

# faith



Promoting A New Synthesis Of Faith And Reason

Spring, and looking forward  
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*Robert McNamara*

Grace: freely enfolded in God's love  
*James Tolhurst*

Science, truth and God  
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# Spring: looking forward

When the FAITH Movement began, in the 1970s, people were drawn to it because it offered a coherent, uplifting and challenging message in the middle of post-Vatican II confusion. It was standard at that time to hear many lamentations from the faithful, announcing that Everything was a Dreadful Mess, and claims that the fault lay with the Second Vatican Council, pointing to the exodus of priests and religious, proliferation of inane songs and antics in liturgies, and the inability of an ever-increasing ecclesiastical bureaucracy to offer support for good catechesis. While most were prepared to acknowledge that the Council “didn’t intend any of this”, there was a tendency merely to lament what was happening – and so there was enthusiasm for any group that appeared to offer hope. And meanwhile some wreckers were around, creating havoc with people’s faith – liberation theologians owing more to Marx than to the Gospel of Christ, crusaders for contraception who railed against *Humanae Vitae* and denounced the gentle Paul VI with a savagery that caused that good, wise and courageous man real suffering.

## Exploring the background

Rarely heard was “How we got where we are” – so today it is worth exploring the background to the 1970s confusion. This necessarily involves a look at the tensions, debates and passions marking the era from Vatican I to Vatican II: a Church struggling with dramatic changes in European politics as the last vestiges of the *ancien regime* toppled.

A sense of being embattled: a reliance perhaps on rules rather than answers to profound questions raised in a rapidly-changing world, a sense of the Church as a fortress rather than a Mother and teacher, a bleak landscape for Biblical studies. Academic rigidity: Scripture used chiefly as proof-texts for known certainties, neo-Scholasticism the imposed line in essays. And some injustice towards gifted theologians with fresh and rich insights.

## The way ahead

But to this mix we should of course also add things that indicated the way ahead: Pius XII’s *Divino Afflante Spiritu* and *Mystici Corporis*, the work of German-speaking theologians von Balthasar and (newly emerging) Ratzinger, plus the French Jean Daniélou and Henri de Lubac. It is worth noting that these last two were men of complete orthodoxy, passionately loyal to Catholic doctrine and moral teachings, unjustly marginalised in the pre-Council years, but magnificently vindicated at the

Council. They will have lasting influence on the Church – but it is important to add that in the 1970s/80s they were roundly denounced as hopelessly “conservative”. Daniélou was treated with great unkindness by his own Jesuit brethren, even to the point of helping to spread untruthful stories about him following his death. (The FAITH Movement is quietly proud of having played its own small role in telling the truth and was privileged to be the publisher of one of Daniélou’s noted works on the Church).

Today any serious commentator must recognise the history, and then look beyond post-Council confusions and seek the authentic message of Vatican II: a message voiced by St John Paul II and Benedict XVI, both of whom played major roles at the Council. Today’s generation of Catholics is being influenced by a much more nourishing diet than was available in the 1970s, and takes for granted the good things available: the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, World Youth Day, St JPII’s *Theology of the Body*, the New Movements, *Veritatis Splendor*, Benedict XVI’s teaching on the relationship between faith and reason, and his emphasis on truth, beauty and a personal encounter with Christ, to name just a few. The Church has big problems – and is losing the once-Catholic heartlands of Europe – but she also has some new resources with which to face the future. And the staggering growth of the Church in Africa and Asia offers a wider perspective to all discussions.

### Beyond post-Council confusions

But there is much more to be done, and the FAITH Movement in this Spring of 2017 sees an increasing need for the specific message of its New Synthesis of science and the Catholic Faith, with its dynamic of understanding that has fostered so many vocations to the priesthood and so much dedicated lay activity over the past decades.

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We mark our 45th anniversary this summer and will do so with gratitude to God and with a renewed commitment to the tasks ahead.

FAITH has always had a forward-looking and upbeat message and has never seen itself as part of that chorus of lamentation so dominant in the immediate post-Vatican II years. We did denounce the catechetical chaos, the absurdity of some of the new Religious

Education material and, of course, the liturgical abuses. But we sought to take a positive stance. We were pleading for a decent translation of the Mass long before it became fashionable to do so (a famous feature in FAITH magazine pointed out a staggering number of serious mistranslations by ICEL), and were arguing that the vernacular should not wholly replace Latin in the liturgy (a good FAITH pamphlet put the case strongly). From the start our increasingly popular youth events had the Liturgy of the Hours, the Angelus, confession, Benediction and the Rosary when these were widely abandoned elsewhere. And we were prophetic in our grim predictions about the consequences of episcopal inertia over poor catechesis and inadequate (to put it mildly) support for *Humanae Vitae*.

*We love the Church, and have  
a confidence in the way in  
which she is always renewed.*

## Witnesses

We are glad to have been active in, and witnesses to, gradual and in some cases dramatic improvement in areas of Church life where we stood firm: most Catholic youth events now have the sort of liturgical and devotional style that at one time was almost unique to the annual FAITH summer gathering, and the new generation of priests has a vigorous approach to catechesis and to promoting the Church's message on marriage and family life. But we are conscious that the growth seen in FAITH and in other New Movements has been in contrast to dramatic losses elsewhere in the western Church.

From the 1990s there was increasing Papal encouragement for the New Movements in the Church, and we saw ourselves in a fresh perspective among them. We found we had, as it were, come of age – and since then the growth has continued, the FAITH Movement has flourished, and we look ahead.

We love the Church, and have a confidence in the way in which she is always renewed. We seek to cultivate a love for the Church in the hearts of the young. We find inspiration in the vision of the Church offered by *Lumen Gentium* at Vatican II, a Marian and maternal vision. Being a Catholic is not about rules, it is about truth and grace given by an incarnate God.

Henri de Lubac loved the Church: "She summons all men so that as their mother she may bring them forth to divine life and eternal light" (*Catholicism*: 24, 1950). He taught, prophetically, the link between Mary and the Church: "Just as the maternal function of Mary is to give the God-Man to the world, so the maternal function of the Church, which culminates...in the celebration of the Eucharist, is to give us Christ" (*The Splendour of the Church*: 329, 1953).

Hans Urs von Balthasar unfolded a profound understanding of the Mary/Church

bond, echoing de Lubac: "Mary begins by being the Mother, but at the Cross she ends by becoming the Bride, the quintessence of the Church" (*To the Heart of the Mystery of Redemption*: 53, 2005). And Joseph Ratzinger brings Biblical studies together with Mariology, noting that "She is the true Israel in whom Old and New Covenant, Israel and Church, are indivisibly one" (*Daughter Zion*: 43, 1977). In all of this we can see what formed John Paul II's "Marian profile" of the Church in *Redemptoris Mater*.

A new generation of Biblical scholars has made full use of the freedom opened up by Pius XII. Scott Hahn has founded a study centre specifically to "promote biblical literacy for Catholic lay people and biblical fluency for Catholic scholars and clergy" – a fruit of Pius XII's *Divino Afflante Spiritu* and Vatican II's *Dei Verbum*.

## New generation

Vatican II's emphasis on Scripture produced a richer and more nourishing diet from the Old and New Testaments at Mass. "A priest who celebrates Mass daily is required to proclaim much of the Bible in the course of a three-year cycle" (Scott Hahn). It also brought a fresh sense of confidence in using Scripture in evangelisation, as evidenced by the work of the New Movements in the Church. Thus Kiko Arguello of the NeoCatechemenate: "We were having a celebration of the Word with the travellers once a week...Among the poor, something was beginning to be created. What we now called the 'tripod'...was born: the Word, the Eucharist, and the Christian community" (*The Kerygma* 2014: 62).

The issue for the Church after 1870, the loss of the Papal States and associated troubles, was one of confrontation with the modern world and its huge challenges. What was to be done? T. Rowland writes "The response of Pius X in *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (his 1907 encyclical against Modernism) was to try to avoid the iceberg of history. At Vatican II the majority decided that the iceberg, so to speak, could not be avoided: it had to be engaged. The names of Rahner, Schillebeeckx, and Kung ...are now shorthand terms for one form of engagement, the names of Ratzinger, De Lubac, Wojtyła and von Balthasar, shorthand terms for another" (*Ratzinger's Faith*: 148-149, 2008).

## Engagement

We too seek to be part of that engagement. With the insights offered by an exploration of a synthesis of faith and science, we respond to the call to evangelisation – from Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, through the powerful and compelling calls of St John Paul and Benedict XVI to the plea of Pope Francis to take the message to the margins. FAITH is a movement born when man had just landed on the moon, when TV was in the first fast-racing rush of its world domination in speedy communication, when the sexual revolution in the West was well under way and when the horrors of a possible

nuclear holocaust had first established itself as part of world understanding. An era that called for a new synthesis.

### Quiet confidence

And now, as in our early youth, we announce with quiet confidence that we need not be afraid. God's original design for man is a great and glad one. In the era of the internet, post-modernism, "gender ideology", global networking and the emergence of new biotechnology, the FAITH Movement is conscious of a sense of urgency in offering its specific message. In the 70s, our detractors – and indeed some of our supporters – spoke of us as reactionaries, gleefully announcing that we were "opposed to Vatican II". We weren't and aren't. On the contrary – we saw and see that Council as opening up rich possibilities for the message that we offer. The Church has the answers to the questions asked by men and women of the 21st century. There is work to be done and the FAITH movement is glad to be doing it. And now, as in our early youth, we announce with quiet confidence that we need not be afraid.



## FROM THE AIMS AND IDEALS OF FAITH MOVEMENT

Faith Movement offers a new synthesis of faith and reason, explaining the Catholic faith in the evolutionary perspective of modern science.

Reflecting on the unity of the cosmos, we can show the transcendent existence of God and the essential distinction between matter and spirit. We offer a vision of God as the true Environment of men in whom "we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28) and of his unfolding purpose in the relationship of word and grace through the prophets which is brought to its true head in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Lord of Creation, centre of history and fulfilment of our humanity.

Our redemption through the death and resurrection of the Lord, following the tragedy of original sin, is also thereby seen in its crucial and central focus. Our life in his Holy Spirit through the church and the sacraments and the necessity of an infallible magisterium likewise flow naturally from this presentation of Christ and his work through the ages.

Our understanding of the role of Mary, the Virgin Mother through whom the Divine Word comes into his own things in the flesh (cf. John 1:10-14), is greatly deepened and enhanced through this perspective. So too the dignity of Man, made male and female as the sacrament of Christ and his church (cf. Ephesians 5:32), is strikingly reaffirmed, and from this many of the church's moral and social teachings can be beautifully explained and underlined.

# Karol Wojtyła and the importance of every human person

*Robert McNamara examines the philosophy of Karol Wojtyła – St John Paul – for the 21st century*

Karol Wojtyła – Pope St. John Paul II – accepted the classical definition of the person, “an individual substance of a rational nature”, and brought to it all of the richness of contemporary developments in philosophy. Wojtyła does not satisfy himself with simply repeating the medieval interpretation of the definition but takes it up afresh, augmenting and expanding it. He thinks alongside and within the Christian tradition to enhance the contemporary understanding of that tradition. In so doing, he markedly expands the dimensions of the received definition of the human person.



The potential for this expansion is furnished by Wojtyła’s formation in contemporary philosophy, particularly phenomenology. The latter half of the 2nd millennium saw a transition from a philosophy of being towards a philosophy of consciousness. With this came a focus on the subject – a move from a focused analysis of the objective constitution of reality, to the thinking and knowing being.

So, with Wojtyła’s help, we now approach the human person from a subjective perspective: we are going to explore the person *The human person is not only an object, a what but also a subject, a who, and primarily so* inwardly, so to speak, by looking at the human person from within the interior experience of personhood. Because the human person is not only an object, a *what*, but also a subject, a *who*, and primarily so.

It is important to note here that the use of ‘subject’ and ‘subjective’ does not in the least imply ‘subjectivism’. Rather, it is simply the recognition that the human person is not just *something*, but each and every person is also *someone*, a subject.

This is a transition from the *cosmological* perspective to the *personalistic* perspective, from the objective metaphysical structuring to the subjective phenomenological experiencing. These modes of approach are of course mutually complementary.

First, to secure a connection between both approaches, let us explore consciousness in Aquinas’ metaphysical doctrine. In this, consciousness can be considered a derivative power of the human person, an active power arising from the rational

principle of the human soul. As a being of a rational nature, the human person is therefore, ordinarily, a conscious being.

The nature of consciousness is twofold: consciousness is both *consciousness* and *self-consciousness*. Consciousness is the power to be present to and aware of reality – it is receptivity to being through experience. Self-consciousness is the power to be self-aware in one’s consciousness of reality. Through consciousness there is an “I” looking out upon the world and knowing it. Each human person is an “I”.

## Individuality

This “I” could be called the interior pole of our individuality, that by which we are awake and alert to the world, and around which revolves all our unique and unrepeatable experiences of life and activity. It is the interior centre of our person, the nexus from which all life originates and all living concentrates. The conscious “I” sees the world, knows the world, and acts in the world. It says, “I think... I choose... I feel... I act.” Each individual “I” is the source of his own living and activity. Consequently, it is that for which we must take responsibility – I am responsible for my “I,” and for all that comes forth from this centre of conscious life. The “I” is the ultimate source of thought and free-choice, the origin of deliberation and action. In grasping this “I”, both of ourselves and of others, we gain a privileged glimpse into understanding the unique personhood of ourselves and others.

## Human creativity

Karol Wojtyła speaks of thought as the basis of human creativity and the source of human culture. Thought, he says, is the “basis for deriving truths from existing reality and for controlling reality”. And again, “in creating, we fill the external material world around us with our own thought and being”, and in this there is a likeness with God, since “the whole of creation is [but an] expression of God’s own thought and being” (*Thomistic Personalism*, 171).

*Karol Wojtyła speaks of thought as the basis of human creativity and the source of human culture.*

Moreover, Wojtyła explains that freedom, and with it morality, is central to the human person: that “which is most characteristic of a person, that in which a person (at least in the natural order) is most fully and properly realised, is morality.” (*Thomistic Personalism*, 172). Morality is essential to the human person precisely because the human person is a being rational and free. And though free thought is certainly a precondition for doing the good, and is thus presupposed of morality, it is only in the very doing of the good in freedom that the human person most fully manifests itself.

## Love

For Wojtyła the moral character of the human person reaches its fullness in *love*. Love revolves around the good. The good is the centre of gravity of love – love recognises, affirms, desires and delights in the good. And since, among all of visible created reality, human persons are the greatest of goods, love is always personal. Strictly speaking love always begins within a person, in the freedom of the will, and ends in a person, in the intimate knowing of the personal core of the beloved.

In *Love and Responsibility*, a ground-breaking text analysing sexual love, Wojtyła goes as far as to say that the *only* proper response to a person is love, since “the person is a kind of being such that only love constitutes the proper and fully mature relation to it” (*Love and Responsibility*, 26). To realise its being and life, and to experience the fullness of human experiencing, the human person must be the *subject* and *object* of love, for it is precisely in love that the human person most fully actualizes itself, and thus reaches the fullest realization of its being and life (66).

In this power of self-dominion, the human person can do all those things which manifest a truly human life. He can take hold of himself as master of itself – can *determine* the course of his life, take *possession* of itself and *give* of himself.

## Self-giving

Persons are radically capable of: 1) self-determination; 2) self-possession; and 3) self-giving.

1) *Self-determination*: The self-determining power of the human person is not simply the ability of the person to determine his own action and the course of his life. In free action the person not only determines some reality external to the self, but also simultaneously determines his own being. This self-determination is traditionally described by the contrasting categories of virtue and vice, where virtue is found in the manifold of habits that order the powers of the soul to their true good, and vice in their correlative negative

*freedom leaves a decisive mark on the self of the person, and is a power with immense responsibility.*

opposites. Virtues are positive determinations of character, and so, virtue is personal *formation*; while vice, being negative, is personal *deformation*.

2) *Self-Possession*: Self-determination in virtue leads to ever greater degrees of self-possession. The human person does not receive his being from the Creator as a static determined fact, but must, through his own freely chosen activity, participate in its own definitive formation in a progressive “taking-hold of itself”. In such a taking-hold the person assumes radical responsibility for himself and further determines his own native individuality. In this way, freedom leaves a decisive mark on the self of the person, and is a power with immense responsibility.

3) *Self-giving*: Though certainly an exalted property of the person, freedom is

not considered by either Aquinas or Wojtyła as an end in itself. Rather, freedom is for love (117). Ultimately, *the human person is defined by love*. Love, for Wojtyła, is about being *other*-focused. It is an inner movement of the will for the true good of the other, and ultimately culminates in some form of self-giving. Self-gift is of the inner nature of love, and is its essential interior dynamic. Therefore, we can see that the fundamental self-determining potential of the person, which is progressively perfected in self-possession, is essentially ordered towards the possibility for self-gift. Wojtyła says that it is precisely in love that the human person reaches the fullest realisation of its potential, and thereby fully develops its being (66). This is the ultimate paradox of human nature, that to fulfil oneself means to give of oneself—to be truly oneself one must exist *for* others.

*Love, for Wojtyła, is about being other-focused*

These three potencies of the human person, which are all ordered towards and culminate in self-giving, became the focus of so much of John Paul's writings, in his encyclicals and his catechesis on the Theology of the Body. And it too became the defining character of his own life, as self-gift for the sake of the kingdom.

## Rich understanding

Given this rich and robust understanding, we see why the human person amongst all of visible created reality has pre-eminent dignity. Dignity identifies a being uniquely worthy of respect. It is only attributed to beings which because of their value are considered *invaluable*, that is, without the possibility of measure. Recognition of dignity is recognition of value beyond valuation.

For Aquinas, the term *person* functions explicitly to signify our dignity. Aquinas states that "*subsistence in a rational nature is of high dignity*". The human individual, as a concrete instantiation of a rational and free nature, is "distinct by reason of dignity", and because of this we attribute to him the word *person*. Aquinas captures this truth beautifully when he says that "person signifies that which is most perfect in all nature".

The human person has dignity because of *what* he is, his nature, and *that* he is, his existence. This is why the term *person* is so very important. When we use the term *person* we don't just point to what the human individual is, his essential constitution, but we directly, intentionally and deliberately signal his pre-eminent dignity.

## Recognise the dignity of all persons

1) It is not the activity of the person that is of decisive importance, but the being and nature of the person. According to a classical Aristotelian – Thomistic axiom: *agere sequitur esse*, action follows being. Actions arise in and from the being and nature

of something, and precisely as such are manifestations of the being and its nature. According to their nature, cats miaow and dogs bark; conversely, cats don't bark and dogs don't miaow – *action* follows being. It is thus the being according to its nature that has priority, with action following as strictly secondary.

And so, it is not the thinking, nor even the aptitude for thinking, that defines the human person, or identifies a particular being as a person, but rather it is the essential being of the person, a *nature* specified by rationality. It is the manifestation of existence of a particular kind that is important, not its activity, or lack thereof. Therefore, *all particular individuals which are identified as having human nature are, as such, persons*. And so, it is necessary to recognise their dignity.

2) The human person does not *receive* his dignity, whether from another, or from his own store of talents and actions. Rather, the human person *has* dignity, just because of '*what he is*' and '*that he is*'. A human being's worth does not depend on anything beyond the simple fact that he stands in existence.

## Absolute respect

Therefore, because of *what* the human person is, his nature, it follows as strictly necessary that he be treated with absolute respect according to his incommensurable value, his dignity. This is why we say that human dignity is *inviolable* and *inalienable* – it cannot be destroyed, and cannot be removed.

Consequently, the term person applies to *all* human beings who have *existence*, whether we consider those who *do not* think or will—including the human embryo, no matter how small—or those who perhaps *never could* or *never will* think and will—including the severely handicapped, the disabled elderly or an individual in a "persistent" or "permanent vegetative state".

## Putting it all together

The human person is the fulcrum around which the whole natural moral law rotates, and that to which it must always return and serve. And this has consequences for contemporary human rights issues, including abortion, euthanasia, human trafficking, war, etc.

The concept of the *person* was developed and refined in the crucible of Christian philosopher – theologians trying to grapple with understanding (and misunderstanding) the two fundamental theological mysteries of the Christian faith. The gradual and sometimes painful evolution of the term through the Trinitarian and Christological controversies of the Patristic period, as well as the robust investigative

*Human dignity is inviolable and inalienable—it cannot be destroyed, and cannot be removed.*

work of Christian philosopher–theologians, Sts. Boëthius, Aquinas, and John Paul II, have progressively led to a fuller appreciation of the proper meaning of the human person.

### Person

It is precisely by virtue of this history of Christian thought that we have our colloquial usage of the term *person* as a signifier of the human being in his unique and unrepeatable individuality, a being with inalienable and inviolable dignity. In just this way, Jesus Christ, in His self-revelation of the Trinity, has had a decisive impact on the development of the meaning of the term, *person*, and with it the human individual – which signification and significance remains indelibly bound-up with Christian history.

*Sts. Boëthius, Aquinas, and John Paul II, have progressively led us to a fuller appreciation of the proper meaning of the human person.*

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*Robert McNamara lectures at the Franciscan University of Steubenville*



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# Grace – freely enfolded in God’s love

*James Tolhurst examines what the Church teaches on Grace*

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**W**e use the word *grace* (χάρις/*charis*/ from which charisma comes) – Latin *gratia* – to express charm and beauty, but also generosity and the kindness of the giver (‘grace and favour residences’). When we apply it to God, it speaks of his mercy and goodness: “a God of tenderness and of grace, slow to anger and rich in mercy” (Ex. 34:6). That grace would flow into individuals such as Noah who found favour with him (Gen. 6:8) for grace is part of God’s nature – which theologians say is diffusive of himself: it is part of his being to give himself to his creation, and the response to the gift is gratitude. The owner of the vineyard replied to those who grumbled that they were being paid the same as those who came at the eleventh hour, “Why be envious because I am generous ?” (Matt. 20:15). Ultimately it flowed into Mary of Nazareth who was that outpouring of God’s favour, whom the angel Gabriel saluted as ‘full of grace’.

When Jesus stood up in the synagogue of Nazareth and read out the words of Isaiah, “The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor...to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour”, the congregation wondered at “ the gracious words”. But the cause of their amazement was not about the way he spoke (they were soon to condemn him for his comments about them) but because he spoke the *words of grace* (χάριτις *charitis*). They were struck that he had not continued the quotation which goes on to proclaim the day of vengeance of our God (Lk. 4:18; Is. 61:2). Jesus chose to stress that salvation did not come linked with retribution.

We owe much of our understanding of grace to St. Paul who considered himself a recipient of God’s mercy and goodness. He would say “God set me apart and called me by his grace,” (Gal. 1:15) “his grace toward me was not in vain” and “I do not nullify the grace of God” (1 Cor.15:10; Gal. 2:21). He was conscious that our justification was out of generosity, “Justified by his grace as a gift” (Rom. 3:24), and it was all powerful so that “we may find grace to help us in time of need” (Heb. 4:16) because “my grace is sufficient for you” (2 Cor. 12:9). It was at the heart of all his teaching – “understanding the grace of God in truth” (Col. 1:6) and it prompted a continuing effort, so that “He should complete among you his gracious work” (2 Cor. 8:6).

## Wilful or woeful

When Newman was studying the history of the early Church he noticed that “the true faith never could come into contact with the heathen philosophies, without exercising its right to arbitrate between them” (*Arians* p.101). The progress of our understanding of grace bears this out. The Church reacted to the heterodoxy of the 5th century ‘Sicilian Briton’ (Pelagius) and subsequent Semi-Pelagian followers who over-emphasised the power of human will, by asserting the preeminent role of grace. The Council of Carthage in 418 labelled heretical the concept that “if grace were not given, it would be possible but not easy to obey God’s commandments without that grace”. When Martin Luther maintained that “when man fell he is no longer free: and of himself can only sin,” (*On Genesis* c. 19) the Council of Trent produced its reply in the *Decree on Justification*.

This magisterial text faced what amounts to the direct contrast of Pelagianism which exalted human endeavour and Lutheranism which considered humanity purely passive and grace “like some brilliant cloak of gold thrown over the human corpse by God” (Karl Adam: *The Spirit of Catholicism* ch.11). The fathers of the Council were careful not to undermine the power of grace while insisting on the free cooperation of human will. It is true that we are not justified on the basis of works; and without God’s grace he could not take one step towards justice in God’s sight. But God does provide the gift of his grace to those who do all that is within their power, “working both the will and the performance” (Phil. 2:13). In the end, we are urged to “fight the good fight of the faith and win for ourselves the eternal life to which we are called” (1 Tim. 6:12).

## God’s will and ours

There remains the deep mystery of divine predestination: “Those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son...And those whom he predestined, he also called; and those whom he called, he also justified” (Rom. 8: 28.29). Trent was quick to point out that nobody can ever presume that they are predestined; or even if they consider themselves justified, that they cannot sin again. But in what does human freedom consist if by our own free will without God’s grace nobody can take one step towards being justified? Does this amount to Luther’s enslavement of the will or does it give a nod towards Pelagius? What is the interplay between grace and our free will?

Isaiah proclaims “You have wrought for us all our works” (Is. 26:12). St Thomas Aquinas wades into the argument by affirming that “divine causality alone can move man’s will from within, yet leave it free” (I-II q.9 a.6). The grace of God is not a divine – human amalgam but only divine. When the great Origen commented on the incident of Jesus with his apostles in the storm, he says, “The one who reaches the other side, does so because ‘Jesus sails with him’ but he must do all within his power to get there.” The

standpoint of Domingo Bañez OP (1528-1604), and his followers is that God foresees all hypothetical future events and premoves the free will to a course of action, calling certain to blessedness and giving them the grace necessary. But Fr. Luis de Molina S.J. (1535-1600) and most of the Jesuits taught that although God calls all to be glorified, his gift of grace is conditioned by an intermediate knowledge, by which God sees beforehand how individuals freely react to grace and knows infallibly in advance how they will make use of the grace that has been given and elects those who cooperate with grace for eternal glory. Pope Paul V in 1607 decreed that the Banezians could not be accused of Calvinism nor the Molinists of Pelagianism, and therefore both opinions could be held. This is still the case. The way in which God chooses to give grace remains mysterious.

### The harvest of good works

Article XI of the Thirty-nine Articles says that “We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings.” Trent however says that although justification begins with a call from God “which we do not merit,” adds “we do not sin when we perform good works with a view to an eternal reward.” As Colossians puts it, “Christ, our hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). The very merit we gain is of course due to our cooperation with the gifts of God’s grace, as we say in the collect for the first Sunday in Advent, “Grant almighty Father, that when Christ comes again we may go out to meet him, bearing the harvest of good works, *achieved by your grace.*” As Augustine puts it, “God’s goodness to men is such that he wants his gifts to be their merits.”

The Council of Trent also followed its treatment on human cooperation with divine grace (as contrasted with the approach of Protestantism) by explaining the mechanisms involved. Following St Thomas, there is the aspect of grace which is antecedent to sin and which actually sustains us so that we can accept grace, or that which proceeds our acceptance. There is also that which is sufficient (but which is not accepted) and efficacious (which is); and grace which is habitual insofar as God permanently offers it to us and it is freely accepted. There is also sanctifying grace which is a permanent condition in those who are justified. Augustine would say, “Without God, we cannot; without us, God will not.”

Jansenism (which turned out to be a Catholic version of Calvinism) rejected the concept of sufficient grace which remains inefficacious through our fault on the grounds that it put humanity in debt to God. It proved to be a stubborn heresy which took three condemnations. Augustine argued that “God works in us even the will to believe and it is always his mercy which forestalls us, but it belongs to the will to answer the divine call or reject it.” Jesus wanted to save Jerusalem and to gather its children together, but they would not respond (Matt. 24:2).

## A communication of truth and love

Theologians like to make distinctions, but there are times when their systematisation could almost be described as “questions about words and names” (Ac. 18:15). “It is the will and design of God that produced sanctity in our souls”, says de Caussade. Grace must not be thought of as simply a theological formula because it is nothing less than “a participation in the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4). Piet Fransen would say that grace was “more than anything else, God’s creative, loving way of speaking to each one of us individually in Christ and in the Church”, which introduces the personal element. From another theological angle, Ralph Martin talks about “the ontological modification of the human being which enables someone to know and love God in the way in which God loves himself”. It is above all a bestowing of divine friendship. Fr. Holloway puts it succinctly, “A communication by love and truth and power by the radiation of God’s very being.”

Scripture recounts that when Jacob dreamed about the ladder between earth and heaven he woke and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not...How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:16). Jesus recalled Jacob’s vision to Nathaniel, telling him, “You shall see greater things than these...You will see heaven thrown open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man” (Jn 1:50-51). What we are promised is not just that contact with the divine, but the actual indwelling of the Trinity itself, as Jesus told his apostles, “My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him” (Jn 14:23). If the mere sense of the presence of God had such an impact on Jacob, how much greater should be our awareness of the individual effect on us of divine grace? Contact with a sovereign inspires awe (the English sovereign is referred to as ‘the Presence’). But how much greater must it be when we are touched by God. He spares us – as he spared Manoah and his wife – out of consideration for the shock it would be to our system (Jdg. 13:22), but we still need to realise that it is something beyond all earthly wonders. Augustine, speaking of our reception of the Eucharist says, “You shall not change me into yourself as bodily food, but into me you shall be changed” (*Confessions* 7, 10).

## Wisdom passes into holy souls

God wants us to be conformed to the image of his Son by the working of his grace. It is what makes poor human beings into saints. Mrs Holloway was adamant that “all souls who love God truly and sincerely, and do what they know to be his holy will are beautiful in his sight and in the sight of his holy Mother and the angels.” This is the state of grace which seems to get scarce mention, yet the book of Wisdom says “in every generation she [Wisdom] passes into holy souls” (Wis. 7:27). Fr John Lenz,

imprisoned in Dachau, would say that it was important “to show those who have crosses of their own to bear in life just what the grace of God can do for those who follow faithfully in the footsteps of Christ the Crucified”. If you have ever encountered a truly holy person, such as happened to Fr Christopher in his meeting with St Henry Morse in Newgate in 1645, “His face was so lit up with joy that if I had been a heathen or a heretic, the experience of sweetness I then had would have won me to the faith he professed.” Fr Holloway says, “Through grace, both soul and body may thrill in one common ecstasy to the communication of the love of God”. If this is true – “things that no eye has seen and no ear has heard, things beyond the mind of man, all that God has prepared for those who love him” ( 1 Cor. 2:9) – it will be the fulfilment of the work of grace in this life, which reaches its completion in the next. Please God, it will be our reward to rejoice with the harvest of our works in the presence of the martyrs and saints. At the end of our journey will be the Immaculate Mother of God: “for the heaven he left, he found heaven in thee, and he shone in thy shining, sweet star of the sea”.

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*Fr. Tolhurst studied theology in Spain at the English College. He needed his time in parish work to put it into practice. He is the General Editor of the Newman Millennium Edition.*

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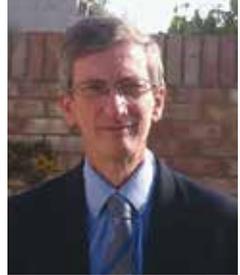
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# Science, truth and God

Gregory Farrelly examines the debate about science and Christianity.

Although few people are scientists or even that interested in science, the influence of scientific thought has never been greater. We take for granted that science is true. However, in the absence of a coherent Christian philosophy, some scientists have filled the vacuum, appointing themselves philosophers and declaring that God does not exist because there is no evidence for his existence. Many people in the West believe that science has indeed proved that God does not exist. Yet on the doors of the Cavendish laboratory in Cambridge is written:



*Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them. [Psalm 111]*

However, science and revelation cannot contradict each other because both come from the same author of truth, namely God. There is a wonderful history in the Church of philosophy and theology seeking to understand material and spiritual nature in the light of human thought as well as that of divine revelation. Indeed in Genesis, the account of creation is quite unlike those from other cultures such as Babylon or the native North Americans; it is not arbitrary or magical. The book of Wisdom, the Psalms and much of the OT develop a line of thought that ponders on creation as a work of the wisdom of God. In St Paul's letter to the Romans we read:

*Ever since the creation of the world, his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. (Rom. 1:20)*

This idea of a "natural revelation" is part of Church doctrine, yet in general the Church has been sleeping while a virulent scientific atheism has been growing like a cancer, with few theologians interested, let alone capable, of tackling this issue. It is my contention that theology in the last hundred years has generally ignored philosophical correspondence with scientific reality.

## The unity-law and creation

The theory of the "creation" of the universe most commonly held by physicists is that of an initial "Big Bang", a sort of explosion of matter-energy in which time and space themselves began. As the universe cooled, nuclei, atoms, molecules, etc. began to form. Gradually organic chemicals were synthesized and eventually self-replicating complex molecules evolved, enabling the evolution of living cells, leading to multi-

cellular organisms, plants and animals. This evolution, increasing in divergence and complexity, continued to the hominids and the species *homo sapiens*.

The natural sciences implicitly assume that material reality involves ordered being, a set of ordered, dynamic relationships between entities. Our ability to understand this vast process, from cosmological to human evolution indicates that there is some underlying structure, controlling and directing its development. The universe is not “random” in any simple sense; it is a cosmos, not a chaos. Causality is intrinsic to the material universe; without it there would be no science. Physics, in particular, is noted for its ability to use inductive reasoning to posit universal laws such as Einstein’s General Relativity, making the claim that experiments and observations on or from earth allow us to generalise a theory into universal law, i.e. a law of physics that we believe must hold everywhere in the universe because this is a law written into the fabric of the universe. Similarly, there is also a constant dynamic towards unification, describing the material universe by single rather than disparate laws, such as the quest to link general relativity/gravitation with quantum mechanics in a “Theory of Everything”. There is clearly a Unity–Law embedded in the material universe.

### *Faith Theology*

A key principle of the *Faith* theology is that matter is controlled and directed by “higher” matter in its environment, subject to universal scientific laws, themselves aspects of the Unity–Law of Control and Direction (ULCD) that underlies the structure of material reality. The universe is an *ecosystem*, involving the dynamic interplay of many factors: an intrinsic inter-relatedness.

### *Controlled and directed*

We do not hold to an “intelligent design” theory in which God designs each entity separately and extrinsically. Rather, God created through the ULCD written as the intrinsic “script” for the universe. In this interdependence, or “co-relativity”, of being, we have an ecosystem of relational being. An example is photosynthesis; it is not enough to have an isolated seed or root; plants need light, water, earth and air.

Matter, then, is controlled and directed. More complex material being directs matter lower than it in being; material reality is contingent, i.e. it depends for its causation on something else. But what about the ULCD itself? We cannot account for the material ULCD without implying something outside the system. What is the cause of this contingent universe? Paul Davies, a professor of theoretical physics wrote: “...a contingent physical universe cannot contain within itself an explanation for itself” (1993, p. 170-71).

Ultimately, it is “Mind” that controls. The “cause” of the material universe must be non-material and itself uncaused, in order to avoid an infinite line of causation.

Scientific atheism objects that there is no evidence for a non-material Creator, but this involves a contradiction since one cannot require non-material being to be materially verifiable by science. The very existence of science itself, considered philosophically, i.e. "meta"-physics, the philosophy of being and existence, indicates the need for God to explain the universe.

## Evolution and humanity

There are several "theories" of evolution, but the fact of evolution, the change in species through generational selection, is undisputed in biology and biochemistry. In Genesis chapter 1, the presentation of the six days of creation is not capricious but progressive: from non-living matter, to living plants and animals, culminating in Adam and Eve, as the glory of creation. This account does not contradict scientific evolution.

*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..." and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over ... every living thing that moves upon the earth." ... And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good (Gen. 1:26-31).*

Adam and Eve are different from the other creatures, being made in God's own image, an extraordinary claim, and having dominion over the world. Humans are both a product of the natural laws of biological evolution and the special, direct, supernatural infusion of the soul as the determining principle of the human person; the soul is our "Unity-Law".

*Unlike other animals, we have developed art, music, science, etc. and we clearly exist beyond the determining influence of our material environment in the manner of our relationships*

## God's own image

Man cannot be explained adequately by the material Unity-Law: we are not determined by our environment: we cannot fly, biologically, yet we can fly; we require oxygen to respire, yet we can go to the Moon where there is no oxygen! We have an extraordinary freedom from the constraints of the material ULCD. Unlike other animals, we have developed art, music, science, etc. and we clearly exist beyond the determining influence of our material environment in the manner of our relationships with each other and with God. We are unique in the animal kingdom in having free will and intellect, mind. In terms of our "dominion" over nature, it is clear that we have a God-like power over matter, although, as Pope Francis points out in *Laudato Si'*, we do not always use this power for the good. We control nature much more than nature controls us, unlike the other animals.

## Humans

Humans are unique on earth in having free will. Unlike the higher apes with their instinctual “intelligence”, we are not determined by our material environment, although of course we are in dynamic relationship with it. There must, then, be a principle of “personhood”, of free will and intellect, that is not controlled by the material environment. The human principle of determination comes from within, from *We need grace, a relationship of love with God, for our very being. The denial of our spiritual nature is also a denial of our humanity* the soul as “ME”, the centre of the personality. The uniqueness of Man is shown by the fact that there is no real *intellect* in the animals – even the higher apes show no propensity for learning other languages, for mathematics, science or art; nor do animals show evidence of free will – they are completely constrained by the material environment and by instinct. From the highest ape to MAN there is a huge leap in intellect, not explicable by material evolution, a difference of kind, not merely degree. This difference therefore must be non-material, spiritual, the “soul”.

## Personal

The primate-hominid brain increased in complexity during evolution. At the summit of material animal evolution is a proto-human, but the next stage of complexity in brain function would be out of kilter with the natural environment since it is now too powerful to be subject to the ULCD from the material environment alone. Such a creature would not survive, but the direct infusion of a new principle of control, one that is not subject to the Unity-Law in matter, would enable such a being to exist in harmony with its natural environment, yet not be determined by it. The first human is THE point in material evolution at which the infusion of the soul becomes necessary and suitable, precisely the principle required for Man to exist in harmony with the material environment. Spirit shows itself as “mind” – it controls and directs *The world was created through God's wisdom, through the 'Logos', the Mind of Christ. Christ is the meaning of the universe itself* in freedom, it is personal, not subject to the intrinsic laws of matter. Matter is not “free” but determined: it cannot, of itself, explain the emergence of the spiritual soul – this must be provided by an external, spiritual agent.

## God

God is our ultimate and immediate, personal, environment. In the language of this theology, God is the “Environer” of Man. The whole plan of creation is precisely directed towards this unique creature, a unity in one person of matter and spirit with

the soul as the Unity–Law for the human person, in relation now to God, not merely to matter. This was God’s plan from all eternity. The world was created through God’s wisdom, through the “Logos”, the Mind of Christ. Christ is the meaning of the universe itself:

*“In the beginning was the Word [Logos], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made”. (Jn 1:1-3)* Unlike the rest of created matter, then, we seek that which is good and true as persons, from God as a Trinity of dynamic personal and interpersonal life: *“In Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).*

So, God is our Environer, God is “the sunshine of the soul”, providing for us what the sun and earth, etc. provide for the plants via photosynthesis. We need grace, a relationship of love with God, for our very being. The denial of our spiritual nature is also a denial of our humanity. It is, in fact, precisely our spiritual nature, our intellect, that enables us to do science. Man now seeks to love, not merely to live: *“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God”. (Matt. 4:4)*

## Christ

Christ was the “One to come”, the full revelation of our true nature as the “Son of Man”, the wisdom behind the whole evolutionary sweep of creation as Lord of the Cosmos. He also comes as “Son of God”, the revelation of the Trinity, our life-principle of being.

If this is all true, one may ask why are there so many scientist–atheists? This is due to the dulling of the intellect by sin, as Pope John Paul II stated in *Fides et Ratio*:

*“If human beings with their intelligence fail to recognize God as Creator of all, it is not because they lack the means to do so, but because their free will and their sinfulness place an impediment in the way.”*

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*Gregory Farrelly has a PhD in Nuclear Structure Physics and an MTh in Modern Systematic Theology and is a member of the Institute of Physics.*

*Unlike the rest of created matter, then, we seek that which is good and true as persons, from God as a Trinity of dynamic personal and interpersonal life*

*Man now seeks to love, not merely to live*

# Interview

## A welcome in Manhattan

*Joanna Bogle meets the Sisters of Life in New York*

They had just finished a “Baby Shower” party – the big sitting-room still had its decorations and balloons and a general air of festivity. And it looked as though there was more to come – a decorated announcement by the door welcomed a new resident, another pregnant girl. Meanwhile, there was warmth and laughter over evening snacks in the kitchen, lively talk and a relaxed atmosphere of friendship.

The Sisters at the Sacred Heart Convent in New York share their home with young mothers in need – girls who are pregnant and alone and who might otherwise be tempted to abort their children.

There is a sense of welcome as soon as the door is opened. And the house – home to an extraordinary mixture of contemplative prayer and bustling baby care – exudes an air of purposeful calm.

Leading the community at Sacred Heart is Sister Catherine Marie Ross, a Canadian – “My family were originally from Scotland” – who joined the Sisters of Life some fifteen years ago.



“I’d taken a year out of university to work full-time for the pro-life cause” she recalls, “and some one put a newspaper cutting on my desk about the Sisters of Life. I went on a retreat with them, and felt I wanted to give my life’s work to the Church. I met Cardinal O’Connor and he encouraged me to finish college, and stay in touch and take things from there.”

Cardinal John O’Connor, Archbishop of New York from 1984 to 2000 founded the Sisters of Life in 1991 as a response to the growing tragedy of abortion. As a brand-new and now thriving religious order, they have a specific charism, centred on a sense of being called by the Holy Spirit to love the women and children they seek to serve.

## Refuge

The girls who find a refuge at Sacred Heart find that it is not only welcoming, but also offers the opportunity for full reflection and making long-term plans. Girls who are offered a place here must either be in work or in some form of full-time study. Each has her own room, and there is a large common room – where the latest Baby Shower party had just finished – plus a kitchen where they make their breakfasts and snacks, a full cooked meal being provided every evening. The theme of the house is “Holy Respite”. The young women remain for some six months after giving birth, during which time they can establish their future plans and be supported in finding the way ahead. Many forge lasting friendships and return to the home for special feast-days and celebrations.

Sister Catherine Marie and her team seem to be a happy bunch – chats in the kitchen often broke into laughter, and an invitation to join the sisters in their own refectory for lunch revealed a community with a sense of unity and purpose.

“There’s a need for the Holy Spirit to work. It’s all about love. If religious life is about rules and structures, it just won’t work. And – very importantly – it isn’t about saying ‘I want to do pro-life work’. It is first of all to be a bride of Christ.”

“And the presence of Christ gives you a sense of being loved. Our prayer is: ‘Lord, here I am . . . love me.’ You allow the Lord to love you, and then you give that love, you share it. You can’t give what you don’t have.”

While the Sisters at the Sacred Heart convent run a home for pregnant women, other Sisters do “visitation” work, answering crisis-calls for help. The principle of their work is that no pregnant girl is ever abandoned. Girls contact the Sisters through a crisis telephone number, or on-line, or through random encounters in the street, or through hospital social workers.

*If religious life is about rules and structures, it just won’t work. And – very importantly – it isn’t about saying ‘I want to do pro-life work’. It is first of all to be a bride of Christ.”*

## Practical

“Sometimes the need is very basic and practical, other times it’s emotional – each story is different. Often it’s a need for housing. Our work is to walk with the girls. And it has to be centred on love. If the Sisters love the girls, then the girls will love the babies. Our role is to help these girls at this special time in their lives.”

The Sisters at the Sacred Heart have their own convent life, each day starting early with Morning Prayer and Mass, followed by breakfast, and then the day’s tasks, punctuated by prayer including silent adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The Sisters spend four hours each day in prayer. There is a discreet but clear definition between the convent and the girls’ accommodation, and the Sisters’ life is clearly respected. Their guests are invited, but not required, to attend Mass and to use the chapel for prayer.

As a new religious order, the Sisters of Life reflect an open post-Vatican II approach: the Sisters keep contact with their families and go home for ten days each year. They are encouraged to attend family weddings and funerals. “Family is all connected with love and life. Of course there is a separation when you leave home and join the convent – but at the same time, to be part of a family is a gift. And we are all friends – I visit the families of other Sisters, there’s a real bond.”

## No personal mobiles or computers

The sisters don’t have mobile phones – except when doing visitation work – and there is just one computer, for community use, and no TV. “At first that feels like a deprivation – but then it’s just so much more peaceful.” They wear a distinctive, traditional-style habit. In addition to their houses in New York, they are now in Toronto and in Denver, Colorado, and have just opened a new house in Philadelphia. They have established a strong regular presence at World Youth Day, promoting the message of “love and life” with talks and conferences, hosting speakers including politicians, lawyers, broadcasters and bishops. They run post-abortion counselling and retreats, and work with the New York archdiocesan pro-life office.

## Cardinal O’Connor

Cardinal O’Connor is much revered as their founder, and the convent in Manhattan has his picture in the hallway. They like to tell the story of how he had the thought that there could be a new religious order dedicated specifically to the pro-life cause, and then prayed about it for five years. Then, in response to an announcement in the *Catholic New York* magazine, several young women responded and a small group took part in an initial discernment retreat. The Order has grown and grown from there. They celebrate their Foundation Day each year on June 1 – Mother Agnes

Mary Donovan, their Mother Superior, was among the first eight sisters, back in 1991. The Sisters have a close bond with the Dominican Sisters of St Cecilia, based in Tennessee, and the Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma, who provided initial training and formation.

Sister Catherine Marie's own decision to join the Sisters caused her family some surprise. "My mom was shocked! But then I reminded her that she had always prayed for each of us...and actually all the family has been very supportive. I think it's much harder for girls who join us from families who don't have that attitude, who don't really understand. Parents worry that they are losing their daughter, that she will in a sense be controlled, won't be free. But then when they see how we live, what we are doing, they see that their daughter is happy and knows what she is doing – and that's what matters."

The Sisters' work is not easy – many of those they seek to help have complicated lives. Vulnerability, a sense of confusion in a difficult situation, lack of prudence in past decision-making, and perhaps a background in which affection and care and the transmission of moral values played little part, can all add up to some one who is not immediately open to mentoring and wise counsel. There can be anger, frustration, or simply an unwillingness to accept responsibilities. Essentially, responding to a vocation with the Sisters of Life means an invitation to some tough work.

## Prayer

The Sisters' daily round is involved with practicalities of housing and childcare, advice, counselling and much human interaction; the central theme for the Sisters of Life is prayer.

"Cardinal O'Connor, pondering the whole question of abortion, kept returning to that message in Mark: 9 where we are reminded that some demons can only be cast out by prayer and fasting. That's central to our work. That's what our founder wanted us all to understand."

There have been notable successes over the years, and the steady growth of the Order reveals a need within the pro-life cause that had perhaps not earlier been recognised: a practical understanding that this is a spiritual matter, that the widespread practice of abortion in western society really is an evil to be countered with a total commitment to Christ.

*Although the work is obviously involved with practicalities of housing and childcare, advice, counselling, and much human interaction, the central theme for the Sisters of Life is prayer.*

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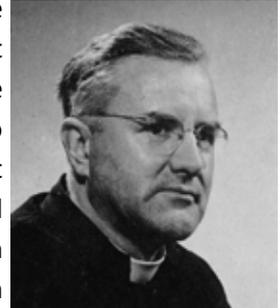
*Joanna Bogle is an author, lecturer, and editor of FAITH magazine*

Holloway on:

# The work of the Faith Movement – past and future

EDWARD HOLLOWAY

Many devout Catholic fundamentalists repudiate the very suggestion of Evolution in the name of Catholic orthodoxy. This reaction is all so unnecessary. These people concentrate on Evolution as a theory in biology, but it has to be understood that we are talking *also* of Evolution as a cosmic principle in philosophy and theology, which embraces and unites the entire works of God to Man. There is no heresy in this. It is the prophetic insight of John Henry Cardinal Newman



*Only now, are we beginning to understand the full dimensions and relevance of Newman*

(who was entirely receptive of Evolution also as a thesis in biology) and is enunciated in his book *The Development of Christian Doctrine*: and Newman is on the side of the angels as the Pope [John Paul II] especially has been insisting. Only

now, are we beginning to understand the full dimensions and relevance of Newman.

## This magazine

Readers, even where they do not agree with the theology or outlook of this magazine, are asked to consider what, subjectively speaking, those of us who run it saw all

*The sweat of blood of Christ in Gethsemane has always been thought as linked to the vision of sin through the ages, and the frustration of the beauty of Our Lord's full, saving love.*

around us in the first ten years or so of the review's life [1968-78]. You saw the eager, idealistic optimistic faith of lovable youth (and youth is *always* lovable). You

could see the utter destruction being wreaked on their personal spiritual lives, their identity as Catholic Christians, their purity, their confident, happy self-commitment to God whether in religious vocation, or in family life. It was like watching a beautiful child sinking in a foul bog; the bog closing over its face, and yourself helplessly out of hand's reach. It hurt beyond words. For the editor writing, the sweat of blood of Christ in Gethsemane has always been thought as linked to the vision of sin through the ages, and the frustration of the beauty of Our Lord's full, saving love.

## “God was not in the wind” (I Kings 19:11)

There is a memory of being present at the celebration of some enlargement to a seminary in the mid-sixties. One listened to the confident speeches, the genuine mutual congratulation, and *knew* that as the years went by this, and many another across the Catholicism of the West, would fall half-empty. One knew the loneliness and horror of a Jeremiah. No one wanted to listen to a Jeremiah – every blast of the winds of change was the stirring of the Holy Spirit. The causes were manifold. The sudden uncertainty about where the Church stood, how far her doctrine could change, or had changed. A careful, positive catechesis of the young, which made a unique claim for the Catholic Church in the name of Christ’s Divinity was heaved out, quite discredited. Liturgical changes were roughly and insensitively brought in, the impact was a desecralisation of the Mass – and the Blessed Sacrament relegated to the side. Communal, devotional prayer went out with the universal death of Benediction; the Mass alone, at all hours, was all. The main reason for foreseeing collapse, however, was the rise of the theological dissent, in the Catholic press and review, in the training colleges of teachers and priests, coupled with a wild, gung-ho type of ecumenism which, at least as it was seen by the people, promised reunion within a decade or so, without any essential change of doctrine or outlook in the non-Catholic Churches.

## Time to build an alternative Intellectualism

Time for personalities is past, its indulgence in the future will be counter-productive. There are many more now who urgently wish to know what went wrong, and how best to rebuild. They don’t want polemics. The time for honest critique and plain speaking will never be past. It is Christian and Catholic duty to bear witness to the truth as you know it, even to death. Where controversy must be analytic, the rapier of the intellect is more effective than the blow of the cosh.

## We cannot build on sand

Certainly it is time for building, and also for rebuilding. It had better be done fast, but we cannot build on sand. We have to build on the rocks of the old foundations; they are still there, however badly dislodged. Much that has to be built anew will need *to be new*, else the phenomenon of the Second Vatican Council and its call for an “aggiornamento” was just one big mistake. To us this is not an acceptable proposition. What the Holy Spirit so urgently wanted is still being called for by God. We have lost our way, that is all. The tornado that tore

*There are many more now who  
urgently wish to know what went  
wrong, and how best to rebuild.  
They don’t want polemics*

through the Church after 1965 was not the “breath of the Spirit”, but the revolution of a Humanism which had long been repressed by force in the Church, together with an establishment perspective, in philosophy at least, which was indeed well out of date. Unfortunately, there was nothing relevant and reliable with which to replace it. The faith of the Church, the ascetic and moral life of the Church, the devotional life of prayer and meditation, were not out of date. We have to find an alternative to the destructive Nominalism and Humanism which have taken the Divinity out of the non-Catholic Communion and threaten the life of our own. With the help of God it can be done, and as always through history despite wreck and storm, it will be done.

### True teaching and vocations

The crash in vocations, and for that matter in every other statistic through which the vitality of the Church may be measured, is often attributed to the hedonism, affluence and decadence of the age. The factors are admitted, but are not the real cause. If these were the real cause, the downward spiral which had set in before the mid-sixties would have continued with some accentuation. What we have seen is a collapse.

### Problems

The Roman Empire, that world into which God was born Incarnate, had all the problems of decadence that we experience. At the top of society gross riches and arrogance; underneath there laboured the slave in misery and squalor. As a chattel, the slave had no direct rights, and moral abuse was the order of life. This did not prevent the rapid spread of the Church, nor the flowering of vocations, nor the blossoming of a purity such as the world before Christ had never seen. We have to say it not as a brag, but as a proclamation and witness: in the Faith Movement, in the matter of vocations, ours has not been the general experience. The inspiration which prompts a vocation in a youth comes mostly – not in every case – from communion with a “preacher” who has conviction, lives and is fulfilled in the Christ he preaches, and teaches with the authority of certainty. In this communion of mind and heart,

*The crash in vocations, and . . . in every other statistic through which the vitality of the Church may be measured, is often attributed to the hedonism, affluence, and decadence of the age. The factors are admitted, but are not the real cause*

love and comradeship grow between the young and their spiritual leaders. They will usually be priests, but not every vocation is sparked by a priest – it can be a friend and colleague of goodness and integrity. It is quite necessary to preach Christ in the background of *Divinity* from the first flash of the creation, through a build up from

matter to man, through the gamut of revelation, to the “Word was made Flesh”. To do all this, the divinity which answers the questioning of men and women concerning the meaning of life must be a divinity which lives also in the Church – a Church which is unique and inerrant, in the likeness of Him who lives and ministers in her sacraments. Human nature craves certainty; without it the very word ‘truth’ is idle, for it could never be achieved in anything at all. Only God is the principle of objective truth, good, love and growth.

### To ignore doctrine, to bypass Christ

The aspirational towards God, even with constant reference to “prayer” and “love your neighbour as yourself”, do not inspire and hold. They don’t make you a *Catholic* in any sense, nor give you the measure of what you have as “Catholic” which is unique and is the full gift of God. The emotional and aspirational approach alone is common to the Catholic and any other Christian body whatever. There is its weakness. The “others” do not have, or claim, the authority, i.e. the divinity and infallibility in their Christian life and its proclamation, which belongs to Christ alone and which the Holy Spirit within the Church speaks and guarantees down the ages. If you do not fully and explicitly teach that way, live that way, and introduce others to Christ that way, then you have bypassed Catholicism and, inadvertently perhaps but quite disastrously, betrayed Christ himself. That way, you get no vocations.

*If we are really to inspire men and women to give themselves to God, or for that matter to live the disregarded purity of Catholic and Christian family life, then we do need to preach the Faith anew*

### Inspire

If we are really to inspire men and women to give themselves to God, or for that matter to live the disregarded purity of Catholic and Christian family life, then we do need to preach the Faith anew in a context which is new, as a sort of new “Gospel”, as it was in the beginning of our Christian history. The more relevant, coherent, and thrilling to the mind it is, the more it will bind the soul to God in love. The point has been made before: there is no fulfilling love which proceeds from a vague and uncertain faith. Faith precedes love, and prompts love as fulfilment. The *Love* between the Father and the Son which is the Holy Spirit, is not a procession from an *indefinite* truth. It is the Love which (and who) proceeds from the contemplated knowledge and communion with the Whole Truth which is between the Father and the Son. The Church, our Faith, and human sanctity, is structured in exactly the same way.

## Wanted: the formative youth sodality

Even without the vision of the Catholic Faith we try to present in the Faith Movement and the magazine, there would be a recovery in the hold the Church has on the young, if only people at the top had the courage to admit mistakes and to return to basics. If it is given to you to move around at times and mix with the scholars at our senior Catholic comprehensive schools, the most chilling factor is the general, total indifferentism you find to the Catholic Church. Great sums go to build and hold on to these “Catholic” schools. These youngsters show an utter indifference, almost a disdain for the priest and for their Church. Only a few of them over sixteen are practising, and none of them has been taught anything about this Way, Truth and Life in any detail at all. Naturally the Mass is found to be a mumbling bore.

## Vatican II to be viewed through Newman

Perhaps the modern world *is* harder to evangelise even than the world of the Roman Empire. Today’s child lives with scandal and temptation from the earliest years before the telly. It all says this is how grown-ups are, and you want to be a grown-up. The power that man now has to indulge every pleasure of his body, and avoid all the meaningful responsibilities of those pleasures, adds a dimension of difficulty in evangelising, and of lawlessness in human sin, which even the apostles did not have to cope with: “because iniquity has abounded, the love of many will grow cold” (Matt. 24:12). Nothing can be achieved without vision and enthusiasm, but against a greater power of evil we have to proclaim a deeper and even more radiant Gospel of the Christ than ever before. God must provide, God will provide. The Christ of today, and the Church of today, must be ever more unambiguously divine in the perfection of truth, and the dignity deliberately chosen, of redeemed human love.

*Nothing can be achieved without vision and enthusiasm, but against a greater power of evil we have to proclaim a deeper and even more radiant Gospel of the Christ than ever before*

## Faith Movement

In Faith Movement we consider ourselves to be the heirs of Cardinal Newman in seeking a new synthesis of modern thought and science, and of Catholic theology. That “new”, whatever it be that fulfils the aspirations of the Second Vatican Council, must preserve the principles Newman gave by which true development grows upon its past. They are:

1. Preservation of the idea or type
2. Continuity of principles

3. Power of assimilation
4. Early anticipation (of later development)
5. Logical sequence
6. Preservative additions (they must not dissolve)
7. Chronic continuance (i.e. of long duration)

## Principles

If these principles had been steadfastly applied to the catechesis of our people, and had been regarded with a more prayerful honesty in the heady days following the last Council, we would be gathering fruits of that Council now, even in the “difficult” Western world. We would also, in the perspective and beauty of the meaning of Christ we could offer, be giving a meaning to our brothers and sisters in Christ which would lend an impetus to ecumenism, as the saving of the gift of Christ. It would already be forming up good men and women into a new unity around the Divinity of Christ. All this is our work, it remains to be done.

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*An abridged extract from Fr Holloway's Editorial, 'Recessional' in his final issue as Editor of Faith magazine, September/October 1991.*



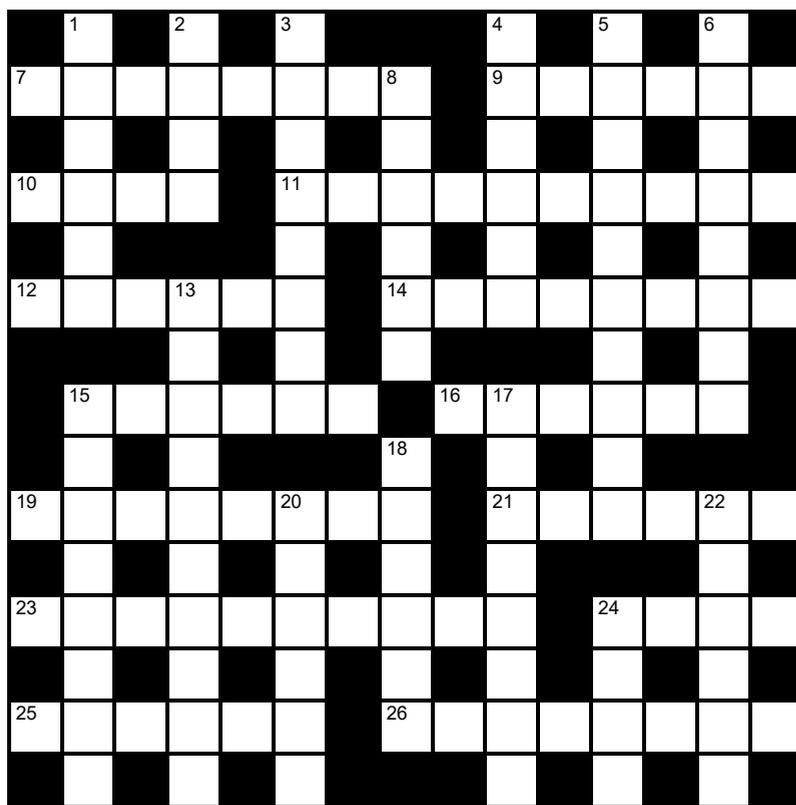
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## CROSSWORD by Aurora Borealis

We invite you to complete this crossword: the clues in bold involve general religious knowledge; the others are cryptic clues with secular answers.



A copy of Robin Harris' new biography *Stepinac: his life and times* will go to the sender of the first correct solution opened from all those received by 1st March 2017. Entries may be this original page or a photocopy and should be sent to: FAITH CROSSWORD 4, 45 East St Helen Street, Abingdon OXON OX14 5EE. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR FULL NAME AND POSTAL ADDRESS.

### Across

7. **Two are worth a penny** (8)
9. **A religious house** (6)
10. **Mary, Mystic** \_ \_ \_ \_ (4)
11. Enclose mates in correspondence (3,7)
12. Energy with each bit of hot stuff (6)
14. Finding your way? Put these first (8)
15. Get at sewer (5)
16. Place for training group of whales? (6)
19. Was this hero a heel? (8)
21. Flaw in photo from shattered eyeglass (3,3)
23. Hill, say, in Italy, provides local food (10)
24. and 17 down **English churchman and ally of Mary Tudor** (8,4)
25. Miss deposit and you'll get plenty (6)
26. Max often goes before to warn the tall (8)

### Down

1. To fight, work model (6)
2. Scottish bank mislaid bear (4)
3. Company with Home Counties sound - test for soldier (8)
4. Dreaming of Oxford (6)
5. **Mercy seat - in the choir** (10)
6. **Son missing in Luke 15** (8)
8. He receives returns while the German pursues nurse (6)
13. Do nice trip, mix-up forecast (10)
15. **St. - - - - - Owen, priest-hole builder** (8)
17. **See 24 across**
18. **Prophetic book of 66 chapters** (6)
20. Fifty-one pork pies go to make a bunch of flowers (6)
22. Call out "ouch"? Cowardly! (6)
24. Danger cut short for fairies (4)

The winner of the December crossword (Christmas: bottle of wine) was A.M.Hill, who attended the January meeting of The Keys, the Catholic Writers' Guild, in London to be presented with her prize.



# ETHICAL SEX

SEXUAL CHOICES AND THEIR NATURE AND MEANING

BY *Anthony McCarthy*

Is sex important? How concerned should we be about our sexual choices and their effects? Is sexual desire best understood in terms of pleasure, love, interpersonal union and/or procreation?

In an era of radical redefinition of marriage and rapidly changing views about the nature of sex, *Ethical Sex* seeks to bring some philosophical clarity to our thinking.

*"McCarthy's book on sex and marriage is full of fascinating, creative and powerful arguments. It interacts with a broad base of philosophical, literary and theological reflection, from Aquinas and Shakespeare to a rich and diverse set of contemporary philosophers. All who want to have an informed view on traditional sexual ethics need to look at this work."*

Professor Alexander Pruss, Baylor University

*"This splendidly and engagingly written book deserves wide attention and careful reading. It defends in an intelligent way...a number of important and, I believe, very true theses about human sexuality and sexual ethics."*

Professor Josef Seifert

International Academy of Philosophy - Institute of Philosophy Edith Stein

*Available from Amazon.co.uk*

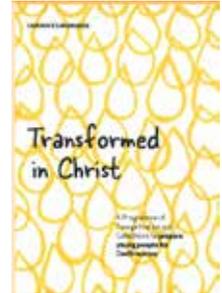
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## Book Reviews

# Evangelising for Confirmation

*Transformed in Christ*

by Hannah Vaughan-Spruce, Gracewing, 430pp,  
£29.99 (Catechist's Guide), £9.99 (Candidate's Workbook).



*Reviewed by Phil Cunnah*

**T***ransformed in Christ* (TIC) is a new “programme of evangelisation and catechesis to prepare young people for Confirmation”. The course provides a clear and comprehensive structure that does not compromise its quality of teaching in an effort to be relevant to young people. In fact, TIC is a significant contribution to parish renewal nationwide and will have people looking out for further contributions from the writer, Hannah Vaughan-Spruce, in the future.

### Meeting the challenges

To understand this programme and the intentions of its author, it is important to understand the context. The sacrament of Confirmation has been a pastoral challenge to priests and catechists for many years. Remarkably, there are some who would claim it is a sacrament in need of a theology. Cynically, others would nickname it the “sacrament of exit” due to the large numbers of teens who lapse after receiving the sacrament

and, unnervingly, there is still debate about the most appropriate age for its reception. In consequence, it is important for priests and catechists to find a programme that can meet all these challenges. With TIC, Hannah Vaughan-Spruce has provided one.

The course contains 22 well-planned sessions that are orthodox, engaging and comprehensive. They cover the mystery of God and the dignity of human beings, salvation in Jesus Christ, the sacraments and living out the faith. Included in these sessions is an apologetic for very current topics such as the existence of God and the presence of the soul as the distinguishing factor between humans and other creatures. Each session includes references to the recently published *Youcat* enabling candidates to build upon the work they do each week.

### Video

A great strength of this programme is the large number of short video clips Vaughan-Spruce has gathered together

that can be accessed on her website ([www.transformedinchrist.com](http://www.transformedinchrist.com)). These are used in each session as a more familiar means of communication for modern young people who are used to short, poignant messages. In addition, her design for the Candidates' Workbook is a wonderful combination of the *Youcat* layout and religious artwork, both ancient and new, that wonderfully captures the imagination. This is a quality resource that any young person would be fascinated by using and proud of owning.

Twenty-two sessions is quite a lot longer than most Confirmation preparations, but this is part of the approach TIC has for candidates. As part of the programme, candidates are encouraged to write a journal which helps them to understand and deepen the journey represented by this preparation. Time is also allotted for candidates to have one-on-one sessions where they can talk about their spiritual life and perhaps any difficulties experienced. Hence, the programme aims to be a holistic formation, not just an orthodox regurgitation of the catechism. Included in this formation is Vaughan-Spruce's recognition that evangelisation must play an important role in preparation for the sacrament.

### Evangelisation before catechesis

In contrast to other courses, TIC begins with an Evangelisation Retreat. This is an important part of its contribution to

the renewal of parish catechesis and a sign that she has integrated significant contemporary thought on this subject. Users of TIC will quickly become familiar with the name Sherry Weddell and her book *Forming Intentional Disciples*. In this book, Weddell explains that parish formation programmes have been putting the cart before the horse by sacramentalising the unevangelised. Drawing wisdom from the General Directory for Catechesis and Pope St John Paul II's *Catechesi Tradendae*, she highlights the need for an earlier phase in a person's conversion to Christ before catechesis. This phase or moment is evangelisation, when a person hears the message of Jesus and has the opportunity to accept that message for themselves. Weddell argues persuasively that this moment has been lacking in a lot of catechesis and that it has been a major factor in the swathes of lapsation seen in the western church. Vaughan-Spruce's inclusion of this thought in TIC in the form of the evangelisation retreat makes this a fresh and powerful programme. However, as more is included, more is expected.

Perhaps the biggest challenge presented in TIC is the expectation placed upon the catechists themselves. The programme is presented in two parts, the aforementioned Candidate's Workbook and the Catechist's Guide. This guide provides the catechists with all the information they need to run the course. It plans every session down to the final minute, contains helpful

advice for working with young people and includes an inspiring section on the “mission of the Catechist”. At 430 pages, it is vast and, perhaps, a daunting read. For those parishes where catechesis is done by volunteers who work full-time and have families, this could present an obstacle to its implementation if it is not presented appropriately.

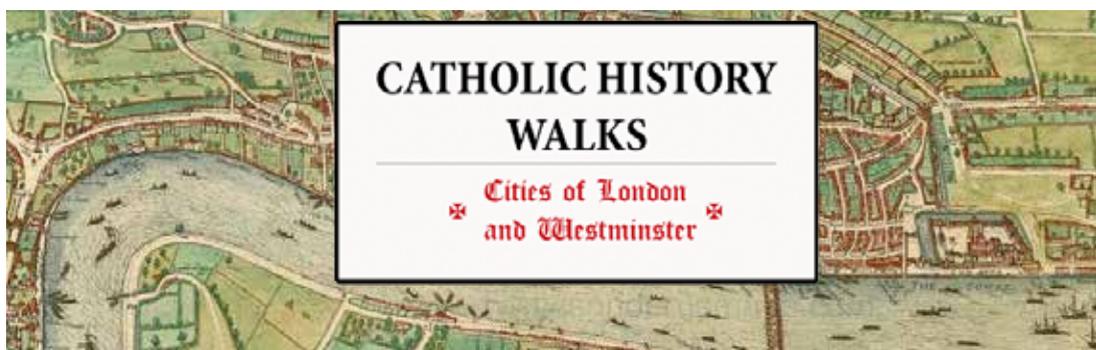
### Faithful and contemporary

In recent times, the language of personal encounter has become more fashionable, both in works of theology and in the thought of recent popes. This language could be open to misunderstanding if not rooted in the Tradition and the life of the Church. *Transformed in Christ* makes a significant contribution to this theology by recognising that the message of the

Gospel must be presented in a faithful and contemporary manner, appropriate to the listener and by people who are themselves wholly committed disciples of Jesus. As such, Vaughan-Spruce has produced a tried and tested programme for Confirmation that provides an answer to some of the challenges found in catechesis generally, and the sacrament of Confirmation, specifically. Its comprehensiveness, however, has the potential either to transform a parish’s approach to catechesis and discipleship or to be a mountain some might struggle to climb. Consequently, TIC challenges parishes to try a new way that echoes Jesus’ words to Peter, “Put out into the deep.” Those who take up the invitation will not be disappointed.

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*Fr Phil Cunnah is a priest of the Middlesbrough Diocese, recently ordained and serving as assistant priest at Middlesbrough Cathedral.*



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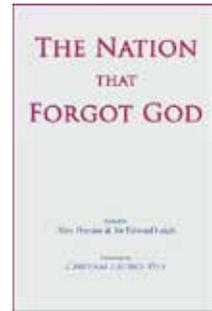
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# A conflict over the heart and soul of our civilisation

*The Nation that Forgot God*, edited by Edward Leigh and Alex Haydon, Gracewing, 280pp, £12.99.

*Reviewed by Peter Smith*



When asked by media what his greatest achievement had been as Prime Minister, David Cameron replied that it was the introduction of same-sex marriage. His political obituaries repeated this claim frequently; it was the only policy Jeremy Corbyn congratulated him on at his last Prime Minister's Questions.

Like it or not, there's a culture war afoot. The conflict was recognised in the United States many decades ago and spread here soon after. Some battlegrounds are familiar: abortion, euthanasia, the importance of marriage, the notion of every child growing up with both a mummy and a daddy, or the advocacy of a personal freedom untrammelled up until the point at which its exercise impinges on that of another (unless it is an unborn child, of choice). Others, less so: the rising intolerance of anyone less than enthusiastic about gay rights, for instance, or the social prominence of transgenderism, and the twisting and curtailment of the ideal of free speech.

## Catastrophic social consequences

In this myriad dispute, this collection of essays is a set of principles for those who would call themselves social conservatives. The essays find a common twine across the skirmishes: the decline in religiosity in Britain and the West. The revised version of an edition first published in 2009, it is subtitled "A chorus of challenge to the secular establishment". In the authors' collective view, as "every major institution" has become "dominated by secular humanists for decades", the social consequences have been "catastrophic".

Broadly, blame is laid on three causes of decline: the loss of religion at a personal level, where taking responsibility for individual actions has been supplanted by blame on others; the relegation of religion in the public square, with a corresponding decline in social cohesion; and the twin threats to tolerance, that essential prerequisite for a virtuous body-politic, posed by atheism, both rabid and chronic, on the one hand, and extremism, especially radical Islam, on the other.

The authors are mostly Christian, with one Jew and one Muslim too. Some are extremely well-known in conservative circles and beyond: Professor Sir Roger Scruton, Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, and the writer Alexander Boot. Unsurprisingly, given the editor is a prominent Catholic Member of Parliament (and my former boss), Catholic clerics feature prominently: Cardinals George Pell and Vincent Nichols, Bishop Philip Egan and Abbot Aidan Bellenger, former Prior of Downside Abbey.

A word of warning: none of the essays are an easy read, and some are littered with literary, historical or philosophical references (although, unlike some of Pope Benedict's works, no quotations remain, untranslated, in the original, non-Latin text). But, for their insights, it is worth persevering.

### Systematic repudiation

Take Roger Scruton's text, originally a speech to the Catholic University of Milan. "Domine, quo vadis?" asked St Peter of an apparition of Jesus as he fled the Roman authorities, a question – where are you going? – that Our Lord turned back at the apostle, as He does to us. Scruton originally gave the lecture shortly before Pope Benedict's Regensburg Address, but many of its points remain valid (and indeed appear prescient) today. He writes of the "emptiness" of the political project of modernity, in the stronghold of life governed by webs of bureaucracy, legislative powers "stolen

from us" and national loyalties "cast aside and trampled on". Scruton points explicitly to the then-proposed European Constitution, a "systematic repudiation" of Europe's Christian heritage. This will all sound very familiar to anyone who voted Leave in the Referendum.

Scruton charts the cultural damage of unrestrained mass economic migration, and radically different vision of Islam, with its inherent difficulties of dividing temporal from spiritual power, that is growing in influence across the Continent. As the Arab Spring and rise of Isis have shown, Islam indeed has a terrible crisis of political philosophy, and Scruton could not have anticipated the millions of migrants who have fled the wars in Iraq and Syria and settled from Iceland to Greece.

Scruton links directly the innovations of freedom and tolerance, which were birthed from Christian notions of civil society, to Europe's own loss of identity and its regression into spiritual, intellectual and physical flabbiness. The antidote, he concludes, lies in the acquisition of personal virtue by imitation, as Aristotle suggested. Role models must stand out as exemplars, par excellence, of charity, humility and forgiveness, to demonstrate to the people what a good person looks like.

I think it is fair to conclude that anyone seeking practical advice should steer clear, as this book certainly isn't a policy manifesto. It is instead an elegy for a lost Christendom, and some of the historical window-dressing is, to my mind, suspect.

## The power of religious principles

That said, the voice of Cassandra sounds throughout, but not without the gift of Pandora's Box. An Anglican Canon, Peter Williams, explains crisply how the abolition of slavery in Britain came about by men, 'taught by no professors and illustrated by no examples', who were motivated above all by an intense desire to put their Christian belief into practical effect. The hope, he writes, is that we recall "the power that moral and religious principles had when taken up by committed people who were

prepared to act in the world", and the examples of William Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect, who "served in this way because they were convinced that God had given them a purpose which was to work for the good of others, even when there was no obvious consequential gain to themselves – save that of knowing that they had done what was right by bringing to an end a system that was wrong".

Readers of this book, and indeed this review, may take heed of this call to arms in a conflict over the heart and soul of our civilisation, into which we are all flung.

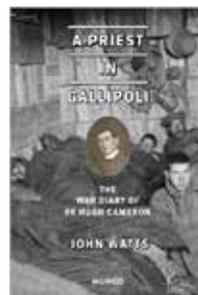
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*Peter Smith is a barrister practising media and commercial law.*

## A priest amidst horror

*A Priest in Gallipoli: The War Diary of Father Hugh Cameron* edited by John Watts, Mungo Books, 96pp, n.p.

*Reviewed by Chris Keeble*



This diary of a First World War army chaplain, Fr Hugh Cameron, is a remarkable book, especially as the editor, John Watts, had taken part in the Falklands Campaign and had also made a particular study of the Gallipoli campaign while at Sandhurst. His introduction gives a helpful biography of Fr Hugh as well as setting the historical scene.

Hugh Cameron, born in Inveroy in the Highlands, felt the call to the priesthood

early and worked as a priest in the Hebrides. In 1914 he volunteered his services to the war-effort, and his diary opens with his loyalty to his family unit of the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Lovat Scouts, part of the Highland Mounted Brigade. The ill-fated Gallipoli Campaign, launched in April 1915 by British, French and the Australian and New Zealand troops, was the biggest amphibious operation in history. Hugh's diary tracks his experience between September and

December 1915 during the bitter battle against the Turks.

### Padres in the fire trenches

Watts gives a useful insight into the emerging British Army's chaplaincy service. At the start of the war there were 117 chaplains but by the end this had risen to 3,500. The Church of England ministers were called to "improvise", focusing their ministry at the rear dressing stations or at fixed locations, such as the reserve trenches or Battalion HQs. The Catholic padres, on the other hand, were permitted to go right forward to the fire trenches and were "less ambivalent", given that the "set and familiar liturgies that they provided were more likely to offer men a sense of objectivity, clarity and security in times of extreme danger than improvised prayer or counsel could give". In a more class-less way (especially in a close-knit Highland Regiment), "they were able to exercise their true priestly vocation to men facing death daily, through the Mass, confession and last rites".

By mid-summer 1915 the Gallipoli campaign was at stalemate. It was into this situation that Fr Hugh arrived at Suvla Bay in September where "survival was now the only attainable goal" with withdrawal being the risky but better operational option. His diary tracks the rising sense of combat with snipers, the presence of shrapnel in "rest" trenches and his initial exposure to dealing with his wounded, with the touching regret of

losing track of "his men", evacuated to the anonymity of the hospital ships.

### Moral staying power

The tension rises inexorably with the impact of diarrhoea and then the more serious dysentery. The grim realities become evident in the trivial: Mass numbers are restricted to avoid "bunching" targets for the Turkish artillery; the terrors of the fire trench are revealed; the lack of bravery of certain individuals; the reporting of casualties becoming "casual"; the personal effort to help his fellow padre, Fr Day, obviously suffering from shell-shock; the modest Mass in a fire trench with just a stole and a biscuit-box altar; the lack of sleep; the filth, the mud; the rain; the suffering; all under fire from snipers and artillery.

His contentment at avoiding the command structure, emerges, as does his loyalty to his flock: "This thing can only be worked properly by remaining with the men". He waives the Catholic "rules" in giving out Communion. He gradually realises that it is "not strength and muscle but moral staying power that counts in this business". His love for his Faith is remarkable: "... no use worrying as to the future. That is in the Hands of God Who will give us the strength to last out if we ask it". His prayer is humble: "Hope I shan't fail".

### "One Great Consolation is the Men"

The fragility of his life is recorded as he reports the constant injuries and deaths

and his own "near misses" that "nearly got me". Yet he maintains his morale despite the sickness, injury, death, weather, mud and the reduction of numbers affecting Mass attendance. The loss of his devoted batman is poignantly sad. This contrasts with the delightful improvement of his spirits with the simple experience of a bath and tea on the hospital ship where he admits "I would love a job of that kind & RC chaplain is badly wanted there. However there isn't enough of us". He remains in the front line.

He pulls no punches with his reporting: low morale; massive sickness; poor discipline in the trenches, even cowardice in the face of the enemy. It is clear his own strength and patience is failing too, though characteristically understated: "it was a bit nerve wracking". Despite all these sapping influences on his own strength of character and will, he continues to do his duty and serve the Catholic men. The continuous bombardment is now routine, and he undertakes Mass, despite its effects on becoming "fatalistic". He reflects on the spiritual attitude of men he serves: "No temptations, the world and its attractions are gone and men are face to face with God and they realise it".

He slowly succumbs to the terrors and privations, the exhaustion and the sickness, the burden of his service and the trials on his strength of will. His health is deteriorating, affected by the cold weather and the inadequate clothing. At the same time, his resilience and strength of character become

a wonderful example, and he finds encouragement from the soldiers: "one great consolation I have here is the men". Those he serves serve him. His determination is challenged by rumours and counter rumours, orders and counter orders. On to these demoralising weaknesses in command and the absence of "mission clarity" is loaded the impact of rain, flooding, thunder, blizzards of sleet and snow, freezing, and frostbite. And as the casualties increase, discipline breaks down.

His fellow chaplain Fr Moth finally leaves, and Fr Hugh is now alone and physically infirm: "steady evening temperature now and feel very rotten". His morale becomes very low: "None of us would be sorry to leave this damned hole of a grave yard where so many brave men have fallen in vain". Yet he keeps going: "Lord give me the grace to do my duty like a man". "I feel rottenly ill"... "am afraid the end is near". On 11th December he collapsed and was put on a hospital ship. He records: "Felt ashamed to have to leave the boys. All the same I could not have held on another night". He is uncertain about "be[ing] sent straight home or unloaded at Malta". "Still too bloody sick to care". The Allied forces are withdrawn a week later.

More than anything, this diary is a vivid, ruthlessly honest record of a wonderful priest fulfilling his vocation as a "miracle-worker" able, amidst the most acute horrors of humanity's inhumanity, to turn bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. In such a way God's

mercy prevails. Father Hugh Cameron must have a special place beyond heaven's gate, in the peace and love of

God, surrounded by the souls he served and saved.

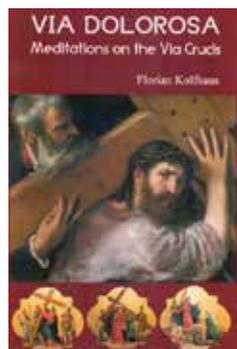
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*Chris Keeble served in the Parachute Regiment. He is now a Fellow of Harris Manchester College and lectures in business ethics.*

## A life-changing way of the cross

*Via Dolorosa, Meditations on the Via Crucis* by Florian Kolffhaus, Gracewing, 66pp, £5.99.

*Reviewed by Bryan Storey*



We need dynamic spiritual truths to support and carry us so that we are able to live our lives more fully despite whatever painful problems may come. As a youngster, and indeed time and again throughout my life, I was inspired by Our Saviour in a way nobody else could assist me. Now I find marvellous help every day in learning to cope with the problems that come during these days when we need to try gradually to give back to God the wonderful gifts with which He blesses us during our lives, be it in walking, conversation, sport, study, examinations or whatever. His dynamic life and death, in each and every event are always salvific. For me personally the perennial treasures were especially brought to life in that outstanding spiritual work, *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis.

### A loving route

So you will readily understand that a book of Meditations on the Way of the Cross, called *Via Dolorosa*, the way of suffering, has the immediate possibility of being something which I would find an inspiration. This book of meditations written by Monsignor Florian Kolffhaus, of the Regensburg (German) Diocese, a doctor of divinity working in the Vatican Secretariate of State, could from the outset be appealing. In fact he has written and published a number of spiritual books including *Totus Tuus Maria* and *Personal Consecration to Our Lady*. Yet so much more, this short book is a gem of positive spiritual reflections. It takes us right away from our natural negativity to a loving route where it is convincingly demonstrated not only that no suffering is meaningless, but that

suffering rightly understood helps us in no small measure to transform so that we are able to convert into the outstanding reality of love. This is the essence of the Redeemer's teaching. In these 66 pages, we find an inspiring Preface followed by realistic meditations on each of the 14 Stations of the Cross. This is preceded and followed by a prayer.

### The answer in the Gospels

It is natural for us in these days of falling vocations, lower Mass attendances, closures of religious institutions and lack of interest in the religious message to seek ways of trying to reverse the trend with the help of God's grace. Many attempts have been made, yet the impact is much less than what had been hoped for if not disappointing. It strikes me strongly that we have the answer to the sufferings of societies which are taken up with much reliance on drugs and alcohol and varying distortions of sexual behaviour along with ridiculously high percentage of marriage breakdown, not to mention the pursuit of practices making a mockery of marriage itself. The answer is transparent in the Gospels of the world's Saviour. Yet this only becomes significant when presented with deeper conviction and apparent difference observable in our daily lives. We have never to forget that truth underlined by Pope Emeritus Benedict that we only come to a reasonable understanding of life's meaning when viewed in and through God.

### Sharing our sufferings with the Saviour

For this, there is normally no short or quick transformation but a definite and real enduring gradual change in the lives of us believers. Monsignor Kolffhaus makes very clear how to be open to this. Time and again in this book of meditations, the author's conviction becomes clear. For Christianity's inspiring and unique contribution is that it is the religion of the Cross. In his quotations from Scripture, the author makes it abundantly clear that the Saviour does not offer us freedom from suffering in this life but that by growing into union with Him, we learn to cope with temptation and to avoid sin, as we learn positively to share our sufferings with Him. In consequence of our faithful discipleship, we rise again in the great and outstanding graces transmitted to us by His Resurrection.

### Help and strength each day

I do not hesitate to tell that I find this book quite brilliant. This Vatican doctor of divinity is obviously a God-centred person who has lived through events related to the Way of the Cross. The book has the possibility of being a life-changer. The problem of suffering is our biggest challenge. It is in learning to cope with problems especially involving family, neighbours and friends in all our lives that we spiritually mature and begin to find the joy of the Resurrection. The author just faces it all in marvellous

dialogues which make it all the more positive somewhat after the fashion of the Little Way and Mother Teresa of Calcutta. I'll just mention one fascinating sentence: "Oftentimes, we must pass through a painful road to find God to discover that all the other ways in life were dead-ends". More of this kind of thing readers

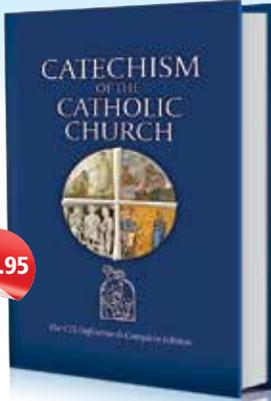
will discover for themselves as they read and meditate the "Via Dolorosa". I very much hope many will purchase this book and perhaps give a copy to suffering members of their family or friends. I pray that more and more will find something of what I find to help and give strength each day.

*Father Bryan Storey is Priest in charge of Tintagel, Cornwall Catholic Mission.*

# Got Questions?

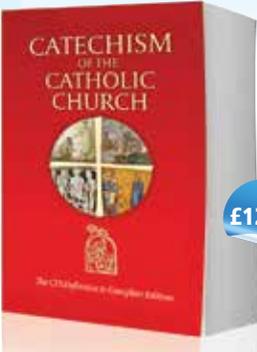


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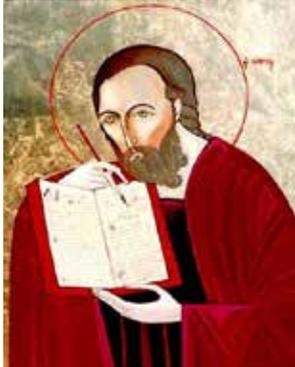
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