

# faith

Promoting A New Synthesis Of Faith And Reason

Editorial: *May, Mary and the Church in our time*

Mark Higgins on the FAITH Movement and a vocation to the priesthood

A special award at Westminster

Peter Stravinskaskas on *Humanae Vitae* and the Scriptures

Kerri & Ryan Christopher on Evangelising in an Age of Identity Confusion

Holloway on the Gospel of St John

Crossword by Aurora Borealis

## Book Reviews

*Fr Philip Miller* on essays about the relationship between science and religion

*Fr Guy de Gaynesford* on a vivid snapshot of the early church

*Pia Matthews* on a Catholic-Jungian view of the recollected life

*Andrew Nash* on Newman, secularist education and the church



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## Walsingham

Where the pilgrims, long ago,  
Anxious for Our Lady's care,  
Left their offerings of prayer,  
Seeking solace here below;  
In a latter age, we too  
Now foregather, at this place,  
Guided by the gift of grace,  
Hoping faith will spring anew;  
And again our land be shown  
Mary's dowry, and so known.

A.Hill

## Contents

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### 1 EDITORIAL

---

5 A Journey to the priesthood  
by Father Mark Higgins

---

9 Evangelising in an Age of Identity Confusion  
by Kerri & Ryan Christopher

---

12 Parliament and the pro-life movement  
Interview by Joanna Bogle

---

16 Humanae Vitae and the Scriptures  
by Fr Peter Stravinskas

---

19 Holloway on...  
The Gospel of St John Part II

---

25 CROSSWORD by Aurora Borealis

---

### 26 Book Reviews

*The Believing Scientist* by Stephen M. Barr, reviewed by Philip Miller

*Early Christianity* by Paul Haffner, reviewed by Guy de Gaynesford

*The Virgin Eye* by Robin Daniels, reviewed by Pia Matthews

*An Aristocracy of Exalted Spirits* by David P. Delio,  
reviewed by Andrew Nash

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# Mary and the Church

*"May is the month of Mary/Bright is the sun above..."*

So runs the hymn. But, as Bl. John Henry Newman noted in his *Meditations* on the Church's seasons, in Britain "We have often a bleak, inclement May". However as he went on to point out, even if the month is cold, it holds the *promise* of warmer weather, of sunshine and the summer ahead.

Marian devotion was deemed rather unfashionable in the Western Church for a while in the 1970s, but it never really lost its popular appeal, and today flourishes anew: vast crowds visit Lourdes annually, the Fatima centenary saw pilgrim numbers there soaring – led by the Holy Father – and in England the shrine at Walsingham, restored at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century draws large groups each summer in this second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup>. The Rosary remains a defining aspect of Catholicism: St John Paul taught a new generation its value and added a new set of Mysteries which now accompany pilgrims as they make their way to Chartres, to Guadalupe, to Carfin, to Knock...or through the streets of London's Soho or of Liverpool or of a Kent village...

## The fullness of Christ's divinity

If we are tempted to think of Marian devotion as a merely sentimental matter, the history of the Church teaches otherwise. Mary has always been the guarantor of Christian orthodoxy, and especially of authentic Christology. In the year 431, in proclaiming Mary to be Mother of God – and not just mother of Christ – the Church affirmed the fullness of Christ's divinity.

*If we are tempted to think of Marian devotion as a merely sentimental matter, the history of the Church teaches otherwise*

As Cardinal Ratzinger – later Benedict XVI – noted "It is, moreover in direct service to faith in Christ—not, therefore, primarily out of devotion to the Mother—that the Church has proclaimed her Marian dogmas: first that of her perpetual virginity and divine motherhood and then, after a long period of maturation and reflection, those of her Immaculate Conception and bodily Assumption into heavenly glory. These dogmas protect the original faith in Christ as true God and true man: two natures in a single Person. They also secure the indispensable eschatological tension by pointing to Mary's Assumption as the immortal destiny that awaits us all. And they also protect the faith—threatened today—in God the Creator, who (and this, among other things, is the meaning of the truth of the perpetual virginity of Mary, more than ever not understood today) can freely intervene also in matter."

He also noted that Mary links Christians with the people of the Old Covenant: "In her very person as a Jewish girl become the mother of the Messiah, Mary binds together, in a living and indissoluble way, the old and the new People of God, Israel and Christianity, synagogue and church. She is, as it were, the connecting link without which the Faith (as is happening today) runs the risk of losing its balance by either forsaking the New Testament for the Old or dispensing with the Old. In her, instead, we can live the unity of sacred Scripture in its entirety."

## Special message

And there is a message for women, of special significance for today: "With her destiny, which is at one and the same time that of Virgin and of Mother, Mary continues to project a light upon that which the Creator intended for women in every age, ours included, or, better said, perhaps precisely in our time, in which—as we know—the very essence of femininity is threatened. Through her virginity and her motherhood, the mystery of woman receives a very lofty destiny from which she cannot be torn away."

Mary has long been understood as being a "type" of the Church. Her song in the *Magnificat* is the song of the Church, her trust in God and full obedience to His will is and must be the essence of the Church at all times.

*"And the tempest-tossed Church, all her eyes are on Thee"* – the hymn "O purest of creatures" expresses an important truth – that in times of difficulty Christians instinctively seek Mary's help.

## Marian devotion

Recent Popes have all been notable for their Marian devotion. St John Paul and Benedict XVI have already been mentioned; Pope – soon to be Saint – Paul VI named Mary as Mother of the Church, and Pope Francis has now, just this March, added this title into the universal calendar of the Church. It will be celebrated worldwide for the first time this year, on the first Monday after Pentecost.

*Paul VI named Mary as Mother of the Church, and Pope Francis has now, just this March, added this title into the universal calendar of the Church.*

Pope Francis, early in his pontificate, made known his personal devotion to Mary under her title "Untier of knots", as depicted in a Bavarian painting.

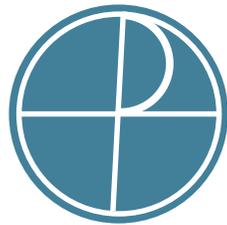
## Knots to be untangled

There are plenty of knots to be untangled in the Church and in the world in 2018. Too often, there can be a tendency to relish the difficulties: there is a strain in Catholicism that rather enjoys gloom. Often this relishing can take mildly comic forms. There was a spate of end-times-are-nigh in the late 1990s as the Millennium drew near, which sometimes merged with the they-haven't-told-us-the-real-secret-of-Fatima theme which dissipated after 2000 when Pope John Paul II revealed the final and complete message. And in every century there have been false visionaries predicting the end of the world, each in turn passing the sell-by date.

## Guide

Mary is the “guide of the wanderer here below”, as another popular hymn expresses it. In 2018, the Pope and the whole Church here on earth can trustfully place trust in that guidance with fresh heart: her new feast as Mother of the Church falls, on this first time of celebration, in this her month of May. As Cardinal Sarah puts it, announcing the feast as Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments: “if we want to grow and to be filled with the love of God, it is necessary to plant our life firmly on three great realities: the Cross, the Eucharist, and the Mother of God.”

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there have been false  
visionaries predicting  
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### *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.

## A Journey to the priesthood

*Father Mark Higgins tells how the FAITH Movement helped him to discover his vocation to the priesthood*



The first instance at which I began to realise that *Faith* was more than just an after school club particular to my secondary school was when one afternoon, at about age 14, I was hustled into the *Faith* room with half a dozen other boys from my class, only to discover an assembly line of production set up for the packing and distribution of a magazine, which, rather intriguingly, bore the name and logo of our school society.

### Magazines

Over the next five years I probably helped pack, address, and send hundreds of these magazines, and did so rather willingly, because quite often it could mean getting half an hour out of French, Maths, or whatever it might have been on a Wednesday afternoon. I appreciated from that first occasion of packing the *Faith* magazine, that, in fact, our little after school club that often seemed to me just like an occasion for schoolboy shenanigans, albeit in the presence of a guest speaker (and with an abundance of tea and toast), was really part of sometime ‘big’, with its own glossy, well presented journal.

### School

Over those early years at The John Fisher School I attended the *Faith* society off and on, but was fairly frequent by the time I entered sixth form. I got to know the names and faces of many priests who are still very much involved in the movement, and who, very generously, travelled to our school club in order to speak to us on different aspects of the Catholic Faith, and in a manner infused by the Faith ‘vision’. I can remember feeling deeply impressed as I heard the educational backgrounds and academic qualifications of a number of these priests. It struck me that many of them were highly qualified in scientific fields and yet, as it initially seemed to me, for some reason, were offering their talents and their intellects to the service of God, and even for the benefit of a group of worn out and often distracted schoolboys on the threshold of their weekend.

## Summer Session

In my case, in spite of attending *Faith* to some extent in those early years at John Fisher, it wasn't until I was in my first year of Sixth Form that I allowed the content of these talks to really reach down into my heart, and perhaps, for the first time, properly into my head. It was at that time, when, as a result of the encouragement of a good friend of mine, I agreed to accompany him to attend the Faith Summer Session.

Certainly, my motivations for attending the Summer Session were very mixed, with the social dimension well eclipsing in my mind the catechetical and religious dimensions. But in the providence of God, He had planned that attending this five day conference would be the instrument through which He would bring what was dead within me back to life, and even to enkindle in my heart the first sparks of a vocation to the priesthood.

*in the providence of Almighty God, He had planned that attending this five day conference would be the instrument through which He would bring what was dead within me back to life*

## Important ideas

As my friend and I explored the auditorium at Woldingham School an hour or so before the conference started, I was amazed at the grandeur of the venue, admittedly, as an adult it now seems rather insignificant, but for a seventeen year old from a comprehensive school it impressed upon me even more that *Faith* was a movement well beyond the confines of my school, with important ideas, perhaps almost worth considering just as much as the young ladies who would be attending the event, and the social time with others of my own age.



FAITH Summer session

## "Tabernacled amongst us"

Over the years I have spoken to a number of others who attended the Summer Session of 2003. Many of us attended that conference at varying degrees of lapsation, or of confusion,

or lack of confidence in our own Faith, and from those with whom I have discussed this, it seems to me that the Holy Spirit was particularly active over those few days. Many conversions that have proven deep and lasting were forged over those days, indeed, a number of vocations to the sacred priesthood find their origin in those few days, my own being one of them. The theme of the conference that year was on 'Christ our Eucharist', and it was as one particular priest outlined insights of the Faith movement on the Word made Flesh, born in Bethlehem, whose flesh is truly made present anew at Mass, and then 'tabernacled amongst us', that according to the biblical phrase, 'my eyes were opened'. The truth of what he was saying seemed evident, I received a tremendous grace of conversion.

*Many conversions that have proven deep and lasting were forged over those days*

## Experience

My experience is hardly singula. The Faith movement has brought countless young people to realise the truth of Jesus Christ, truly present on the altar, as real as He was when in Our Blessed Mother's arms. This is a doctrine not only taught at Faith conferences, but lived out there through the reverent offering of Mass, something which seems to deepen year upon year. Love and esteem for the mysteries of the sacred liturgy and of Our Lord made present in these mysteries is surely one of the most clear factors in the climate that so effectively nurtures priestly vocations at the winter and summer gatherings.

## Rosary

It was also on that conference that I gained a new appreciation for the Holy Rosary, indeed, a first appreciation. Each one of the participants was given a rosary and a copy of St. John Paul II's beautiful exhortation, *Rosarium virginis Mariae*, we said the rosary collectively, and that first genuine encounter with Our Lady's sacramental left a lasting mark on my spiritual life. Too often I think *Faith* is falsely characterised as if it were solely orientated towards the intellectual, but once one knows more fully he may begin to love more fully - that first conference I attended affected my entire person, I was led to encounter Jesus Christ as both Lord of the Cosmos but also as my own personal Lord.

*I was led to encounter Jesus Christ as both Lord of the Cosmos but also as my own personal Lord.*

## Theological certainty

Following that first conference I began to pick up and read a lot of those *Faith* publications which quietly inhabited the back of the school chapel. I wanted to know my faith more and I was deeply attracted by the theological certainty, indeed, the determinism, which is integral to the *Faith* vision: that Christ and the salvation He offers is not an add on to nature or history, but that His incarnation was predestined in God's charity from the very first moment of creation.

I ventured my first passage through Holloway's great tome. *Catholicism*, back in those days, it was certainly a tough journey, but not without deep rewards through the marvellous insights contained in Fr. Holloway's work. The handwriting and underlining in blue biro from my first read through of *Catholicism* still stands out. I was clearly taken by Fr Holloway's defence of the unchanging Catholic faith within a relativistic and agnostic society, and this acted as a springboard for reading further apologetics, and wanting to defend my faith.



Woldingham School

### Vocation

Certainly in the early 2000s, and even to this day, there is no other movement within the Catholic Church in England and Wales so committed to the task of forming young people as apologists and equipping them to encounter and engage with a secular, scientific society. Vocations don't emerge among young people who are ignorant of their faith, or who have no fire to share these truths. The FAITH Movement's commitment to apologetics, indeed, a confident apologetics, was a strong influence in fostering my own desire to give myself completely and ministerially to the evangelising mission Christ entrusted to His apostles.

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Father Mark Higgins, ordained in 2016, is a priest of the diocese of Southwark.

## Evangelising in an Age of Identity Confusion

*Kerri & Ryan Christopher announce the launch of the Humanum Institute*

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Identity is the question of the age.

In 2000, Joseph Ratzinger spoke these words to Catechists and Religion Teachers: "Human life cannot be realised by itself. Our life is an open question, an incomplete project, still to be brought to fruition and realised. Each man's fundamental question is: How will this be realised—becoming man? How does one learn the art of living? Which is the path toward happiness?"<sup>1</sup>

How *does* one learn the art of living? How does one learn to be fully human? In previous centuries, family, country, even ethnic and religious culture may have been the formators of youth. Today, however, the groups which formerly lent identity to the young are no longer in a stable place. Young people now face the very difficult task of trying to construct their own identities, grasping at ideas from any and all sources.

Questions of sexuality, personhood, rights, relationships, and personal identity lie at the heart of a young person's search for happiness and meaning. Much of secular culture offers a narrative of self-worth based on productivity, success, social media presence, sexual prowess, or even rebellion against these things.

"To evangelise means...to teach the art of living," explained Ratzinger.

### "Who am I?"

Through decades of work with young people in schools, universities, chaplaincies and retreats, we have seen that the core, most immediate question of young people today is not necessarily, "who is God?" but rather, "who am I?"

Evangelizers now face the choice of branding millennials as egocentric, or embracing their questions, engaging with them on their search for happiness and meaning, knowing that, as John Paul II told young people in that same year 2000, "It is Jesus in fact that you seek when you dream of happiness...it is he who urges you to shed the masks of a false life."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers Jubilee of Catechists, 12 December 2000. [https://www.ewtn.com/new\\_evangelization/ratzinger.htm](https://www.ewtn.com/new_evangelization/ratzinger.htm)

<sup>2</sup>John Paul II, 15th World Youth Day Vigil of Prayer, Tor Vergata, Saturday, 19 August 2000. [https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2000/jul-sep/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_20000819\\_gmg-veglia.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2000/jul-sep/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20000819_gmg-veglia.html)

What does this engagement look like? We've seen snatches of evangelical zeal across movements, with young people taken in by the beauty of a teaching like John Paul II's "Theology of the Body," or the Christian community of friendship to be found in regular retreats and prayer groups. These are both beautiful and necessary.

But what we have found lacking is any sort of systematic engagement with the deeper questions of Christian anthropology. What is it to be human? How does a Christian view of reality affect our understanding of what it means to be a person? What is the role of freedom in my life? How does my sexuality relate to my identity?

*What is it to be human? How does a Christian view of reality affect our understanding of what it means to be a person? What is the role of freedom in my life? How does my sexuality relate to my identity?*

### Struggle

We believe that a key to the New Evangelization lies in engaging with the core questions of identity that young people struggle with today, because these questions can either open their hearts to the truth of the gospel or close them off from its healing power. A young man who believes that his homosexual tendencies define his identity and value in life, for example, is not open to dialogue with a community he perceives to be rejecting him at core. A young woman whose self-narrative is formed through the identity politics of feminism cannot bring herself to identify with an institution which she perceives to be based on radical inequality. On the other hand, that same young man may find relief in the truth that sexual passions do not define a person, and that young woman may find peace and joy in embracing a worldview in which service of those less fortunate, regardless of their sex, is a mission taken up by all.

To that end, we have recently opened **The Humanum Institute**, dedicated to engaging with the question, "what does it mean to be human?"

### Evangelising mission

Serving the wider evangelising mission of the Church, our work is designed to help overcome an often reductive anthropology which prevents an openness to the truth of human dignity and purpose. Our programmes and consultancy equip Christians with an authentic understanding of the uniqueness of human personhood and personal identity. Through engaging with contemporary questions and challenges, we enable others to learn and teach how the Christian vision of the person is not only true, but liberating. The Humanum Institute works with schools, parishes, seminaries, and chaplaincies, as well as individuals and church movements.

### Major conference

Our first major event is a conference for Catholic educators and formators, "**Understanding Sex and Gender.**" The 2-day, multidisciplinary conference, co-sponsored by Choose Life, Choose Love at St. Patrick's Soho, will be held on **July 13-14 at St. Mary's University, Twickenham.** We will have experts from the fields of philosophy, psychology, spirituality, law, and others to help us gain insight into the Catholic perspective on this challenging topic. It is open to teachers, parents, chaplains, catechists, pastors, and anyone interested in learning more. (sexandgender2018.com)

On the evening of July 13, our Keynote Lecture by priest and psychotherapist Fr. Anthony Doe, "Sexuality, Discipleship, and Evangelisation: *Humanae Vitae* 50 Years Later," will be open to the public.

### Knowledge

Our hope is that the conference helps educators to gain knowledge of and confidence in the truth and beauty of the Church's teaching on the human person in his or her sex, so as to better serve the young people they work with, and help them "teach the art of living" well.



*Kerri Christopher serves as the co-founder and director of the Humanum Institute. After completing her BA and MA in theology, she went to complete an STB and STL from Pontifical University of St. Thomas through the faculty of Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Michigan, focusing on the New Feminism. In 2012, she became the first woman in the world to receive a Licentiate in the New Evangelisation. As part of her doctoral studies at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, she researched the nature of gender and the vocation of woman. She also has extensive experience in teaching the thought of St. John Paul II, systematic theology and issues of sexuality. Her experience of teaching secondary school students and undergraduates convinced her of the need for a greater provision of holistic and faithful Christian anthropology.*



*Ryan Christopher serves as co-founder and consultant to the Humanum Institute. Ryan read history at the University of Cambridge before studying Philosophy at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas and Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. His passion for Christian anthropology is the result of years of experience in the field of teaching and evangelisation. Ryan held senior posts at Ampleforth College, York, and St Aloysius' College, Glasgow as well as teaching in the state sector and private tuition. He now serves as the Senior Policy Officer for ADF International's London office.*

# Parliament and the pro-life movement

*Joanna Bogle meets members of the Parliamentary all-party pro-life group at a special event in Westminster*

The Houses of Parliament look strange at present, with massive scaffolding blocking off the gothic spires and Big Ben's clock face obliterated under the great network of metal and wooden struts. Inside, it was business-as-usual and people were gathering in a Committee Room for a major event with the Parliamentary pro-life group: Lord Alton, Baroness O'Loan, and Fiona Bruce MP were attending the presentation of the 2018 Westminster Award in a Committee Room in the Palace of Westminster. The Editor of FAITH magazine was among those invited to the event.

The Award is presented annually to a group or individual working to uphold "human rights, human life and human dignity". It is administered by the Right to Life movement and was launched in honour of Phyllis Bowman, who was a leading figure in opposing abortion from the late 1960s onwards and who died in 2012. Previous recipients have included Chen Guangcheng, a blind Chinese human rights lawyer, and Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow of the charity Mary's Meals.

The 2018 Award went to a young Catholic, Katie Ascough, who was ousted as a student leader in Dublin for taking a stand for freedom of speech, insisting that the pro-abortion message was not the only one that should be allowed, and that the law should be obeyed.

Katie was elected President of the Student Union at Dublin University - her particular concerns were student accommodation and welfare. When the student union produced a guidebook with information on how to obtain an abortion she became aware that it could be illegal under Irish law and blocked it. For this she was impeached by the Student Union and removed from office.

Lord Alton told FAITH magazine: "Katie Ascough bravely refused to distribute advertising to promote the ending of lives through abortion. She refused to be bullied into breaking Irish law and she courageously upheld the principle of freedom of speech."

*The Award is presented annually to a group or individual working to uphold "human rights, human life and human dignity"*

## Universities

A number of universities across the Western world are now attempting to ban pro-life speakers. At Dublin, Katie joined a "Yes for neutrality" campaign on the question of students' action on Ireland and abortion. She made no secret of the fact that she was opposed to abortion and had been active in student pro-life groups, and made it clear that she felt both sides of the argument should always be heard. Accepting the Westminster Award, she said "University should a place of freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and freedom of association. Fairness, respect for those who don't wish to break the law, and respect for others with different beliefs, are critical to debate and intellectual freedom on campus."



*Katie Ascough with Christopher Whitehouse of Right to Life, and members of the All-Party Parliamentary pro-Life group*

Presenting the Award, Fiona Bruce MP of the All-Party Parliamentary Pro-Life group told us about the background:

"Elected as President of University College Dublin's Student Union in March last year on a platform to improve issues like student mental health and accommodation, Katie was attacked from the beginning of her candidacy for her pro-life views.

"Threats to impeach Katie for her right-to-life convictions went back to her Election, but became a reality when she had a page containing information on abortion access

removed from the Union's Freshers' magazine, 'Winging It', after receiving legal advice that it may have been illegal. As CEO of the Union, Katie would have been legally responsible, and potentially risked a criminal record.

"All this effort shows a woman of strength, of intelligence, of deep principle, and of wonderful witness to societies across the West that badly need to open minds and hearts to the dignity and humanity of unborn children, and for that to happen, to be open to discussion and tolerance, especially in universities."

### All-Party

The all-party Parliamentary pro-life group is not large, but it is dedicated and brings together a range of knowledge and public service. Fiona Bruce MP is a solicitor, born in the Scottish Highlands, and is MP for Congleton. She earlier served for some years as a borough councillor in Warrington. Among her Parliamentary activities has been a planned Bill to make abortion on the grounds of a baby's sex illegal. The measure was rejected in the House of Commons by 292 votes to 201.

*The all-party Parliamentary pro-life group is not large, but it is dedicated and brings together a range of knowledge and public service*

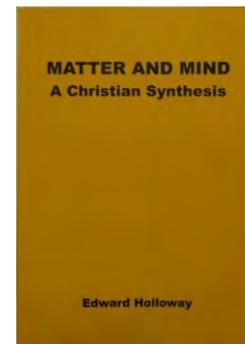
Mrs Bruce is a member of the Evangelical Alliance. She is married with two sons and has been a Member of Parliament since 2010.

### Baroness O'Loan

Baroness (Nuala) O'Loan has been a noted public figure in Northern Ireland and was the first Police Ombudsman, serving from 1999 to 2007. The pro-life group is involved on a range of issues, and Baroness O'Loan has been active in promoting legislation to protect the consciences of medical practitioners who refuse to involve themselves in any way in the taking of human life. She is emphatic that "Reasonable accommodation of conscientious objection is a matter both of liberty and equality: of individual freedom and social inclusion. No one should be coerced by the risk to their careers into violating their conscience, and it is plainly inconsistent with the principles of equality legislation to exclude whole sections of society from areas of medical employment simply because of their moral beliefs".

### Westminster Hall

Following the Westminster Award presentation we gathered in Westminster Hall – site of so many major events in Parliamentary and national life – and grouped for commemorative photographs. It was here, of course, in 1535 that St Thomas More was tried, and here in 2010 that Pope Benedict XVI spoke to a massed gathering of people from Parliament and public life and urged a message of freedom centred on respect for moral truths. A fitting place for a gathering of pro-life campaigners.



## MATTER AND MIND A Christian Synthesis by Edward Holloway

Edited and with an Introduction by Roger Nesbitt

427pp, £15.00

Fr Edward Holloway's masterpiece on science and religion, *Catholicism: A New Synthesis*, has inspired priests, laity and religious since it was first published in 1969. Here now is his original version – never published before – of this profound vision. Written when he was a young priest in the late 1940s, it sets out with freshness and urgency his insight into how the Catholic faith can be presented in a synthesis with the new scientific knowledge of evolution. He addresses the fundamental issues about God, the evolution of the universe and the emergence of human life. The question of human nature – how much is matter and how much is mind? – is answered convincingly. And God's revelation to the world, climaxing in Jesus Christ, is presented in a striking perspective. With his grasp of evolutionary science – which research in the decades since has further confirmed – he argues the philosophical and theological basis which must underpin Christian thought in the modern age.

His friend and fellow founder of the Faith Movement, Fr Roger Nesbitt, has now edited this early text to bring Fr Holloway's thought to a new generation. As atheism grows in the secular West, this synthesis is more urgently needed than ever if the Church is to present the Faith in its fulness to the scientific age.

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*Please send me a copy of Matter and Mind – A Christian Synthesis. I enclose a cheque for £18.30 (£15.00 + £3.30 p&p) to Faith-Keyway Trust.*

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# Humanae Vitae and the Scriptures

*Fifty years since Humanae Vitae: in this anniversary year of a great encyclical, Fr Peter Stravinskis looks at its Scriptural roots*



To hear some people talk, one would get the impression that the prohibition against artificial contraception came out of the blue. However, even a brief review of history reveals a strong and consistent ban on all such activities from the earliest days of the Church in a direct line, right into the twentieth century, with statements to the same effect by Pope Paul VI's three immediate predecessors, as well as Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes*. As a matter of fact, at least as early as 1966, Pope Paul VI himself gave clear signals that the traditional teaching would be reaffirmed. It is likewise worth noting that all the Protestant Reformers held to this teaching, as did all their spiritual descendants, up to the beginning of the twentieth century.

Pope St John Paul II reiterated that case for the teaching of *Humane Vitae* with patience and regularity. Two statements, however, are particularly noteworthy because of their forcefulness. In 1983, the Holy Father declared: "*Contraception is to be judged so profoundly unlawful as never to be, for any reason, justified. To think or to say the contrary is equal to maintaining that in human life, situations may arise in which it is lawful not to recognize God as God.*" (*L'Osservatore Romano*, October 10, 1983, p.7)

In 1987, Pope John Paul II asserted that "*the Church's teaching on contraception does not belong to the category of matter open to free discussion among theologians, Teaching the contrary amounts to leading the moral consciences of spouses into error.*" (*L'Osservatore Romano*, July 6, 1987, p.12) If the polls are correct in observing that more than 80% of Catholic women of child bearing age in the United States ignore this teaching, why not change it, or at least why bother to appear to "beat a dead horse?" Because the truth of the Gospel and the truth about the human person are at stake.

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## Covenant

Very often even people of goodwill find the logic of *Humanae Vitae* difficult to understand. While they know the pronouncements of the Magisterium in this regard, they may feel the teaching has no grounding in Scripture.

I have always wondered why no one seems to ground the core of *Humanae Vitae*'s teaching in the written Word of God. For me, one passage (which provides a basic theme for the whole of the Bible) is most instructive about the plan of God and the response He

expects from those who would wish to be numbered among His Chosen People. I refer specifically to Gn 17:10-13: "*This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you that you must keep: every male among you shall be circumcised. Circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and that shall be the mark of the covenant between you and me. Throughout the ages every male among you when he is eight days old, shall be circumcised, including household slaves and those acquired with money from any foreigner who is part of your blood. Yes, both the house born slaves and those acquired with money must be circumcised. Thus my covenant shall be in your flesh as an everlasting pact.*"

As Almighty God began to form a people uniquely His own, He established a covenant (that is, a pact, a contract) with Abraham as the father of that chosen nation. The Lord promised that Abraham's descendants would be as numerous as "*the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore*" (Gn 22:17) and that from a man who was "*as good as dead.*" (Heb 11:12) All this showed that the Lord was God both in love and in power; He was truly Yahweh (I Am Who Am), who thus revealed himself to Moses as the very source of life. (cf. Ex 3:14)

And so it was that when God was asked by Abraham to demonstrate His love, God spoke in terms of *life*; ever since, love and life have been inextricably linked to each other, for they are two sides of the same coin.

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## Man and wife

In ancient times covenants were the normal means of doing business, and such agreements always had external signs. The Lord God said the sign for Abraham and every son of the covenant thereafter was to be that of circumcision. How strange! Why not a sign that would be visible to all at every moment? Why a sign seen only by the man and his wife? For a reason so simple that is most profound: the act of sexual intercourse would thenceforth speak not only the language of love but equally the language of life, which is to say, that sexual intimacy would speak God's language.

Therefore, every time a Hebrew man engaged in intercourse, he would be reminded that this particular act had been invested with a new meaning by God himself, a point literally branded into one's flesh and as enduring as God's will, God's love, God's gift of life.

Whoever came up with the saying "Two's company, three's a crowd," knew nothing of the God of the covenant; His love is totally unrestricted and completely open. God says, "*the more the merrier!*" He says that in His own Godhead in that community of Persons who love Each Other eternally and expansively in the Trinity; hence, not just one Person, nor two, but three. Thus does the Blessed Trinity serve as a model for human love and relationship, in which love between persons *necessarily* overflows into new life.

The connection between love and life reaches its apex in Jesus Christ, who loves humanity so much that He gives His life that *“we might have life and have it to the full.”* (John 10:10) Like His heavenly Father, Jesus offers a covenantal sign of His love in the life blood of the Eucharist, that new and everlasting covenant.

### Love and life

Although Christians need not practice circumcision under the new covenant, they are still called to reflect those same values by which love and life are proclaimed in who we are and what we do, an example provided in a preeminent manner by Christ’s sacrifice of himself on our behalf.

Unlike any faith system before or since, the covenant way of the Lord sacralizes human sexuality by making of it a mirror image of God’s own gifts of himself as Love and Life. Therefore, we deal here with the truth of God’s identity and man’s dignity at one and the same time. No wonder, then, that St. Paul could rhapsodise on the beauty of marital love as a great mystery, indeed the sign of Christ’s love for His Church. Contraceptive intercourse, on the other hand, lies about both the God of the covenant and the children of the covenant.

Decades after *Humanae Vitae* the Church clings to this essential teaching with a tenacity that annoys and astounds most people, but she does so because of some fundamental convictions that underlie the whole vocation of being a part of the Chosen People. In a 1966 essay in *Triumph* magazine, Brent Bozell put it powerfully: *“The world deems the Church mad to have hitched its whole moral authority to this wretched piece of intransigence. Millions of Catholics and near Catholics and apostate Catholics over the years have felt the same way: if only the Church would give ground on this one, the rest would be easy to take. But this wretched piece of intransigence is the key to the mighty mystery of sex, which unlocks the door to the even more awesome mystery of life, which in turn reveals the reality of the supernatural. If the Church does not own this key, it does not own any keys at all.”*

Married couples, theologians, clergy – indeed anyone interested in the God-man relationship – would do well to reflect on *“the mighty mystery of sex,”* and on *“the even more awesome mystery of life.”*

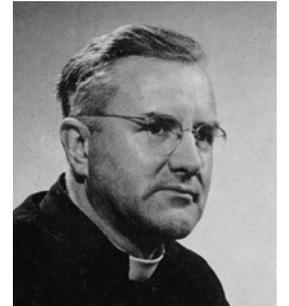
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*Fr Peter Stravinskis is editor of The Catholic Response and author of over 30 books.*

## Holloway on...

# The Gospel of St John Part II

EDWARD HOLLOWAY



The question arises how far the words of St. John, and the literary cadences of St. John’s Gospel, do reflect directly the words and very expressions of Jesus Christ Himself. One suggests that the correspondence will be very close indeed. It will certainly be ‘substantial’ in the sense of communicating the essential thought of Christ in all its beauty and more than human coherence. It could be more or less verbal, be a correspondence very, very close to the literal reality, especially in the so-called ‘sacerdotal prayer’, the four chapters spoken almost personally and verbally by Christ, at the Last Supper.

### Retaining, verbalizing and memorising

The possibility of this involves certain human factors. There is first the power to retain, verbalise, and memorise in detail long passages of speech or writing, a power native to the Semitic mind, and found among the Arabs to this day. Indeed, among the people of Spain as well, and their descendants, whether because of their partly Moorish and Semitic inheritance or not this writer is not competent to say, something of the same ability, an ability alien to the Nordic mind, still exists. There are a number of cases recorded in the lives of Spanish saints, of the whole Bible being learned by heart, and being at the memory recall of the person involved. This writer personally, has sat in an empty lecture room of the Gregorian University at Rome, and as a student listened to members of the South American College there, rehearsing each other in the theses on which we were to be examined for the Licentiate of Philosophy. One can attest that these young men were *word perfect* page after page, after page of the author, comprising not only the theses themselves and their formal arguments, but the words of their author concerning the opinions, the adversaries, the corollaries, etc. One does not imply that this is a good or worthy way to learn philosophy, or that it would happen that way now. One is saying that in fact it did happen, and one can testify to the amazing type of prowess it contained.

### St. John’s Vocation in the Church

We have already suggested [in Part I] that St. John made himself, in his relationship of total personal discipleship of Christ *the very mirror image of the mind of Christ and the heart of Christ:* we are saying that to this he was invited by Jesus Christ, and formed by Jesus Christ. No other human came as close to sharing and copying the human characteristics, in teaching and speaking, of Jesus the Christ, as did him who was ‘the Beloved Disciple’. As a

*St. John could and did express Christ, and express Christ in what He said, and did, and meant, with a unique clarity and authority*

result, St. John could and did express Christ, and express Christ in what He said, and did, and meant, with a unique clarity and authority. Such was John's vocation in the Church, and that vocation gives us unerringly the Gospel of St. John. This dramatic, detailed, and rich picture is the living Christ, the Christ of history and the Christ of faith.

The question of recall in the Gospel of St. John has its own fascinating overtones as well. It is a known fact that it is possible in deep hypnosis for a subject to recall in detail, facts of deed, dress, and relationship going back to events in their very early childhood. This writer at least has had the testimony from a soldier who was there, as a medical orderly, in a hospital in Egypt, in the boredom of the last great war, that such a doctor of psychological medicine could not only make willing subjects recall back to their early youth, but that the voice of the man relating changed to the accents of childhood as he spoke. About all these claims, this writer cannot claim to have personal competence.

### Mystical Contemplative Union

If, however, detailed recall of this nature is possible at all, one must ask whether as much, and more, would not be a psychological possibility in one who was not only totally formed in the mind and heart of God made Man, but who had known, retained, and always did possess his Master, at all times, in the communion of the deepest and most loving contemplation. St. John of the Cross tells us that in the deepest communion of mystical contemplative union with God, the mind, heart, will, and love of the mystic is made as much one with God Himself, as if a 'little flame' on a wick were merged with a great flame. When they are merged you see but one flame: when the wick is moved away, you prove the separate identity of the 'little' flame. Indeed, St. John of the Cross teaches that in the highest, and most final phase of perfect mystical union with God, the soul so blessed cannot think any thought not according to the will of God, nor will anything, unless God will that the mystic should will it. When John set his mind to write his Gospel, a Gospel which ancient writers of the Joannine school and tradition tell us was written expressly to vindicate and manifest the Living Divinity of Christ against the first burgeoning heresies concerning that Divinity, would he not have been in his own psyche in some special relationship to Jesus Christ?

### The Graphic Mind of St. John

St. John would have been willing to do that which Christ wanted him to do, something also that Christ positively willed John to do. He had been formed, moulded, loved to do it well and do it truly. He had never lost the presence of the person of Christ to his own soul; he had loved and possessed the Master within, in communion of being, even after that Master had "ascended up to where He was before". To this writer it seems that the 'recall' of St. John, lived in a living communion of contemplation with Jesus Himself, would have reached a level of graphic perfection and visual acuity which it would be hard for most of us to conceptualise. John had also, from his description of many incidents in the

Gospel (as for example "full of great fishes, one hundred and fifty three") a mind capable of almost photographic fixation. He is a master of the dramatic moment, a moment to which he thrilled. So for instance he not only gives us the terse, idiomatic exchanges of Jesus and His mother, and of Mary to the waiters, at the first public miracle at Cana, he gives us also the rough, good-natured rustic jest of the 'best man' of the bridegroom as well. John, elevated by a living love of Jesus, at the moment of writing or dictating the high points of his Gospel, would live again the fact and expression of the same Jesus Christ, whom John had known, loved, and almost 'fused with' in the days of his discipleship on earth. Does he not say himself, of that same Jesus, "that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and palpably felt with our hands, concerning the word of Life: — the Life was made manifest and we saw it, and testify to it" (1 John 1: 1-2.)?

Who can doubt the vivid, graphic manner in which St. John lived his love and recognition of the Lord Jesus? With St. John we would be in the presence not of any kind of hypnotic recall, not any sort of passive unconscious self-surrender, but in the presence of a recall that was total, active, loving and fully given over to the purposes of the wisdom and will of God Incarnate Himself. This is a higher principle of prompting and recall than that of a passive response to the command under hypnotic trance of another's will. It would be similar to that process attested by St. John of the Cross, presumably from his own mystic communion with God, by which upon what St. John of the Cross himself calls, "the very threshold of the beatific vision", the saintly soul can only think what God would have it think, and will what God would have it will, so fully is that soul now become the very mirror-image of the God in whom it is about to be beatified.

*Who can doubt the vivid, graphic manner in which St. John lived his love and recognition of the Lord Jesus?*

### Temple and Liturgy Fulfilled in Christ's Body

In such a state of union and communion with God, no doubt even in extreme old age, St. John the Evangelist could write with the verve and power of his youth. Yet, this writer does ask leave to doubt if St. John really was at the very end of his earthly life when he wrote that Gospel. It is the Gospel of a man in the full possession of great power of intellect and dynamism of personality. It reads like the work of a man who was, psychologically speaking, in his prime. In that sense of 'his prime: it could of course be taken up to at least the early seventies of his life. For the whole scheme of the Gospel of St. John is amazing.

*In John the Evangelist one is tempted to say we see the noblest and most perfect of the Old Testament prophetic minds, taught and fulfilled in the meaning of that tradition— the Person of God revealed in the Flesh of Jesus the Messiah.*

Besides the points we have briefly touched upon, there is the presentation of Christ as the physical fulfilment, in His very Body, of the Temple itself, of the liturgy of the Temple, of the meaning of all its feasts, and the meaning of all the prophetic utterance, and living

types of the Old Testament itself. Indeed, the great writer and former Rabbi, Dr. Alfred Edersheim does not hesitate to state that both from the Gospel of St. John, and from somewhat arcane references in the Book of Revelations, St. John reveals that he was himself either of the priestly line of Aaron, or at least intimately aware of the most secret ritual and practices of the priests within the Temple itself by day and by night. If it is so, that John was indeed of the priestly line, then once again we see how wonderfully he was chosen and formed by the Word made Flesh to reveal to men *the whole import and meaning* of the age-long ascent of the Bible, its inspired word, and its unique prophetic and Messianic message.

One could imagine that the Epistles of St. John, especially the second and the third, do show something of the fading grasp on detail of a very old man. There is in them the permanent, blinding reality of God loved and held in contemplative communion. There would seem to be the weariness of detail of a brain now extremely fatigued. There is no sign of any such in the Gospel of St. John, nor in the Book of Revelations, itself compiled upon a pattern totally similar to the Apocalyptic writings, such as the *Books of Enoch* etc, of the Old Testament. In John the Evangelist one is tempted to say we see the noblest and most perfect of the Old Testament prophetic minds, taught and fulfilled in the meaning of that tradition:— the Person of God revealed in the Flesh of Jesus the Messiah.

### Reflecting and Pondering the Word of God

Neither is it true, to suggest a final thought, that later and fuller reflection on any great vision of the truth, whether natural or supernatural truth, does in fact dilute or degenerate or expand by extraneous addition the content of the original vision, knowledge, or experience. The effect of time, when the soul reflects and ponders the word of God, is to refine, deepen, and basically to simplify in expression the fulness of God revealed or known, in all its implications. If this is true when great philosopher mathematicians like Einstein or Heisenberg reflected on their work in their most mature years, much more is it true of the knowledge and experience of the things of God. Doubtless there is a lot more work to be done, especially if the Gospel of St. John is linked with his Book of Revelations, upon the fascinating character and personality of the *Beloved Disciple* who conformed himself so closely to the human psyche and the divine personality of Jesus Christ. One dares to suggest, while admitting that other and more careful scholars will do much better, that more fruit of truth is to be found by following the theology one here suggests, than by wandering in the deadly desert of the Bultmannite mind. One is also grateful once again, to those students, seminarists, and most dear friends, whose earnest enquiries in their tribulations from their confused teachers of theology, force one, in trying to answer their needs, to rethink and understand much more satisfyingly, the beauty and truth of the Word of God; as that Eternal Word is manifested in the Economy of the

Church, and in the utterly true and loving words of the writers of the New Testament.

*This is the concluding part of Fr. Holloway's Editorial in the May/June 1983 issue of Faith Magazine.*



*Priests of the FAITH Movement met for the annual symposium recently at Ampleforth Abbey, Yorkshire. This year the theme was Fr Holloway's book Matter and Mind.*

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# ETHICAL SEX

SEXUAL CHOICES AND THEIR NATURE AND MEANING

BY *Anthony McCarthy*

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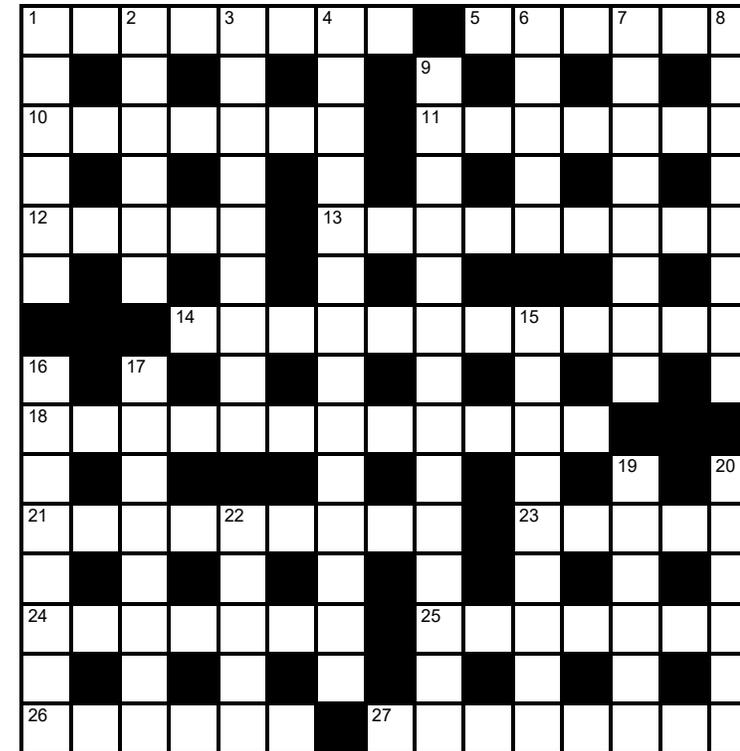
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## CROSSWORD 11 by Aurora Borealis



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 *Father Benedict: the spiritual and intellectual legacy of Pope Benedict XVI* by James Day, will go to the sender of the first correct solution opened from all those received by 30th June 2018. Entries may be this original page or a photocopy and should be sent to:  
**FAITH CROSSWORD**  
 No.11, 45 East St Helen Street, Abingdon OXON OX14 5EE. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR FULL NAME AND POSTAL ADDRESS.

The winner of Faith Crossword 9 was Julie McCarthy of London E9.

### Across

1. **Marks on the body corresponding to the wounds of Christ (8)**
5. Moves dresses (6)
10. Line might be silver (7)
11. The further it reaches, it comes across African region (7)
12. Man the Spanish ship - leans over (5)
13. **One of the three religious vows (9)**
14. Creak! Big bank is made to be very heavy (12)
18. Local loyalty gets precedence (5,2,5)
21. Drink next to Queen, her love makes a man able to do anything (9)
23. **One who believes in God but not Revelation (5)**
24. Conscientious daughter confused lift with two universities (7)
25. Make hash of lenient artist (7)
26. Company's determined to pamper (6)
27. Leaving around first of September is already in place (8)

### Down

1. **Author of the Fourth Gospel (2,4)**
2. Favourite staple lacks a native (6)
3. Fish follows start of menu in local Knightsbridge spot: get a drink (9)
4. **A ninth century book of the Gospels in Latin (3,4,2,5)**
6. Cap protects one, one behind island (5)
7. Methods of detection involve playing score in F (8)
8. Prowl around for pay back after first half of scam (8)
9. Intellectual with right time to sit between commanding officer and former lover: gets piece of mind (8,6)
15. **Substance and ..... (9)**
16. Great story about island turf is told in instalments (8)
17. Demand is put especially well and has room for arguments (8)
19. One family enters British Isles in swimsuit (6)
20. Good person backs fête and ends up with prison (6)
22. Cream off top of pudding and shoulder this (5)

# Clarity about God and Science

*The Believing Scientist — Essays on Science and Religion*  
by Stephen M. Barr, William B. Eerdmans, 226pp, £17.99.

*reviewed by Philip Miller*



Let me state at the outset that this is an excellent book, a straightforward and pleasant read, with 26 short chapters of essays, articles, lectures, and book reviews that Barr has written over the past decade or so. Almost all of the pieces are post-2000, and one third of them from 2010 or later. It is, therefore, an up-to-date analysis of many of the crucial questions of faith and science, written by an active researcher in the field of particle physics at the University of Delaware. Barr has a clarity of expression, with a gift for the use of very illuminating images in his writing, which makes reading this work a pleasure.

### Undoing the confusion

Barr reminds us from the outset that the controversy is not that of science vs. religion, but of materialism vs. religion. Materialism is a philosophical attitude that sees no place for the divine or the spiritual, and asserts that matter is all that there is. Science is not the same as this materialistic philosophy, though many in the debate often confuse the two. Barr's book is fundamentally about gently undoing this confusion, and allowing the beauty of science in harmony with belief in God to show its face. A masterly opening chapter sets the scene, with a clear analysis of

how the materialist myth has deliberately 'retold' the story of science, and created the sense of faith-science opposition that we all recognise as prevalent today.

In a powerful passage, Barr sums up the implications of much of modern scientific discoveries about the nature of the universe and of man, viz., that they bring us back to affirm the biblical notion of creation and man's place in it. "After all the twists and turns of scientific history we look around and find ourselves in very familiar surroundings. We find ourselves in a universe that seems to have had a beginning. We find it governed by laws that have a grandeur and sublimity that bespeak design. We find many indications in those laws that we were built in from the beginning. We find that physical determinism is wrong. And we find that the deepest discoveries of modern physics and mathematics give hints, if not proof, that the mind of man has something about it that lies beyond the power of either physics or mathematics to describe. ... The search for truth always leads us, in the end, back to God" (conclusion of Ch. 1).

### 'Random' but not uncaused

Crucial issues that Barr treats in his sections on evolutionary theory are, for

example, 'randomness' (Chs. 5 & 6) and so-called 'intelligent design' (Chs. 7 & 8), as well as giving Richard Dawkins a 'run for his money' as he unpicks the latter's polemical work, 'A Devil's Chaplain' (Ch. 3). The correct explanation of scientific 'randomness' with regard to the progress of biological evolution is indeed most pertinent, since it is the crux of the matter: those who wish to deny God's overarching plan of cosmic design will constantly argue that the 'random' nature of genetic mutations means that evolution cannot therefore be 'guided.' Barr explains: "some biologists, when they explain evolution to the public or to hapless students, do argue from the 'randomness' of genetic mutations to the philosophical conclusion that the history of life is 'unguided' and 'unplanned.' ... So, if the word 'random' necessarily entails the idea that some events are 'unguided' in the sense of falling 'outside of the bounds of divine providence,' we should have to condemn as incompatible with Christian faith a great deal of modern physics, chemistry, geology, and astronomy, as well as biology. This is absurd, of course. The word 'random' as used in science does not mean uncaused, unplanned, or inexplicable; it means uncorrelated" (ch. 5). Barr goes on to use a variety of illuminating examples to explain clearly what statistical randomness actually is, and is not, and to show its compatibility with divine providence.

### Human consciousness

Another fascinating and topical area that Barr considers is the whole question of the mind and free will: in chs. 9-15 he introduces various anti-materialist arguments that human consciousness is not reducible to physics. The human brain itself is the most complex entity in

material creation, containing of the order of 1011 neurons in a typical brain, each capable of signalling to maybe 104 others, and so, as Barr quotes, "The complexity of connections between neurons is ... gargantuan. ... The combinatorial possibilities are immense" (Ch. 15). Making progress in the area of neuroscience is therefore fraught with difficulties, but Barr shows that this is not in itself the issue. Our freedom of will, our ability to conceptualize, and our role as observer (one who knows the outcomes) within the quantum-mechanical framework, all point to the independence of the human mind from a deterministic response. Barr quotes a leading physicist, whose opinion he shares: "The premise that you can describe in terms of physics the whole function of a human being ... including its knowledge, and its consciousness, is untenable" (Ch. 11).

To conclude, I quote a summary sentence in which Barr looks at the grand whole: "The idea that all the various aspects and components of the natural order fit together in some internally *coherent* way and the idea that some mind conceived of the natural order can be seen *themselves* to fit together in a coherent way" (Ch. 13). It is refreshing to see the clarity of vision of a scientific author who sees the universal coherence of mind and matter, of God and his Creation, and how science is born of this very rational understanding.

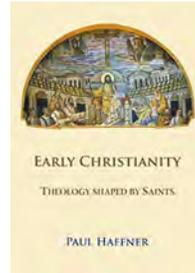
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*Fr Philip Miller is a parish priest in the diocese of Westminster and holds a PhD in observational radio-astronomy.*

# Vivid snapshots of the early church

*Early Christianity – Theology shaped by Saints*  
by Paul Haffner, Gracewing, 454pp, £20.00.

reviewed by Guy de Gaynesford



There is no shortage of books dealing with the Early Church – studies of its saints, its history, its theological and philosophical controversies, schools of thought, the development of its liturgies, and so on – and every year new volumes are added to the shelves. The first six centuries of the Church have come under increasingly intense academic scrutiny, as we have felt the attractions of returning to the sources, and banishing the obscurity that seems to cover those distant centuries. And yet, in the midst of such specialised research, there is a need for a very different form of presentation of the period – an introduction that lays before the reader the big picture of the Church's development, and the personalities that dominate it.

## A mosaic of a thousand pieces

Haffner's *Early Christianity – Theology shaped by Saints* is an ambitious project. In twelve chapters, ranging from "Mary Mother of God" to "Monks and Missionaries", from "The Early Popes" to "The Role of Women", from "Sacramental Life" to "The Fall of Rome", he lays before

the reader a remarkable Aladdin's cave of facts and information, colourful vignettes, and biographical detail. This is no sweeping chronological narrative, pace Henry Chadwick's "The Early Church" – a grand, single, and seamless presentation of organic growth and development – but instead a mosaic made up of a thousand smaller pieces, each one providing its own particular element of colour, and which, when taken as a whole offers an extraordinary single image of the Church through these formative years.

## Setting papal priorities straight

These tesserae come in a variety of different shapes, some charming – for example, the tradition that Our Lady sewed an episcopal stole for Lazarus, whom her divine Son had raised from the dead; while others are a great deal more disturbing – such as the account of forty Christian legionaries martyred by being exposed naked on a frozen pond near Sebaste in 320 AD. In contrast, some are deliciously dramatic: who would not have wanted to be present at the audience granted by Pope Anastasius I to the redoubtable

noble Roman matron Marcella, who was scandalised by the Pontiff's hesitation to condemn the heresies of Origen, contained in his theological work *de Principiis*, and insisted on seeing the Pope personally in order to set the papal priorities straight? Others cast fresh light on familiar elements of the picture: did you know, for instance, that at their height, the Roman gladiatorial games swallowed one third of the Empire's income?

Some elements of the book have a straightforward and informative character, bordering on the prosaic, for example, that it was St Peter's successor, St Linus, who decreed that women should cover their heads when entering Church; while others are more than a little surprising. I smile at the irony of the celebrations of 248 AD which marked the one thousandth anniversary of the founding of the city of Rome being presided over by the then Emperor, Marcus Julius Philippus, who was Syrian by birth and nicknamed 'the Arab'.

This book is clearly intended to serve as an introduction to the period, rather than as a piece of original research, and as such, Haffner has gathered a breath-taking array of information. Sometimes narrative in style, sometimes apologetic, occasionally conversational, and at times even leaning towards the poetic, our author is always informative as he lays out the factual foundations of the origins of the Church. Chapters on the role of women in the Early Church, as well as on the formation of the canon of the New Testament will be of interest to many.

## Faith and reason before Aquinas

Particular mention should be made of the chapter on Faith and Reason, in which

Haffner establishes, in brief outline, the contributions made by Christian thinkers to the world of philosophy and, in particular, the consistent premise on which generation after generation of Christian apologists based their presentation of the mysteries of the Faith – that is, on the principle that the Christian faith is both consistent with reason and is well served by it. Haffner establishes that the Church did not have to wait until the thirteenth century to discover the Five Ways of St Thomas Aquinas. Many of these are beautifully anticipated in the writings of the Fathers of the second, third and fourth centuries.

St Athanasius of Alexandria (the fourth-century contemporary of his more famous namesake of Alexandria), and St Theophilus of Antioch (writing some two hundred years earlier, in the middle of the second century) respond to challenges eerily similar to those we encounter today ("Show me your God!") with arguments that will later be refined and reformulated into Aquinas' argument from design and his argument from contingency. Haffner gives evidence and strength to the truth that many of our contemporaries find inconvenient today – that the faith has always respected reason rather than opposed it; that it has applied reason to demonstrate the reliability of claims it makes, and far from being founded on a fundamentalist philosophy of either fideism or superstition, regards both as forces contrary to the faith and which must therefore be resisted.

## Tantalisingly brief

If there are weakness in the presentation, they flow from the nature of the project – such a broad canvas cannot linger on

significant subjects for long, and the sections dealing with the sacraments, and with the great heresies that stimulated the Church into some of the loftiest and definitive statements of faith, are tantalisingly brief – and it is a pity that space could not have been devoted to a brief examination of the patristic interpretation of scripture. In addition, it may not be a service to clarity if a list of the outstanding Fathers of the Church includes the names of men who denied the faith, or were condemned for heresy, such as Tertullian, Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia.

Nevertheless, there is much to be learned from this book, and a useful bibliography provides further avenues of study for the reader whose interest has been stimulated. Haffner has provided a fascinating collage of snapshots into the world of the early Church, the vivid colours of which will surprise and delight in equal measure.

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*Fr Guy de Gaynesford, MA, STL, is Rector of the School of the Annunciation, a Catholic Institute of Higher Education for the New Evangelisation, based at Buckfast Abbey, Devon*

## CATHOLIC HISTORY WALKS: Summer 2018

### Lift up your heads, O Gates!

**Monday 14th May, 6pm.** Explore the varied and fascinating history of the City of London. Meet at the Church of the Most Precious Blood, Southwark. SE1 1TA. Nearest Tube: Borough or London Bridge.

### The West End

**Saturday 19th May, 3pm.** As we walk around the West End, we'll see the history of London as it expanded - becoming ever more crowded, varied, fascinating. Meet at St Patrick's Soho Square. W1D 4NR. Nearest Tube: Tottenham Court Road.

### The King's Good Servant

**Monday 21st May, 6pm.** The heroic story of St Thomas More, who died defending the faith during the turbulence of Henry VIII's reign. Meet at the Church of Our Most Holy Redeemer and St Thomas More, Cheyne Row. SW3 5HS. Nearest Tube: South Kensington.

### May Pilgrimage to St Mary's University, Twickenham

**Wednesday 23rd May**, organised with the Association of Catholic Women. **Meet 12.30pm** main reception, St Mary's University, Waldegrave Road Twickenham TW1 4SX (nearest railway station: Strawberry Hill). Mass 1pm, tour follows. Bring a packed lunch.

### For King and Country!

**Sunday 3rd June, 3pm.** Catholics and Politics: St Thomas More, Guy Fawkes, Pugin, Parliament and the Abbey. Meet on the steps of Westminster Cathedral. Nearest Tube: Victoria.

### Lift up your heads, O Gates!

Tuesday 5th June, 6pm. Explore the varied and fascinating history of the City of London. Meet at the Church of the Most Precious Blood, Southwark. SE1 1TA. Nearest Tube: Borough or London Bridge.

### A Royal Walk - Queen's Birthday Special

**Sunday 10th June, 3pm.** On this weekend of the Queen's Official Birthday and today, Prince Philip's Birthday, join us for a walk through Westminster. Meet on the steps of Westminster Cathedral. Nearest Tube: Victoria.

### St Mary's Twickenham

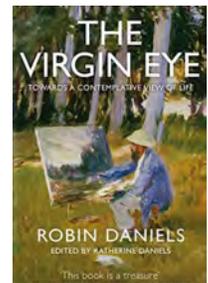
**Wednesday 13th June, 2pm.** Join us to walk through the beautiful grounds of England's only Catholic University, alongside the Thames, seeing the stunning exterior of Strawberry Hill House.

**More information: [www.catholichistorywalks.com](http://www.catholichistorywalks.com)**

## Seeing the world with new eyes

*The Virgin Eye: Towards a Contemplative View of Life* by Robin Daniels (ed. Katherine Daniels), Instant Apostles, 320pp., £9.99.

reviewed by Pia Matthews



*The Virgin Eye: Towards a Contemplative View of Life* is the fruit of a very long gestation. Daniels, a one-time music critic, publicity manager for SCOPE, counsellor, social worker and Jungian psychoanalyst, was prompted to put into writing some lectures he gave in the 1990s on the interface between psychology and spirituality. The book was finally edited by Daniels wife Katherine and published after his death.

### An invitation not a demand

This long gestation is obvious in the structure of the book. Very much the reflections of a man who is interested in slowing down, centring on contemplation and the inner life, embracing the God-giveness of life, there is no clear line of argument or driven progression. Instead, the book reads like a collection of wise and insightful comments on the world and how we can be in the world. Daniels does not urge us to see the world with new eyes, the virgin eye. Urge would be too strong a word. Rather, in the five sections of the book Daniels leads the reader from the challenges that we all encounter,

to the vision he offers of a new kind of enlightenment, an enlightenment of awareness, to attention to our relationship with God, with ourselves and with others. Seeing with 'the virgin eye' takes time to perfect because it involves becoming aware of God's presence in daily life. It is an invitation not a demand.

### Overcoming self-absorption

In his first section Daniels begins by exploring the contemporary challenges that face us today. We may perhaps recognise worries over change and notably advances in technology leading to added anxiety, worries over the causes and pseudo-solutions to stress, and worries over time pressures that end up devaluing time. Daniels ends each chapter of worries with prayers to become more serene and accepting of such worries and, perhaps in homage to his psychoanalyst past, to find balance, patience and a level of detachment. In his second section Daniels suggests a process of decluttering the mind to enjoy the present moment and mindfulness to be open to the silence around us. In order

to overcome self-absorption he advocates seeing in the way of a poet, child or artist so that we become open to creation and the creative activity of God. This openness can prepare us for change and for a letting go into a contemplative form of living, into enlightenment, where God is the light.

### Uplink, inlink, outlook

The following three sections form what Daniels calls a triad, and he thinks that this triad is fundamental to the spiritual life. Daniels describes the connection in the triad as 'uplook, inlook, outlook': as we seek to know ourselves we find God and reach out to others; as we seek God we find ourselves and others; and when we reach out to others we find ourselves and God. However, he also thinks it vital to work on all three areas so that we are balanced in our spiritual life. For Daniels developing a healthy relationship with God rather than holding onto a polarised view of God as judge or rescuer is key to all the other relationships, and it is prayer that enables us to practice and grow into that relationship. Drawing on the monastic tradition, Daniels thinks that contemplative prayer and silence that raise us heavenwards, in conjunction with a sense of community to keep us grounded, form a good middle way for spiritual living.

### The wisdom of the body

His attention to the 'wisdom of the body' to aid decision-making takes perhaps a clear steer from his Jungian studies of psychoanalysis. Listening to gut

instincts, limiting information to avoid overload, listening to your sense of timing, developing a sense of detachment towards options, getting your own orientation before asking the opinion of others, trusting your unconscious, are all ways in which a person can work to bring together conscious awareness and experience into a more balanced relationship with unconscious elements of the psyche. Nevertheless, no less important for Daniels is becoming more aligned with God and with God's will. This becomes further evident in Daniels' discussion on support and self-examination where what amounts to an examination of conscience goes beyond mere self-improvement to a deeper relationship with God and with others.

### Facing our shadows

It may be expected from a psychoanalyst that there is space given to personal growth. On the interface between psychology and spirituality Daniels argues that psychology serves to unblock what closes off our potential; spirituality gives meaning, direction and grace for transformation. Facing our shadows and integrating them, developing a relationship with our old wounds, come as no surprise, as does growth in self-esteem. However, Daniels goes on to explain that this freedom gained not from self-absorption but from self-awareness, naturally leads to responsibility since freedom is, he says, a social word.

Rather surprisingly at first glance, chastity appears at the beginning of the section on

the Other. Daniels' take on chastity is that this is the virtue that enables reverence for the other. Understood in this way the idea of seeing with pure virginal eyes perhaps takes on added significance in the area of human love. Love of neighbour as ethical responsibility follows so that we can put ourselves at the service of others in recollected, prayerful outreach.

### Whimsical but valuable

Daniels' book is very wide ranging and eclectic. He joins commentary on economic theory, psychoanalysis, beauty and art with

quotes from Einstein, Eliot, Chesterton, various archbishops, Milton, Keats, Shakespeare and Scripture. He includes explanations from Christian mystics and lectio divina as well as psychology found in the poems of Lawrence and Brooke and the six degrees of separation from Frigyes. Such eclecticism may irritate some readers who are used to a less whimsical style. Nevertheless, there is something of value for everyone in this book.

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*Dr Pia Matthews lectures at St Mary's University, Twickenham and St John's Seminary, Womersley.*

## The FAITH Movement: Summer 2018

### The FAITH Summer Session (for ages 18-35) and

### The FAITH Break (for ages 11-15)

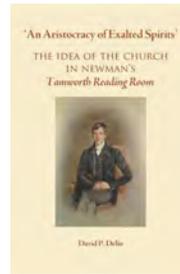
**FAITH Summer Session, Monday 30th July - Friday 3rd August 2018:** the ever-popular gathering for young Catholics aged 18-30, in the attractive surroundings of Woldingham School in Surrey with its beautiful extensive grounds and opportunities for sport and relaxation. Daily Mass, prayer, talks, social time...all in a friendly holiday atmosphere. More information from: [www.faith.org.uk](http://www.faith.org.uk)

**FAITH Break, Monday Aug 6th - Thursday Aug 9th 2018:** an exciting four days for 11-15 year olds combining both faith and fun activities in a relaxed holiday setting. The week is structured around getting to know God and each other and includes Holy Mass each day, talks about the Catholic Faith, discussions, prayer, quizzes, art and craft, games, sports and a visit to Chessington World of Adventures. Fr. Michael Dolman St John the Baptist Catholic Church Castle Hill, Alton, Staffordshire, ST10 4TT Telephone 01538 703503

# Newman on the Church vs. secularist education

*'An Aristocracy of Exalted Spirits' – The Idea of the Church in Newman's Tamworth Reading Room*  
by David P. Delio, Gracewing, 359pp, £17.99.

reviewed by Andrew Nash



Newman's *Tamworth Reading Room* is one of his lesser known works, partly, I suspect, because its title doesn't suggest what it is about, and partly because it is now tucked away in the volume *Discussions and Arguments* in which Newman brought together a number of his shorter occasional works in the standard edition he produced towards the end of his life. Also, even those people who do know what it is about - education - assume that the much better known *Idea of a University* will tell them more about Newman's educational philosophy. But it is perhaps even more unusual for readers of Newman to go to the *Tamworth Reading Room* letters in search of his ecclesiology. And one has to say that 'an aristocracy of exalted spirits' - the quotation from the work which David Delio has chosen as his title, is not the most immediately appealing description of the Church. Out of context, it could look like an elitist, even Calvinist, view of the Church as consisting only of the perfect, which is not, of course, what Newman meant.

## Secularist education

In due course Dr Delio explains what it does mean, but this only comes in the

final chapters of this book. Before that, we are taken through the historical background to the *Tamworth Reading Room* letters. They were not really letters but newspaper articles, commissioned by *The Times* in response to a speech which the then Prime Minister, Robert Peel, gave at the opening of a Reading Room (a public library) in Tamworth, in the heart of the industrial Midlands of England, for which he was the Member of Parliament. Peel was a moderniser of the old Tory party, turning it into the Conservative party we know today.

In praising the new Reading Room, Peel unwisely adopted the new philosophy of education that had been enunciated by utilitarian thinkers like Henry Brougham. In this view education was not just about becoming more knowledgeable but was actually going to bring about moral improvement among working people. And it was explicitly going to do this without any religious influence - indeed, books on religion were specifically banned from the new Reading Room. It was the new gospel of secularism which now dominates educational thought throughout much of the Western world.

## 'Catholicus'

Newman, writing anonymously under the title 'Catholicus', made a highly effective critique of Peel. Readers who think of Newman as very serious will be surprised at how witty and satirical he could be. He ridiculed the idea that someone could be improved morally by reading about Physics or Chemistry, asking, 'Can the process be analyzed and drawn out, or does it act like a dose or a charm which comes into general use empirically?' Peel was reducing science and literature to the level of a palliative, like giving an alcoholic drink to someone who is feeling depressed. Newman commented, 'Strong liquors, indeed, do for a time succeed in their object; but who was ever consoled in real trouble by the small beer of literature or science?'

In contrast, Newman argued that only religion can give consolation to the ills of the human condition and effect real moral improvement in people: 'If virtue be a mastery over the mind, if its end be action, if its perfection be inward order, harmony, and peace, we must seek it in graver and holier places than in libraries and reading rooms.' This is the nub of Newman's argument, which he was to expand and express more systematically in *The Idea of a University* over a decade later.

## Role models or saints?

Brougham (and Peel following him) had suggested a secular 'aristocracy of exalted spirits' from history, a pantheon of thinkers and scientist who have been 'drawn together out of all countries, ranks, and ages, raised above the condition of humanity, specimens of the capabilities

of our race, incentives to rivalry and patterns for imitation'. These were to inspire the users of the Reading Room to become better people. This was in effect a secular version of the Communion of Saints. But of course such thinkers were not necessarily noble human beings, and the idea that they would act as role models to the industrial proletariat now looks naïve. Certainly, they cut no ice in our own celebrity-obsessed culture which now sees scientists and intellectuals generally as 'nerds'. True saints, on the other hand, people of heroic dedication, inspired by the Gospel and transformed by grace, do inspire people. And this is where Delio finds Newman's implicit theology of the Church in the *Tamworth Reading Room*.

Newman was still an Anglican at this time, but he had already developed a completely Catholic ecclesiology which he had learnt from his reading of the early Fathers. Delio brings this out from Newman's sermons but sees him in the *Tamworth* letters as being more like 'a modern street evangelist' (p.242), using a different style of language to get a hearing from his contemporaries. Newman's idea of the Church, says Delio, 'arose from the variety of themes and images in *The Tamworth Reading Room*' (p.253), and he summarises it as 'the Church present in the world through good human beings weakened by sin, diverse yet unified, incarnate in various nations and cultures, and always divinely ordained and guided' (p.256).

## A systematic study

This study by Delio of a perhaps neglected Newman work is very thoroughly

done. The bulk of the book comprises a systematic and highly detailed analysis of the whole of *The Tamworth Reading Room*, and he records the letters' reception both immediately and later. In this sense, the title is a little misleading – readers expecting a book mainly about the Church should look elsewhere (Fr James Tolhurst's *The Church ... a Communion* makes an excellent introduction to this aspect of Newman's thought). But Delio certainly gives the reader a really detailed account of one of Newman's most readable shorter works. I should add that it sometimes reads as if it is aimed at the American market: in his early chapters he takes his readers through a great deal of British political and social history, telling us things which the

British reader of Newman already knows, such as what the Battle of Trafalgar was; but perhaps his students at the University of Holy Cross in New Orleans aren't so familiar with European history. Overall, this is a workmanlike contribution to the vast corpus of writings about Newman, who emerges more and more as a clear guide in our increasingly secular world.

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*Andrew Nash is the Book Reviews Editor of Faith; his critical edition of Newman's Lectures on the Present Position of Catholics is published by Gracewing.*

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