

# faith

September and October 2012  
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OF FAITH AND REASON

## **Newman, Vatican II and the Imperative of Development**

Editorial

## **Magisterial Development Concerning Revelation**

Luiz Ruscillo

## **Catholic Involvement in Saving Marriage**

Eric Hester

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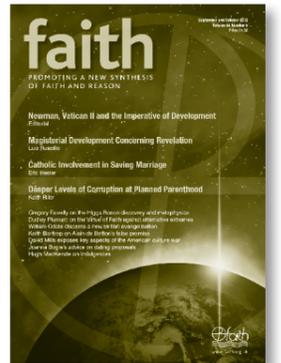
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# faith

September and October 2012

Volume 44 Number 5

In this issue we introduce a new column entitled **Continuity and Development: Notes and Quotes from the Year of Faith**.

In this column we hope to chronicle some of the statements and initiatives that, by the grace of God and in accordance with ideas articulated by the Second Vatican Council, are aimed at the “New Evangelisation” of our culture. One of the most important of these initiatives is the Year of Faith, which begins on 11 October – a date chosen by Pope Benedict as it falls exactly 50 years after the opening of the Council and 20 years after the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* by Blessed John Paul II.

During this Year of Faith the texts of the Council and Catechism will be central to our efforts as Catholics to rediscover and share with others the gift of Faith entrusted to the Church. **Dudley Plunkett** kicks off our new column with a description of the attitude of supernatural trust and realistic engagement that we are called to bring to this year.

Archbishop Fisichella, head of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelisation, recently stated that the primary purpose of the Year of Faith is that “in the face of the dramatic crisis of faith which touches many Christians, [the Church] will be able to show once again and with renewed enthusiasm the true face of Christ”.

In this regard the *Lineamenti*, or outline notes, for the forthcoming Synod of Bishops on the theme of the New Evangelisation affirm that Our Lord “will give his Spirit and provide the force to announce and proclaim the Gospel in new ways which can speak to today’s cultures”.

The *Lineamenti* point out that, through recent projects such as the Courtyard of the Gentiles, Pope Benedict has tried to promote that respectful engagement with secular opinion-

formers that Vatican II encouraged so strongly in *Gaudium et Spes*, one of the concluding – and most controversial – documents of the Council.

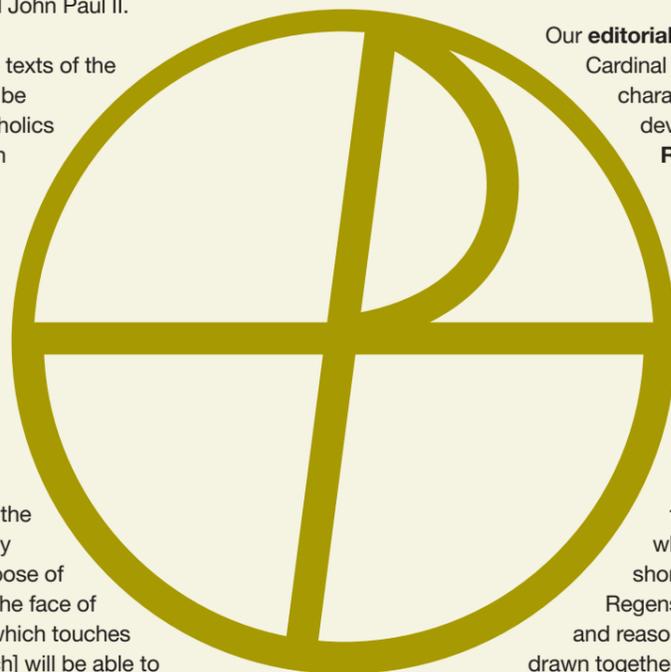
Given the interplay of knowing and loving which defines the spiritual life, we must indeed pray for – and expect God to provide – the “force to announce and proclaim the Gospel in new ways”. In these times of spiritual crisis, we look to the Holy Spirit to lead us to that deeper truth and deeper loving called for by Vatican II. For without such a developed vision of the faith, our attempts to evangelise the culture around us cannot bear fruit.

Our **editorial** draws upon the thought of Cardinal Newman to outline the character of authentic doctrinal development. And **Canon Luiz Ruscillo**’s piece shows how recent magisterial development of scriptural interpretation is leading us, through the Spirit who guides us into all truth, to a deeper and more unified understanding of the mystery of revelation.

Our new column flows out of and replaces our **Road from Regensburg** column, which began in autumn 2006 shortly after the Pope’s speech in Regensburg on the interplay of faith and reason today. That column has drawn together numerous insights from the magisterium on the need to harmonise modern

intellectual and social development with the life of faith; many of these insights have come from Pope Benedict’s addresses to cultural leaders during his international journeys.

**Keith Barltrop**’s review of Alain de Botton’s new book brings out the bankruptcy of an alternative, humanist approach, in which Christian ideas, cut free from their Christian roots, are appropriated by non-believers in their pursuit of an ideal secular society. We pray that Pope Benedict’s inspiring work may bear much fruit in the lives of all people of goodwill in this world and the next.



## “I have yet many things to say to you” (Jn 16:12)

“Well, you seem quite healthy...” Thus the doctor summed up this writer’s annual check-up and indicated the door. Patients want to be told that in all likelihood there is no lingering disease, and with that assurance they can carry on until the next visit.

Although the analogy is not exact, we need to feel that our faith is firmly based. To be told that we are clinging to words and ideas, to plans and false securities, instead of listening to the inspirations of the Spirit is not much consolation. *The Tablet* recently put it more succinctly: “The history of the Church shows repeatedly that ideas rejected by one generation can become the orthodoxy of the next.” They continue to peddle the line that there is “no method of re-evangelisation” that will turn back the “rational” rejection of the Church by large numbers of Catholics. This prominent British interpretation of Vatican II’s call for development has been a significant cause of the weakening of the virtue of faith in our land. Yet we do need true development, and the failure to acknowledge this has been a more long-term cause of such weakening.

### The Building up of the Body of Christ

Let us admit at the start the activity of the Holy Spirit. The third Person of the Trinity prompts from within – coming to our aid in prayer and inspiration; and in the outpouring of ideas in those who can be termed prophets or theologians. But at the same time, he brings to mind and gradually fulfils the whole ministerial structure of the Church in an ordered way “for building up the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith” (Eph. 4:12-13). The gifts of the Spirit are thus both hierarchic and charismatic.

The author of the Ephesians is not talking about some *future* horizon so much as the actual and present means for edifying, for “building up” the Church; so that she can preach the fullness of Christ’s message of salvation and so serve the holiness of its members. He goes on to remind his listeners that they are “no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine...”

We say that the Church is the body of Christ, meaning that it is a living organism and not just a concept. An organism has a dynamic equilibrium which allows it to assimilate and respond to a changing environment *in order to preserve its unique identity*. A tomato seed will take in nutrients in order to become a tomato plant and not a jacaranda tree. A young John Henry Newman realised this, partly as a result of attending Professor William Buckland’s geology lectures. He subsequently preached – as early as 1825 – on the analogy between the growth of living things in the natural world and “the gradual revelation of the Gospel.”

### A Matter of Development

Newman would eventually work out his ideas in the *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*. It is not Newman’s

most difficult work (that was another essay: *A Grammar of Assent*) but be warned! Newman himself came to see that the circumstances of the 1845 edition argued to a complete recasting of the text, and what we usually possess is the 1878 edition, not the 1845 original (which was itself an immediate best-seller). Both texts, however, make the same argument. The effort we are prepared to put into grasping Newman’s thought process will help to introduce us to the three important ingredients of our faith: worship, devotion and interrelated dogmas, which must be joined in our minds because together they provide the strong foundation for our faith.

It is interesting that the *Essay* was rapidly translated into French and Spanish by modernist theologians who felt that it chimed with their thoughts. They would argue that the Christian Gospel can and should be modified and adapted to the cultural and intellectual attitudes and demands of successive generations and indeed originates in them. This could be said to depend on the view that humanity is the result of a purposeless and materialistic process that did not have God in mind, which many conceived as one aspect of the theory of evolution itself. Pius X’s *Syllabus Condemning the Errors of the Modernists* contrasts the view that human society, being subject to “perpetual evolution”, was linked to the same process in the *organic* constitution of the Church.

The *Essay* was at the time suspect in the eyes of Thomist scholars. There was the fear both of opening a Pandora’s box of inevitable progress uncontrolled by man – and by extension the Church – and of the worship of any form of ineluctable progress. Giovanni Perrone, the Jesuit theologian at the Collegio Romano, was sympathetic to Newman’s point that different views of the council fathers become the seeds from which an apostolic definition arise, but felt bound to comment, “I should not be so bold as to say that.” The prevailing reaction was that there was too little philosophical deduction (Newman would call this “paper logic”) and too much inherent sentiment and broad assumption within an historical package.

### The Central Idea

Newman started from the premise of the Incarnation as the central idea of Christianity. This is the very heart of the *Essay*. Grasp this and the rest follows. But the very word *idea* had different meanings for Neo-Scholastics and for Newman. For Thomists, the idea was largely a logical construct, but for Newman it was both the apprehension of the object “which may vary in the separate consciousness of individuals [and] no one term or proposition will serve to define it”, and the object itself. In the case of the Incarnation, the idea is received subjectively into the minds of individuals and then becomes objective in the dogmatic expressions used by the Magisterium.

There is obviously a place for logical deduction in the actual formulation of dogmatic decrees, but Newman interposes a

kind of deep internal sense which enters the mind through the grasp of faith before being formulated objectively. Continuing the analogy of natural growth, we could say that there is this gradual assimilation in the embryonic stage of the seed (which is not obviously observable from the outside) before it puts out shoots above ground.

The central idea of Christianity is a burgeoning growth which takes hold of the Church with all the power of Pentecostal wind and fire. The Second Vatican Council's *Dei Verbum* could say: "There is a growth in insight into the realities and words that are being passed on ... [coming] from the intimate sense of spiritual realities which they experience... The Holy Spirit himself constantly perfects faith by his gifts, so that they may be more and more profoundly understood." Newman would claim that such *chronic vigour* or *chronic continuance* (in the 1845 edition), as one of his seven *Tests* or *Notes*, was a lasting dynamism.

“The very word *idea* had different meanings for Neo-Scholastics and for Newman”

If we consider the history of the Church and the mix of intellectual activity from saints and scholars, together with the attacks of persecutors, it would be expected that the Church would succumb to corruption if not extinction. But in spite of all apparent failures, dogmatic definitions arose, and precisely *in their long-lasting continuance* contrasted with the always short-lived heresies which flourish and gain adherents for a while but then fade into obscurity.

### Development Not Change

This is no licence for mere change. As Fr Edward Holloway remarks: "Development is something other than change. It is an increase of being in accordance with, and substantial to, the nature of a thing in its primordial condition" (unpublished manuscript). Newman would write that Christian dogmas were in the Church from the time of the Apostles. "They were ever in their substance what they are now; that they existed before the formulas were publicly adopted." He would provide a profile of the early Church which was "a religious communion claiming a divine commission, and holding all other religious bodies around it heretical or infidel, a sort of secret society binding its members together by influence and engagement, spread over the whole world, a natural enemy to governments, intolerant and capable of dividing families and breaking laws. It is gross superstition, charged with the vilest of crimes and despised by intellectuals." He then provides a picture of the Church in the first five centuries and finds a remarkable *preservation of type*.

But in this development there is also the *power of assimilation*. Newman would maintain that no idea could last without making use of external sources. Such development, far from implying corruption, implies incorporation. If an idea coalesces with certain other ideas it does not show undue influence or corruption but "an antecedent affinity to them. But if it is really

strong and vigorous, the more it is able to trust itself to throw off corruption and exult in its strength." He would argue that forms, subscriptions, or articles of religion were indispensable when the principle of life is weak, and would add prophetically: "We have yet to see whether the Free Kirk can keep its present theological ground."

It is because Catholicism has a living tradition that it can dispense with such forms, because the organism has the power to filter what it receives into itself, and the capacity to absorb and to reject. The precise balance is always difficult to assess but growth in nature and in Christianity involves interaction with the environment in which it operates. Newman would argue: "As fresh and fresh duties arises, or fresh and fresh faculties are brought into action, they are at once absorbed into the existing inward system and take their appropriate place in it."

In the case of Arianism, Newman said: "Certain it is that the true faith never could come into contact with the heathen philosophies without exercising its right to arbitrate between them." This is not some theological apportionment but the result of an awareness of what resonates with the *idea* itself. The Church, said Professor Joseph Ratzinger, is the living presence in every age, not the petrification of what once was.

But there must be an interconnection which in one sense is logical, but not by a process of reasoning from premise to conclusion. Rather it *develops* in the mind step by step and is higher than that which is logical. The Apostles knew without putting into words all the truths pertaining to theology which have subsequently been reduced to doctrinal formulae: the Holy Spirit would show them the things that were to come. (John 16:13) When we look back we can see what Newman called the *logical sequence*. When we look forward, it is *anticipation of the future*.

It is also possible to notice that what seems new illustrates and corroborates the body of thought which precedes it. Newman would cover this under the name of *preservative* additions (which became, in the 1878 edition, *conservative action on the past*). In other words it is one process which does not destroy what has gone before but draws it on to a new plane, just as Jesus came, not to destroy but to fulfil; whereas a corruption tends of its nature towards decay and destruction.

The school of Socinus maintained that belief in the Trinity went against belief in Monotheism but in fact belief in the Trinity takes into consideration the previous doctrine and enriches it. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception is still considered by Anglican theologians as an unwarranted addition to Christian doctrine: unproved from Scripture and not logically deduced from apostolic teaching. However, Pius IX pointed out that nothing had been added or taken away from the deposit of faith but that the Immaculate Conception "always existed in the Church as a doctrine that has been received from our ancestors" and was implicit in Scripture.

But above all there must be consistency. Newman refers to *continuity of principles*. The life of doctrines "may be said to consist in the law or principle which they embody". There is the dogmatic principle which argues that supernatural truths committed to human language are necessary and definitive of their very nature. The sacramental principle is the direct expression of the doctrine of the Incarnation, as is the principle of grace.

But all of these aspects of the development of doctrine depend fundamentally on making that assent to the fact that the Church was founded by Jesus Christ and perpetually guided by the Holy Spirit into all truth. One must expect to see in the *present* Church the realisation of what has gone before. Newman himself followed his own logic and did not add the final touches to the *Essay* because he wanted to be received into the Roman Catholic Church which fulfilled all the criteria he had set out beforehand.

“Dogmatic definitions arose, and precisely *in their long-lasting continuance* contrasted with the always short-lived heresies”

### Contemporary Reactions

Since Newman's time, and especially in the last 50 years, we have seen a development in the understanding of the Church's role in the world. Of course, there is a duty to uphold the deposit of faith but also an awareness that the Church is uniquely placed to offer Christ as the one who unifies and perfects the best in humanity, because he is its Saviour. This is at the heart of the continuing ecumenical debate, where attention is drawn to "the hierarchy of truths... which vary in their relation to the foundation of the Christian faith". In this context we can appreciate the contribution of the *Ordinariate* of Our Lady of Walsingham, which is bringing into the Church the influence of the Sarum rite in the *Book of Common Prayer* for an English Evensong now to be completed by Benediction.

But the organism which is Catholic Christianity must react when its integrity is jeopardised. This danger has always emerged from within rather than from without. Instead of regarding heterodox opinions as invasions to be repulsed, it is more helpful to see them against the background of a natural reflex to a pathogen. Newman would say: "Truth is wrought by the indirect operation of error and sin." It is all too easy to treat theological research as somehow isolated from that leading into all truth which the Church is consecrated to pursue, under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Newman's words in 1860 still have relevance: "To unsettle the minds of a generation, when you give them no landmarks and no causeway across the morass, is to undertake a great responsibility."

However, historically from Arianism there arose eventually the Nicene Creed and, in the case of Protestantism, the teaching on Grace and Original Sin. Of course sin and error are wounds inflicted on the Church, but the central *idea* maintains itself and

## “Christianity involves interaction with the environment in which it operates”

develops, using the dreadful experience as an opportunity for reform. Subsequently the Church puts out new shoots – at the time of the Reformation these were seen in the rise of new religious orders and seminaries for the training of the clergy; since Vatican II, after the tide of militant atheism had passed, they have been evident in the opening of a dialogue with the world – and, as a direct result of the Council, in the rise of liturgy in the vernacular and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Together these developments provide a renewed expression of the faith, what Pope John Paul II would call "a new Advent". This has provided the momentum to press for a greater commitment, and has strengthened our faith to face the challenges which a new, internationally connected and culturally diverse society needs.

### The Test of a True Development

For Newman there is always the possibility that what may appear innovative doctrines are in fact implicit in the total understanding of the faith, and yet not necessarily subject to some logical deduction. Into that equation must be put that sense of the faith which comes from an anointing by the Holy Spirit and manifests itself "from the bishops to the last of the faithful...as a *universal consent* in faith and morals". But the final touch, we might say, of what is a genuine development remains always the Magisterium, which possesses "the sure charism of truth". As Vatican II pointed out this is not a question of a bicameral juridical process. Rather, it is a universal consent that arises from within the Church but is articulated by the Pope and bishops who have been mandated by Christ to oversee the concrete articulation of the faith entrusted to them. It was witnessed at the Council of Ephesus when the bishops pronounced that Mary was the Mother of God and therefore Jesus was true God and true man. The people outside broke into song, glorifying God and praising Mary as *Deipara*, the Mother of God.

There needs to be that joyous enthusiasm for the faith, but it must not be merely a prompting of the heart. There must also be an appeal to the mind – one which can take in the necessity of advancing in wisdom and knowledge and which at times demands the capacity for growth and change. Newman's gift was to explain, before Darwin put pen to paper, how the growth of new ideas does not involve jettisoning what has gone before but taking it on to new levels. The Church is not committed to a process of arbitrary change – that is not how to understand Newman's phrase "to be perfect, is to change often".

Newman presents us with a means to comprehend any new and genuine development. He also largely explains why the Church can reject what many believe to be a valid expression of faith but which must be authoritatively excluded. In this way he prepares us to see that there is a *pattern* behind the changes taking place because the Church always possesses a *chronic vigour*. It is that continually dynamic life which carries us in its stride. For the Church goes boldly forward "amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God", and so should we with her.

# Magisterial Development Concerning Revelation

*By Canon Luiz Ruscillo*

In the last issue we published Canon Ruscillo’s synthesising of Pope Benedict’s post-Synodal exhortation *Verbum Domini* with aspects of Fr Edward Holloway’s *New Synthesis* concerning the Incarnation. Here he does something similar with the Pope’s symphonic analogy, where the Pope continues to develop the magisterial development of scriptural theology of the last 150 years and to encourage “further thought” and development.

This is a developed extract of the first part of a talk given to the Faith Theological Symposium 2012. Canon Ruscillo is director of education in Lancaster diocese and parish priest of Hornby and Kirby Lonsdale.

## The Symphony of the Word

The Synod Fathers referred to a “symphony of the word, to a single word expressed in multiple ways: ‘a polyphonic hymn’.”<sup>1</sup> Benedict says of the *liber naturae*, “Creation is born of the Logos and indelibly bears the mark of the creative Reason which orders and directs it.”<sup>2</sup> This idea is not drawn out in much further detail. The Pope quotes Psalms 19 and 33 to illustrate the work of the Word in creation and then cites *Dei Verbum*, but the further implications of this idea are not developed. Even so, he does say that sacred Scripture itself invites us to acknowledge the Creator by contemplating his creation.<sup>3</sup> Continuing in a reflection on the creation of man we read, “Reality, then, is born of the word, as *creatura verbi*, and everything is called to serve the word.”<sup>4</sup> Further on we read, “The word of God makes us change our concept of realism: the realist is the one who recognises in the word of God the foundation of all things.”<sup>5</sup> In a rather lengthier sentence Fr Edward Holloway, a true realist, expresses it in this way:

“All the laws of all the elements, every nature synthesised upon them, and the scientific expression, or formula, when attainable, of the law of its being, all this and the conjunction that events have to each other in space and in time, are only aspects of this overall Law of Control and Direction within which, and through which, all things subsist.”<sup>6</sup>

Holloway evokes a “law of control and direction” across the whole of creation and salvation history. Pope Benedict describes the activity of the Logos as one which “orders and directs”. The Logos is the architect of creation who also gives and reveals the purpose of creation. This purpose is union with God the Father and, the Pope suggests, only comes about through the Incarnation. “In the Prologue of his Gospel, John thus contemplates the Word from his being with God to his becoming flesh and his return to the Father with our humanity, which he has assumed for ever. In this coming forth from God and returning to him (cf Jn 13:3; 16:28; 17:8-10), Christ is presented as the one who “tells us” about God (cf Jn 1:18)... Jesus Christ is the definitive and effective word which came forth from the Father and returned to him, perfectly accomplishing his will in the world.”<sup>7</sup>

In the passage of *Verbum Domini* quoted above, it is not only the phrase “orders and directs” that catches our attention.

The idea of the “polyphonic hymn”, at once one and many, resonates with Holloway’s insistence on the one Wisdom of God at work in creation and salvation. It is the single Word which is spoken in eternity, in creation, in humanity, in history and, through Mary, in time. In *Verbum Domini* the Pope suggests that “there is a need for further study of how the different meanings of this expression [‘the word of God’ expressed analogically] are interrelated, so that the unity of God’s plan and, within it, the centrality of the person of Christ, may shine forth more clearly.”<sup>8</sup>

Holloway’s “new synthesis” enables this centrality of the person of Christ to shine forth more clearly. The unity of God’s plan is expressed time and again in *Verbum Domini*, and in many forms. From the realism which has the Word at its foundation, the document moves to the history of salvation as found in the Old Testament. Heb 1:1-2 describes the “handiwork of the Blessed Trinity through the divine Word”.<sup>9</sup> It is the Word which gives this history its unity. Indeed the entire Old Testament appears to us as a history in which God communicates his word. It is according to the plan of God that Israel might learn by experience, listen to the voice of God and make God’s ways known to the nations.

For *Catholicism: A New Synthesis* this is “the line of promise” found in Israel as the custodian for mankind.<sup>10</sup> “It will not be enough if God work to raise up religious truth, now here and now there, without any line of sure direction to fulfilment. This would not suffice to implement the basic principle of that Unity-Law of Control and Direction to fulfilment through which God has from the beginning worked in the processes of creation.”<sup>11</sup> This idea is expressed as an integral and necessary part of the plan of God for man and creation. In *Verbum Domini* it is described as a real part of the present economy of God. It is an essential of God’s plan now, in this dispensation. Yet the impression is given, just through his Christocentric ontology and anthropology if not explicitly, that Pope Benedict is suggesting the same. By basing his whole approach on the Logos of the Prologue he inevitably tends, for the sake of coherence and fullness, to this position.

## The Solo

As the culmination of the “polyphonic hymn”, “the eternal Word, expressed in creation and communicated in salvation history, in Christ became a man, “born of a woman” (Gal 4:4).”<sup>12</sup> Pope Benedict describes the unique and singular

history of Jesus as “the definitive word which God speaks to humanity”. He says that the “constant renewal of this encounter and this awareness fills the hearts of believers with amazement at God’s initiative, which human beings, with our own reason and imagination, could never have dreamt of. We are speaking of an unprecedented and humanly inconceivable novelty.”<sup>13</sup>

Looking at the very “structure” of creation, not only at the “present economy”, Holloway is bolder. The Incarnation is “expected” in Holloway’s synthesis. He writes: “Man could not receive from God his adequate determination in the nature of his being unless Revelation were part of the natural scheme of man’s creation, but here a word of warning must be given.”<sup>14</sup> If revelation is part of the natural scheme, the Incarnation is also. The word of warning Holloway makes is that, although revelation is part of the “natural scheme” of man, this does not mean that man’s (created) essence is of one order with the being of God. Nor does it imply that God and the creature are related in the same order of mutual relationship. The created spirit has no claims, rights or debts to collect, as Holloway expresses it, upon the nature of God. The intelligibility of man is “related not to the Divine Essence as a claim, but only to the Divine Wisdom, as the principle of meaning for the whole of creation.”<sup>15</sup> Divine Wisdom is true to itself.

Moreover in answer to questions concerning the “natural end of man” Holloway tended to hold back from claiming for Divinisation what he claimed for the Incarnation, saying that the former is an astounding scriptural revelation, and that God could intelligibly have given us a lesser end in relationship with Him.

Pope Benedict raises a similar point to Holloway’s warning. In our response to the God who speaks and calls into dialogue, the mystery of the Covenant is established. But this is not a covenant of equals, it is not a “meeting of two peers”.<sup>16</sup> The Synod Fathers expressed it in this way: “Dialogue, when we are speaking of revelation, entails the primacy of the Word of God addressed to man.”<sup>17</sup>

This is an essential aspect of the biblical notion of covenant. In the Old Testament we often read of human covenants between equal parties (eg two kings) or between unequal parties (a king and a vassal). Either party could initiate or invite the covenant, whether it be the “inferior” or “superior” party. But any covenant with God is always and only initiated by God and is always clearly “unequal”.

Taking on board the words of warning, Holloway insists that the Incarnation is expected. Pope Benedict expresses it as an “inconceivable novelty”.

## The Cross – Silence

*Verbum Domini* now touches briefly on the paschal mystery, in which we find ourselves before the “Word of the Cross”, which has spoken exhaustively and becomes silence.<sup>18</sup> Pope

**“It is in calling to mind these mysteries of our faith, expressed as Symphony, Solo and Silence, that we see the unity between creation, the new creation and salvation history in Christ”**

Benedict quotes Maximus the Confessor who attributes to Mary the phrase: “Wordless is the Word of the Father, who made every creature which speaks; lifeless are the eyes of the One at whose Word and whose nod all living things move.”<sup>19</sup>

Since God’s revelation and relationship with creation is put in terms of the dialogue of and with the Word, sin is aptly defined as the refusal to hear the Word,<sup>20</sup> to listen and engage in the dialogue. The “Word of the Cross” is the culmination of how Jesus in his perfect humanity does the will of the Father at all times. In a perfect way he hears, embodies and communicates to us the Word of God.

The paschal mystery can be described as an eternally valid compact: “divine freedom and human freedom have definitively met in his crucified flesh, in an indissoluble and eternally valid compact.”<sup>21</sup> In this mystery Jesus is revealed as the Word of the new and everlasting covenant. “In the most luminous mystery of the resurrection, this silence of the Word is shown in its authentic and definitive meaning. Christ, the incarnate, crucified and risen Word of God, is Lord of all things.”<sup>22</sup>

In this way of understanding revelation as an encounter, a dialogue with the Word, sin is described as the “refusal to hear the Word”. It breaks the covenant and results in being closed to God who calls to us. The radical obedience of Jesus “unmasks sin”, “brings about the New Covenant” and “grants us the possibility of reconciliation”.<sup>23</sup> While it is easy to understand how Jesus’ obedience “unmasks” sin, and establishes the New Covenant, it is not fully explained why this should bring about reconciliation for all other human beings.

Holloway indicates that it is the unity of the material order, and God’s entering into it in the Incarnation, that provides the “vehicle” for the “connection” with others. In this connection all human beings can share in the reconciliation achieved by Christ. It is in calling to mind these mysteries of our faith, expressed as *Symphony*, *Solo* and *Silence*, that we see the unity between creation, the new creation and salvation history in Christ. Here Pope Benedict uses an example which is used by Galileo. “We can compare the cosmos to a ‘book’” and consider it as,

“the work of an author who expresses himself through the ‘symphony’ of creation. In this symphony one finds ... what would be called in musical terms a ‘solo’, a theme entrusted to a single instrument or voice which is so important that the meaning of the entire work depends on it. The ‘solo’ is Jesus ... The Son of Man recapitulates in himself earth and heaven, creation and the Creator, flesh and Spirit. He is the centre of the cosmos and of history, for in him converge without confusion the author and his work.”<sup>24</sup>

The inspiration of the same Fathers of the Church lie at the heart of Pope Benedict’s and Holloway’s thought:

## Magisterial Developing Concerning Revelation continued

“They [the Fathers] use the Word [recapitulation] to denote that all the force and meaning of the material universe, and the spiritual personality of man, works up to a climax in Christ, the King and the Heir of the Ages, who as God in Person, brings all things to a head, and to a consummation of fulfilment in his own Being, in the Incarnation of God.”<sup>25</sup>

### The Holy Spirit

In *Verbum Domini* Pope Benedict explains that there can be no authentic understanding of revelation apart from the mission of the Holy Spirit. This is because God’s self-communication always involves the relationship of the Son and the Holy Spirit. “The missions of the Son and the Spirit are inseparable and constitute a single economy of salvation.”<sup>26</sup> It is the same Spirit who acts in the Incarnation, who guides Jesus through His mission, who is promised to the disciples; the same Spirit spoke in the prophets and continues to inspire the Church; it is the Spirit who inspires the authors of Scripture.

This is the point of unity between Scripture and Tradition. Benedict writes:

“Ultimately, it is the living Tradition of the Church which makes us adequately understand the sacred Scripture as the Word of God. Although the Word of God precedes and exceeds sacred Scripture, nonetheless Scripture, as inspired by God, contains the divine word in an altogether singular way.”<sup>27</sup>

*Catholicism: A New Synthesis* draws further conclusions from the principle of the inseparable missions of the Son and the Spirit and the single economy of salvation:

“Tradition, God’s word of teaching, has priority over the word written down. For long ages there could be no Holy Writ, but there was a teaching Church... The Bible is hers [the Catholic Church]. Unless the teaching ministry precedes, there will be no written word. The authority of the written word is one principle with the solemn authority of the teaching word... Tradition and Holy Writ are one principle, not two. The written word was, and remains, the one divine teaching. The teacher is teaching to a climax, to His coming in the flesh as Emmanuel. After He has ascended to the Father He teaches still, with divinity, with God’s authority on earth as the *Envioner* of man. ‘I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak...for He will take what is mine and declare it to you’ (Jn 16:12-14).”<sup>28</sup>

The understanding of the single economy is summed up in this passage of *Verbum Domini*:

“In the Son, ‘Logos made flesh’ (Jn 1:14), who came to accomplish the will of the one who sent him (Jn 4:34), God,

the source of revelation, reveals himself as Father and brings to completion the divine pedagogy which had previously been carried out through the words of the prophets and the wondrous deeds accomplished in creation and in the history of his people and all mankind. The revelation of God the Father culminates in the Son’s gift of the Paraclete (Jn 14:6), the Spirit of the Father and the Son, who guides us ‘into all the truth’ (Jn 16:13).”<sup>29</sup>

The Church is central to God’s plan as the place where the Holy Spirit is received. “Indeed, the Word of God is given to us in sacred Scripture as an inspired testimony to revelation; together with the Church’s living tradition, it constitutes the supreme rule of faith.”<sup>30</sup> In the dialogue of revelation the proper human response to the God who speaks is faith. “It is the preaching of the divine Word, in fact, which gives rise to faith, whereby we give our heartfelt assent to the truth which has been revealed to us and we commit ourselves entirely to Christ: ‘faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes from the word of Christ’ (Rom 10:17) ... Christ Jesus remains present today in history, in his body which is the Church; for this reason our act of faith is at once both personal and ecclesial.”<sup>31</sup>

The Church, then, is the essential location of the human response. Holloway, in a similar but more poetic and earthy manner, places the Church in Eden: “All Earth is Eden, God’s Garden of Delights. And the friendship of loving recognition and contemplative love, however simple, marks the primal revelation of God to His people. This surely must be the moment of the Church.”<sup>32</sup>

### Mary

In *Verbum Domini*, Mary’s role is described in terms of the “Mother of God’s Word” and the “Mother of Faith”. She is the one in whom the interplay between the Word of God and faith was brought to perfection. “By her ‘yes’ to the word of the covenant and her mission [Mary] perfectly fulfils the divine vocation of humanity.”<sup>33</sup> Mary is presented as the perfect image of the human reality. She is the one who is completely open to God’s will, made full of grace, unconditionally docile to the word, obedient, attentive and attuned to the word. In this way Mary is the image of the Church, actively listening, interiorising and assimilating the word. She is the model and archetype of the Church’s faith.<sup>34</sup>

Holloway expresses Mary’s role further since he is more explicit on the necessity of the Incarnation in the plan of God’s revelation and the very meaning of the created order. “It is necessary that the Heir to the Ages come into his own through the womb of woman, so that the human nature of man may be the perfect means of the action ... of God in Person upon ‘his own’ and upon the material order itself, through mankind... In this magnificent consummation of the created order by God in himself, it cannot happen that the divine Being be subjected to the intrinsic relativism of a coming to be, also in personality, which is involved in the

co-operation with God in human beings in sexual intercourse.”<sup>35</sup>

Mary is the model of the perfect response of faith to the invitation to dialogue inherent in revelation. In this she is truly “Mother of faith”. She is also “Mother of God’s Word” because she is necessary as the “world-place”,<sup>36</sup> freely cooperating in God’s plan, where the Word can take flesh.

It is Holloway’s insistence on the Incarnation, as absolutely necessary according to the wisdom of God in his plan, which brings out Mary’s role to the full.

### Conclusion

*Verbum Domini* is a significant moment in the Catholic Church’s approach to the word of God in sacred Scripture and in the Church. Catholic scripture scholarship must discover anew the Trinity-centric orientation of the Gospels, the essential place of the Church, the unity of scripture, the true meaning of hermeneutics and exegesis and that the Bible is the Church’s book. As Pope Benedict writes: “Consequently, ‘since sacred Scripture must be read and interpreted in the light of the same Spirit through whom it was written’,<sup>37</sup> exegetes, theologians and the whole people of God must approach it as what it really is, the word of God conveyed to us through human words (cf 1 Thess 2:13)”.

In as much as it tries to reflect all the voices of the many bishops present at the Synod, this document is, however, a wordy mishmash in much of the latter parts. This is a great pity because its significance goes further than giving a sure foundation to our approach to reading, studying and praying the Bible. Pope Benedict’s constant reference to the Prologue of John gives to the understanding of revelation a particular synthesis which cannot be ignored. The union of the plan of creation and revelation, of wisdom and Word, of ordering and directing, is firmly established. In so doing, he comes tantalisingly close to asserting the necessity, within God’s plan, of the Incarnation. But if we are expecting it to be declared explicitly, we remain on the threshold. It is continually suggested and insinuated but never quite stated.

It is Holloway who is the bolder:

“We must therefore expect and presume the union and communion of God with men through space and time, through history and society, through priest and prophet. And what a majestic theme this is! It is the surge of God’s communion with men until it is crowned in the Incarnation of the Eternal Word, our God in Person, who fulfils all in all – from the foetus in the womb to the entire People of God as Church and as community in heaven and upon earth.”

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 8; Ps 33:6-9; Ps 19:1; Wis 13:5; Rom 1:19-20; *Dei Verbum*, 3 (and *Dei Filius*, Chap 2).

<sup>4</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 9.

<sup>5</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 10.

<sup>6</sup> E Holloway, *Catholicism: A New Synthesis*, p40.

<sup>7</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 90.

<sup>8</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 7.

<sup>9</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 11.

<sup>10</sup> *Catholicism*, p130.

<sup>11</sup> *Catholicism*, p122.

<sup>12</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 11.

<sup>13</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 11.

<sup>14</sup> *Catholicism*, p108.

<sup>15</sup> *Catholicism*, p109.

<sup>16</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 22.

<sup>17</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 22.

<sup>18</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 12.

<sup>19</sup> Maximus the Confessor, *Life of Mary*, 89.

<sup>20</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 26.

<sup>21</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 12.

<sup>22</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 12.

<sup>23</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 26.

<sup>24</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 13; Benedict XVI, Homily on the Feast of the Epiphany, 2009.

<sup>25</sup> *Catholicism*, p205.

<sup>26</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 15.

<sup>27</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 17.

<sup>28</sup> E Holloway, *Perspectives in Theology, Vol. I*, pp38-39, Oxford 2005.

<sup>29</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 20.

<sup>30</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 18.

<sup>31</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 25.

<sup>32</sup> E Holloway, *Perspectives in Theology, Vol. I*, p37, Oxford 2005.

<sup>33</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 27.

<sup>34</sup> *Verbum Domini*, 27-28.

<sup>35</sup> *Catholicism*, p216.

<sup>36</sup> *Catholicism*, p215.

<sup>37</sup> *Dei Verbum*, 2.

<sup>38</sup> *Verbum Domin*, 29.

<sup>39</sup> E Holloway, *Perspectives in Theology, Vol. I*, p31-32, Oxford 2005.

# Catholic Involvement in Saving Marriage

By Eric Hester

**Eric Hester is a retired headmaster of Catholic grammar and comprehensive schools and currently a lead inspector of independent schools. He writes about the practical response that Catholics could make to the current attack on marriage.**

The Catholic Church in England has a poor record in opposing governments in the area of sexual morality. There is a consistent pattern here which may perhaps have raised eyebrows in Rome. Despite some resistance to redefining marriage, it is not clear that our tactics are the best – nor is it clear what our angle is. I propose to raise a couple of campaigning issues in this regard.

We have seen every Catholic adoption society in effect closed down because, apparently, the leaders of the Church thought they had a deal with politicians over “gay” adoption. The Catholic authorities were completely out-manoeuvred. As this magazine has chronicled, they largely surrendered in the fight against compulsory sex education (of a profoundly corrupting kind), most especially concerning non-Catholic schools. We were saved only from the worst excesses because the Labour government lost the last election. In schools, the Catholic authorities have meekly handed over to the politicians control over the curriculum, over the admissions of pupils and, in practice, over the appointment of teachers.

Despite the above our politicians do not seem to feel they that they owe us any favours but are pushing ahead towards altering the whole basis of marriage as it has been known in England since the time of King St Ethelbert. It will be a difficult fight against a government-funded campaign (ie one backed by our money), which has daily access to the media, especially to the BBC – which has clearly shown that it intends to push for “gay marriage”.

I am not here discussing the morality of homosexuality. The Catholic Church has always condemned homosexual acts as “intrinsically evil”, as well as of course distinguishing clearly between wounded tendencies, sin, and sinner. I want to focus upon what should be done politically to stop this proposal from becoming law.

The power of the “gay” lobby can further be gauged by the fact that, on one level, we need to remind ourselves that, in terms of health considerations, homosexual acts are not at all on the level of holding hands and a peck on the cheek. It is just the tip of a health-risk iceberg to recognise that sexually active gay men, and even their female sexual partners, are not allowed to donate blood. Given the amount of rewriting of basic biology going on in this area it is interesting to see the NHS “Who can’t give blood” website page.

In considering the practicalities of fighting this frenzied rush formally to separate sex from any specific meaning written into the nature of the human person, in which the Catholic Church seems little more than a bystander, I should remind

the reader of one fact: none of the political parties as much as mentioned the “gay marriage” measure in their manifestos.

So the British people are having something thrust upon them, a huge change, on which they have never had the chance to vote. This is wrong. This is not an emergency measure and there is no need for haste. As it is the Prime Minister who is introducing this measure, why was it not in the Conservative Party manifesto?

The reason is obvious: the proposal is massively unpopular. The Tories might well have lost the election had they included this measure in their manifesto.

They now say that they are having a consultation but that whatever the consultation finds they will still pass the measure. Will it, in fact, go through Parliament? Easily. The Tories say they are giving their MPs a free vote, which is nice for them. But those Tories who are part of the Government will in effect be pressurised to vote Yes, and the Labour and Liberal Democrats are keeping quiet. It is marvellous for the Labour Party: something which they desire is being proposed and the Tories are taking all the odium for it. Even if Labour gave a free vote, which is unlikely, the pressure from Labour constituency activists (not Labour voters) would force most Labour MPs to vote for the change: just a few people of principle will hold out. Much the same goes for the Liberal Democrats, whose leader has said that he has no intention of allowing MPs to have a free vote.

When objective histories are written of this era, surely the virtual silence of the Catholic Church in Britain concerning the widening gap between sex and procreation will figure prominently. In this piece I will focus on the tactics of the Catholic Church in England. *The Catholic Times* of 12 June reported that a prominent bishop has called upon the Labour Party and Liberal Democrats to allow a free vote. But though there is nothing wrong with this, *per se*, it concedes that the politicians should make the decision and not the people. The bishop quoted in the report made no reference to the rights of the people of Britain. As stated above, a “free” vote of MPs would almost certainly result in the Bill’s being passed.

The Catholic Bishops sent a good letter to be read at all parishes (though interestingly it did not directly mention homosexuality, and some priests have kept this secret from their parishioners). But the letter, though good on moral arguments, was weak on tactics. It did recommend that Catholics should sign the petition against the new form of marriage. There is certainly no harm in this, but politicians tend to ignore petitions. How many petitions did we all sign against abortion, all to no avail – as were the demonstrations

in London that we attended. The BBC played down the numbers and the politicians ignored what was being said.

This time we can be more optimistic because, for once, we are showing an ecumenical dimension that is useful: we should work with the Church of England. Leading bishops of that Church have spoken against the coming Bill and, more importantly, there is very strong grass-roots opposition, especially from the admirable evangelical Christian Institute based in the North East. This institute is pursuing a hard fight and its website has daily news of that battle. Among other things, the Institute has fruitfully called for a Christian boycott of Tesco, which has been giving money to the Gay Pride march. One would hardly expect this to be a festive family occasion, at least in the traditional sense of family; indeed, it is a highly sexualised pageant.

So what can we do? If one has a Conservative MP then write to him or her but even better go and see the MP, or ask the MP to meet a deputation of a dozen or so people. If you do not mind writing to newspapers, then do that: political parties want bad news to be kept quiet and the Conservative Party is certainly hoping that the fuss will subside. Use websites. Write to the Prime Minister at Downing Street and ask specific questions to which you want answers. In particular, one could ask the Prime Minister to put in writing his personal guarantee that no Church or individual will be forced to perform “gay marriages”; and that it will not be illegal for Christians to teach the traditional and biblical view that homosexual acts are sinful; and that Christians who refuse to perform “gay” marriages will still be able to be registrars.

Parish priests could consider asking any local Conservative MP to attend a meeting with him and a group of parishioners. My advice would be that such a meeting should not be a public one but that about a dozen good people should meet the MP. The meeting should be a private one, but the MP could be told quite clearly that afterwards a clear statement will be issued giving his, or her, views about homosexual marriage with the MP’s voting intentions.

I have spoken about Conservative MPs because at the time I am writing no Bill has been produced and only the leader of the Conservative Party has raised the issue directly. Once the matter becomes a definite proposal, and there is a parliamentary timetable, then MPs of all parties should be contacted. Those who live in marginal constituencies are in a very good position to help. They can contact MPs and candidates of all parties. A Conservative MP with a small majority will feel under pressure especially if, say, a candidate for UKIP strongly opposes this measure.

There are different views about political tactics but I feel that we should ask for a referendum. How are the people to express their views on an important and fairly straightforward issue missing from manifestos? Of course, the Government would control the wording and the BBC would push for

**“Leading Anglican bishops have spoken against the coming Bill and there is strong grass-roots opposition, especially from the admirable evangelical Christian Institute in the North East”**

people to vote Yes. But it is very unlikely that the Government would permit a referendum on this matter – or on any other. First, it is quite likely that it would lose heavily and suffer a great deal of bad publicity. More importantly, the Government is worried that the British people might warm to the concept of referendums and push for one on the EU.

Finally, please do not decide to leave it to other people to resist this evil. I know it is a cliché, but it is a true one that for evil to triumph it is sufficient for good people to do nothing.

# Deeper Levels of Corruption at Planned Parenthood *By Keith Riler*

**“It is hard to imagine that a 99% correlation between Planned Parenthood’s abortions and its government funding could reflect anything but a sustained, concerted – and illegal – effort”**

In his popular paper in our March issue, Keith Riler demonstrated a very close correlation over many years between Planned Parenthood’s US government funding and the abortions it performs. In addition he demonstrated a tight correlation between Planned Parenthood’s contraceptive distribution and its abortions, in direct contravention of the oft-heard comment that contraception reduces abortions. He suggested that deceptive marketing, particularly aimed at young teens, and the known link between contraception and increased sexual activity were key factors in understanding Planned Parenthood’s abortion-driven revenue growth. In this paper he offers a deeper understanding of the funding–abortion correlation, involving alleged frauds now brought to light by several whistleblower lawsuits.

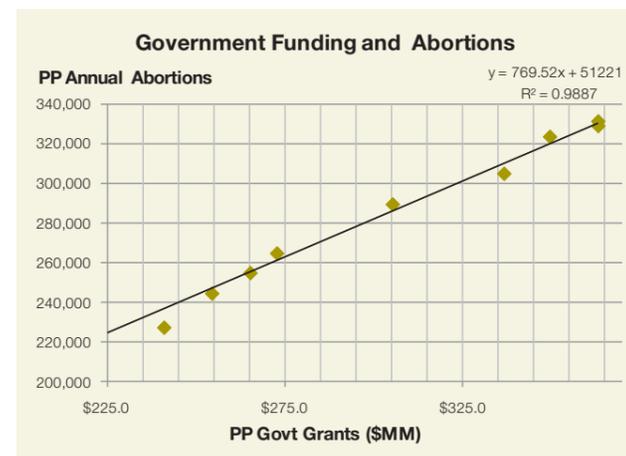
Often the simplest answer is the true one. If recent claims<sup>1</sup> made against Planned Parenthood by the Alliance Defense Fund (“ADF”) and the American Center for Law and Justice (“ACLJ”) are accurate, a simple answer solves a prior mystery.

## Strong Taxpayer-Abortion Link

A startlingly high correlation between Planned Parenthood’s abortions and its government funding was documented this year:<sup>2</sup>

Planned Parenthood’s abortions are very highly positively correlated with the amount of government funds received by the company, at 99% correlation. ... These results contradict the oft-heard wisdom that Planned Parenthood’s government support is unrelated to its abortion business. At 99% correlation, Planned Parenthood’s government funding and abortions are statistically one and the same.

The charts below confirm that Planned Parenthood’s abortion business is highly related to its government funding. The scatter plot demonstrates a near-linear relationship and the bar graph shows that for every \$1m [£640,000] of taxpayer dollars, a consistent average of 949 abortions results:



Although the earlier work highlighted the unusually high 99% correlation (social scientists get excited over mere 60-70% correlations), it deferred offering an explanation:

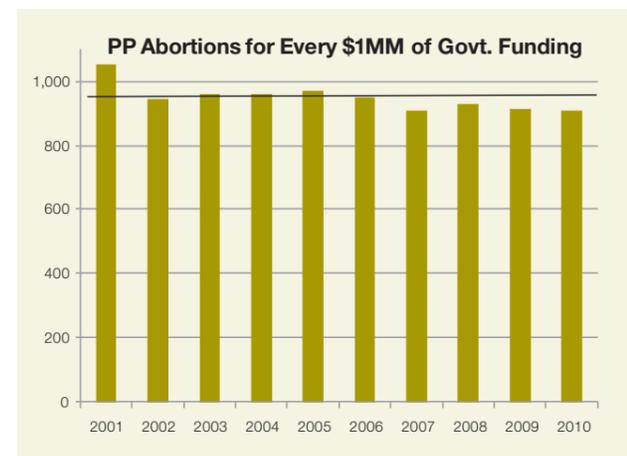
There is an apparent inconsistency between (i) a 99% correlation and (ii) Planned Parenthood’s strong assertions that no connection exists between taxpayer support and abortions. The assertions don’t square with the numbers.... It is also possible there is a more explicit connection between abortion and Planned Parenthood’s grants, given the strength of the correlation; however, such an analysis is beyond the scope of this paper.

## Now, an Explanation?

We may now have an answer that is both obvious and simple. A recent lawsuit,<sup>3</sup> brought by a former Planned Parenthood manager and the ADF, alleges that Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast (PPGC):

filed at least 87,075 false, fraudulent, or ineligible claims with the Texas Women’s Health Program. As a result, Planned Parenthood wrongfully received and retained reimbursements totalling more than \$5.7m.

Paragraphs 80-106 of the lawsuit are particularly informative



and suggest that Planned Parenthood is no charity, just another profit-seeking entity, offering a lethal product and fraudulently billing for it. Paragraph 93 explains:

Planned Parenthood...presented false, fraudulent and ineligible claims to the United States, the State of Texas ... by making an additional false notation reflecting a family planning purpose ...

An earlier case,<sup>4</sup> brought in California by a former chief financial officer, made comparable claims:

Planned Parenthood (PP) affiliates in California, including the one for which relator worked (PP of Los Angeles), knowingly overbilled the state government, and through it the federal government, to the tune of tens of millions of dollars, for birth control drugs and devices provided to clients.

And a more recent case brought in Iowa by a Planned Parenthood centre manager echoed the California claims:<sup>5</sup>

Planned Parenthood clinic director Sue Thayer filed the lawsuit against the abortion giant’s Iowa affiliate accusing it of submitting “repeated false, fraudulent, and/or ineligible claims for reimbursements” to Medicaid ...

Finally, detailed allegations (paragraphs 22-35) are made in a third case, also brought by a former employee:<sup>6</sup>

PPGC also trained its employees to create fraudulent and misleading patient chart entries so as to obtain reimbursement for services for which WHP and Medicaid would otherwise not allow payment. One notable example of this practice relates to PPGC policies for obtaining payment for abortion-related services. WHP, Medicaid, and some other government programmes do not allow payment for abortion-related services including “follow-up visits” after an elective abortion procedure. The following is a direct quote from a staff meeting memorandum given to clinic employees on 22 January 2009:

## POST AB[ORTION] VISITS:

We must work these clients in! This visit is self-pay. Quote the self-pay price then ask if she needs any other services such as birth control. If she is interested, screen for WHP or Title XX and offer the WWE [Well Woman Exam]. If the client is getting on birth control *make this the focus of the visit* and put a note in the chief complaints that the client had a surgical or medical abortion “x” weeks ago.

If Planned Parenthood in fact defrauded taxpayers using “Post AB Visits,” then the correlation between Planned Parenthood’s abortions and government payments *should* be high because “post AB visits” must follow ABs (abortions). Statistically, it is hard to imagine that a 99% correlation between Planned Parenthood’s abortions and its government

funding could reflect anything *but* a sustained and concerted effort. Such an effort would be illegal in many ways.

## Fraud = 99% Correlation = \$1,522 per Life?

These lawsuits describe just such a widespread and concerted effort. Allegedly, Planned Parenthood sought government funding for abortion by creating and billing for fraudulent services – which billing would substantially increase Planned Parenthood’s revenue per head aborted. In ACLJ’s words,<sup>7</sup> Planned Parenthood:

knowingly engaged in continued violations of both federal and state law by adopting and implementing company-wide billing policies intended to maximise revenue received from government health care programmes ... by expressly requiring PPGC’s clinics ... to bill the federal and state governments for reimbursement for (i) medical services that were never actually rendered; (ii) medical services that, although rendered, were known by Defendant to be medically unnecessary; and (iii) abortion-related services that PPGC knew were not properly reimbursable through these government programmes.

When the 99% correlation is properly considered, Planned Parenthood’s per-head abortion realisations increase to \$1,522 per life, or \$501.4m in 2010.

## Taxpayer Funding – More Correlated With Abortion Than With Contraception

The earlier analysis also observed that Planned Parenthood’s government funding correlated more strongly with its abortions (at R=99%) than with its contraception activities (although still strong, at R=77%-83%). Given that government payments are supposedly contraception-related, one would expect the contraception-funding correlation to have been higher. Not so.

The information alleged in the lawsuits could explain the shortfall. If Planned Parenthood was distributing contraception services legitimately and fraudulently claiming for abortion services (really just dollars for abortion follow-ups), then the inflated billing would weaken the correlation between contraception and government funding.

## Overstated Contraception Reporting?

By plotting reported Planned Parenthood contraception services (y-axis) and government funding (x-axis, in millions) for 2002-2009,<sup>8</sup> we see a linear trend line indicating a 1.38 million y-axis intersection. This means the best linear model of Planned Parenthood’s contraception activities calls for Planned Parenthood to “distribute” 1.38 million contraception units even while receiving no government funds (a y-axis intercept means a zero value for the x variable, being government payments).

Although Planned Parenthood might distribute contraception to private-pay clients, that distribution is unlikely to be

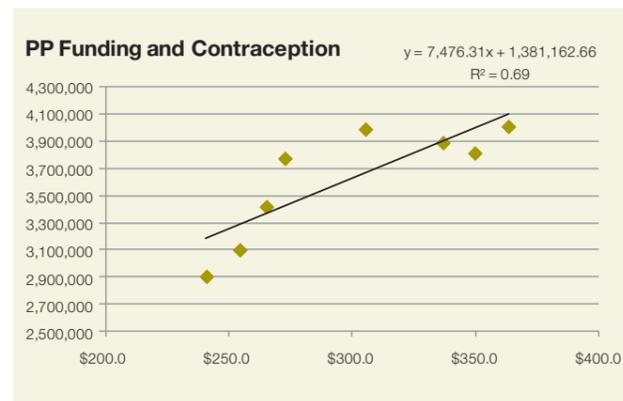
meaningful.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, if the lawsuit claims are valid, these 1.38 million uncompensated contraception services might be better viewed as the annual contraception services fraudulently recorded under the alleged schemes described above. Between the lure of taxpayer cash and the predictable Democrat accolades about “healthcare” (even more cash later), Planned Parenthood must be sorely tempted to overstate contraception activity.

### Conclusion

In summary, earlier analysis highlighted the very unusual 99% positive correlation between government funding and Planned Parenthood’s abortions. This correlation is statistically rare, but the fraud described in the numerous lawsuits could explain it. The mystery may be solved, making a simple explanation the true one – “Planned Parenthood improperly sought reimbursement from the government for abortion-related services.”<sup>10</sup>

Although unproven, the multitude and consistency of employee whistleblowing is eye opening. The old adage there’s no honour among thieves is a reflection of the broader truth that you can’t practice vice virtuously. Don’t be surprised if those who permanently render babies lifeless might also lie, cheat and steal.

On a final note, by implementing \$1/month abortions,<sup>11</sup> Obamacare has upended longstanding law prohibiting the use of taxpayer money for abortions,<sup>12</sup> by requiring that taxpayers fund abortions through private pay insurance.<sup>13</sup> Now we and aborting mothers pay \$1, with insurance companies paying the balance (about \$500<sup>14</sup>), all of which Planned Parenthood receives for each abortion. If mobile phones became ubiquitous once made cheaper, imagine what will happen with \$1-abortion. Obamacare thus moves Planned Parenthood into the legitimate unfettered flow of taxpayer money by replacing one middleman, the US government, with another, private pay insurance companies. Is it any wonder Planned Parenthood just purchased \$1.4m<sup>15</sup> in Barack Obama re-election ads?



### Notes

- <sup>1</sup><http://www.lifenews.com/2012/06/15/former-employees-expose-planned-parenthoods-medicaid-fraud/>
- <sup>2</sup><http://www.faith.org.uk/Publications/Magazines/Mar12/Mar12PlannedParenthoodAndTheDemandForAbortion.html>
- <sup>3</sup><http://www.adfmedia.org/files/JohnsonComplaint.pdf>
- <sup>4</sup>[http://media.aclj.org/pdf/gonzalez\\_brief\\_for\\_appellants\\_no\\_09-55010.pdf](http://media.aclj.org/pdf/gonzalez_brief_for_appellants_no_09-55010.pdf)
- <sup>5</sup><http://www.adfmedia.org/files/ThayerComplaint.pdf>
- <sup>6</sup><http://c0391070.cdn2.cloudfiles.rackspacecloud.com/pdf/reynolds-v-planned-parenthood-complaint-texas-planned-parenthood-lawsuit.pdf>
- <sup>7</sup><http://aclj.org/planned-parenthood/challenging-planned-parenthood-court-again-this-time-texas>
- <sup>8</sup>2010 excluded: PP changed its Medicaid accounting in 2010 and ceased reporting condom distribution, making results non-comparable without further adjustment.
- <sup>9</sup>The Title X government programme covers customers at or below 250% of the poverty line. Planned Parenthood has indicated that 75% of its customers are at or below the 150% mark, indicating PP is receiving taxpayer money for most of its customers.
- <sup>10</sup><http://www.lifenews.com/2012/06/15/former-employees-expose-planned-parenthoods-medicaid-fraud/>
- <sup>11</sup><http://www.lifenews.com/2012/03/12/obama-admin-finalizes-rules-1-abortions-in-obamacare/>
- <sup>12</sup><http://www.bdfund.org/ObamacareinCourt>
- <sup>13</sup><http://www.nationalreview.com/bench-memos/294500/what-rules-us-dorinda-c-bordlee>
- <sup>14</sup><http://civilliberty.about.com/od/abortion/f/Average-Cost-of-an-Abortion.htm>
- <sup>15</sup><http://thehill.com/video/campaign/229979-planned-parenthood-endorses-obama-launches-14m-ad-buy>

## SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT PENANCE

Christopher Keefe from West Harrow has posed us the following questions. He seems to be requesting a little development of some traditional answers. As such his queries are very apposite to the charism of Faith movement and this pastorally oriented column in particular.

1. What are the effects of personal mortal sin? Does it cut me off from God, and run the risk of my going to hell if not confessed?

Yes. Mortal sin, the committing of a gravely wrong act, deliberately and with full knowledge of its seriously wrong character, incurs the loss of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

2. If a priest absolves the mortal sin why should I have to do penance as the sin has been forgiven? I understand that through confession my sin is forgiven, and that I have to make reparation to God for my sin, but why do I need to make this reparation as God is all loving?

Because we have to cooperate with this loving work of God. Sin breaks, or at least wounds, relationships with God and each other. Forgiveness restarts and strengthens these friendships. It is the base and beginning of healing. Penance enacts our sincere sorrow and bases our cooperation with God’s healing, loving work.

3. If I have a mortal sin and it has been pardoned in confession why would one need to go to purgatory to be made perfect in preparation for heaven as one has had one’s sins forgiven? I know I need to make the reparation as per 2 above, but why?

Because, as mentioned in the previous answer, healing still has to happen.

4. How do indulgences work? I understand that they remit temporal punishment due to my forgiven sins, if I die without performing the acts of penance a priest has imposed. But again why does a loving God need this reparation? I understand that nothing unclean can go to heaven, and that, like a dry dock, we need the barnacles chipped off.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: “An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints.” (CCC 1471)

Through indulgences the Church makes a close link between “the merits” of the saints and the needs of a particular repentant sinner. The healing work of Christ, which, building upon his forgiveness, is the necessary preparation for heaven, is enabled through his sacrificial life, death and resurrection. Suffering, when it is linked with Christ and his suffering shares the latter’s redemptive effects.

The sufferings of the martyrs and saints are the most obvious and powerful examples of this fruitful solidarity with Christ in the Church. Through the Church we all therefore benefit from them. Indulgences, where we do particular acts of devotion and charity as set by the Church, focus and personalise a little bit more these saving effects.

Furthermore the loving offerings and sufferings of holy men and women across the ages can, through the Church, bear fruit in particular ways and can be applied for particular needs that may not have been explicitly known about by those who actually made those Christocentric sacrifices. The “gaining” of an indulgence by particular people can bring them special healing, to the extent that they are open to this.

# Letters to the Editor

The Editor, The Parish House, Moorhouse Road,  
Bayswater, London W2 5DJ, editor@faith.org.uk

## JOHN PAUL THE GREAT?

Dear Father Editor,

I greatly enjoyed Joanna Bogle's article on Blessed John Paul II and far be it from me to argue with the masses of people in the Church, especially the "John Paul II Generation" in America, a phenomenon not seen in Britain, about the greatness of the man. As a person with Eastern European background, I think his call to greatness could be his amazing stand and success against Communism, or at least the Soviet Bloc, which is not quite the same thing.

However, I do have theological reservations regarding Blessed John Paul II's "greatness". Part of his appeal was his ability to use the media in a way previous popes did not. In his day, media coverage of the Church brought the attention back to the universality of Catholicism in a way not seen in modern times. However, I believe one must be cautious in labelling any Pope great.

I still have serious concerns regarding the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi in 1986, both in its reality and in the media myth, which struck me at the time, and today, as a movement away from the message of Catholicism as a Church called to convert the world and to be the "sign of contradiction" in the world. False ecumenism must be seen as one of the weaknesses of the Post-Conciliar Church.

The other reason I question the label "great" is that the Pope did not reconcile many differences in the Church, which our current Pope Benedict XVI, who has been labelled the Pope of Unity, has done. Of

course, I am referring to the hoped-for rapprochement with the SSPX and the birth of the Ordinariate, the latter which is the lasting legacy of our current Pope, and the former which may become so for us traditional Catholics.

*Summorum Pontificum*, still not fully implemented in the Church in Great Britain, is another step towards the revitalisation, or renewal, of the Catholic Church, as it encourages a depth of prayer, reflection, true worship and reverence that the many outdoor Masses of Blessed John Paul II lacked almost to a fault. In addition, although his writings were clear in some respects, at least to those of us who have studied phenomenology, Blessed John Paul II did very little to directly contradict or correct the awful aberrational practices in the Liturgy that so many of us suffered from in the 1980s and 1990s, and, sadly, even today. The present Pope has done much more in this regard.

There are several other points I could cover, but I want to highlight only one more. We have a leadership crisis in the Church at the level of bishops and archbishops, most of whom were consecrated under Blessed John Paul II. No one can deny that many, many bishops are not as orthodox concerning the Faith as the laity and world needs at this time. Now, I realise that his decision was not based on his own discernment, but that of the local churches. However, his legacy of choices, at least in the States, and perhaps in Great Britain, leaves something to be desired. A great man is known by those whom he chooses to work under him as well as his own accomplishments. Part of Blessed John Paul II's legacy is his bishops.

Now, I realise a person does not have to be absolutely perfect in order to be seen as a saint, or even canonised. However, to compare Blessed John Paul II with St Gregory the Great, the reformer of the Liturgy, the great apostle to the Anglo-Saxons, a Doctor of the Church, a Latin Father, writer, and the patron saint of students,

teachers, musicians, and singers, seems to me to stretch the title a bit.

That Blessed John Paul II was a Pope for the time is undoubtedly true, but I would not have stood in St Peter's Square shouting "Santo subito". If and when I get to heaven, I can happily be proven wrong.

Yours faithfully,  
Marie Miller Dean  
Artesian Rd  
Bayswater

## OUR LORD'S GLORIFIED BODY

Dear Father Editor,

The brief article on the Eucharist in the last issue of *Faith* (Truth Will Set You Free, July/Aug 2012) brought out some interesting points. Whole books have been written on the subject and it is difficult to cover all the points when space is limited.

The Catholic explanation called Transubstantiation comes directly from St Thomas Aquinas and was promulgated as the official Church teaching at the Council of Trent to counteract such heterodox ideas as consubstantiation and impanation.

But any discussion must include John Chapter 6 where the words of Our Lord are unequivocal. He Himself said he was going to give us His Body and Blood (and, by extension, His Soul and Divinity – cf. his use of "Me") which His audience found to be an intolerable idea and started to leave. Our Lord did not call them back and say they had misunderstood, in fact He turned to the disciples and said, "Will you also go?" Peter came up with that sustaining and vivifying reply, "Lord to whom shall we go? You have the message of eternal life!" All the theological explanations return in the end to faith and the truth of Our Lord's words. *Truth Himself talks truly or there's nothing true. (Adorate devote).*

I am grateful for your emphasis upon the fact that the Body we receive is the

risen, glorious Body of Our Lord with all the properties of that state, an aspect too rarely discussed. Our Lord did show His transfigured Body to Peter, James and John. The splendour shown then was the normal quality of Christ's Body. His human soul, as it was hypostatically united to the Eternal Word, enjoyed the Beatific Vision. He normally suppressed this splendour, presumably to convince us of the reality of His humanity. After His resurrection His glorified body possessed the properties of immortality, incorruptibility, clarity, subtlety and agility.

These properties can be glimpsed from the Gospel accounts of the appearances to the disciples after the Resurrection. Although he had a wound in His side which Thomas put his hand in, there was no blood, and blood did not flow from His hands or feet. The physical properties appertaining to this glorified body are quite different from those that we now possess. It is precisely because His Body is glorified that He is able to give Himself to us in the Holy Eucharist. The condition of a glorified body is further clouded by the enigmatic remark to Mary Magdalene by Our Lord on the morning of His Resurrection when she tried to embrace Him: "Do not cling to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father." He entered the room where the disciples were even though the room was locked (Jn 20:19) and the two disciples on the way to Emmaus did not recognise Him and He was able suddenly to vanish from their sight (Lk 24:31).

The most remarkable occasion when the Eucharist was given was at the Last Supper for Christ was there standing in front of His Apostles, yet His body remained intact in front of them. We are certainly in the realm of a very profound mystery. He still stands in front of us at Mass in the person of the celebrant who as *Alter Christus* says the words exactly as Christ did at the Last Supper using the first person singular.

**"If it is accepted that homo sapiens evolved from non-rational animal precursors, was there a progression from animal souls to human souls?"**

It is precisely because His Body is now in a glorified state that He is able to give Himself in the Eucharist. This is all a profound mystery but this line of thought helps many to deepen their understanding of the jewel in the crown of the Catholic Church.

Yours faithfully,  
Christopher Bull  
Reed Avenue  
Canterbury

## IDEALISTIC EVOLUTION

Dear Father Editor,

Fr Hugh MacKenzie, in the May/June issue of *Faith* magazine, castigates Jack Mahoney SJ for expressing views (*The Tablet*, Jan 2012) that the doctrine of original sin and the primordial fall of our first parents should simply be ditched.

Fr MacKenzie accepts all the *Catechism* says on the topic, but agrees that evolution of all life forms occurred. Thus he maintains that God breathed human immortal souls into a male and female pair of hominoids, when they had emerged with a sufficient level of consciousness. This pair, Adam and Eve, then committed the original sin and fell, as described in Genesis, and in the *Catechism*, as a historical event.

However, the late Fr Ernan McMullin argued that evolution calls for a dramatic reinterpretation of the Genesis story of human origins (*The Tablet*, Jan 2008). The evolutionary process is flawed throughout, with natural evil and death, from the Big Bang onwards. As Fr McMullin stated, it is difficult to justify God as direct creator of such an imperfect process.

The same problem of theodicy was also stressed at the international conference on Darwin's theory, in Rome in 2009. The direct creation of each human soul at the moment of conception was also regarded as a theological difficulty – since the conference accepted that *homo*

*sapiens* had evolved from non-rational animal precursors. Was there a progression from animal souls to human souls?

Mgr Loftus (*Catholic Times*, 3 June 2012) insists that the doctrine of original sin should not be denied, but agrees with Fr McMullin that the present interpretation is too rigid.

The great Russian philosopher Vladimir Soloviev, who died in 1900, produced a thesis about creation, which is almost completely ignored in the West, even though it is a key to a solution of all of the above problems.

He argued that while each human being has a very tiny life span, or finite appearance in the whole of space-time of the universe, humanity is also an eternal intelligible essence. Therefore it is logical to admit that a person exists not only after death (immortal soul and ultimately immortal body at the General Resurrection), but also before birth – as an idea in God.

We can then think of humanity beginning as a great transcendental design, which is a living reality and a unity in God. The divine intention was, and is, that we would all be actualised as distinct, but perfectly sharing the whole universe as one immortal living body. Creation would then be many-in-one in the direct image of the Trinity.

This design, with full knowledge of the divine will for the being of creation, and in perfect freedom, rebelled as a unity, except the higher unity of the Alpha Christ, the idea of the Word becoming incarnate, and the idea of Mary, the Immaculate Conception.

Everything, matter and spirit, within the great design, generated within and one with the Alpha Christ, and in the fallen finite universe that is actualised, is blemished by original sin. Jesus and Mary were also actualised in the fallen state according to the divine decree of original unity, but unlike us, are always immaculate in the totality of their bodies and souls.

This thesis not only answers the problems described above, but also greatly illuminates many important aspects of doctrine and dogma, especially transubstantiation.

*Yours faithfully,  
Professor John Rooney  
Stranmillis Road  
Belfast*

### INCREASING PARISH CONFESSIONS

Dear Father Editor,  
Thank you so much for a good and thorough coverage of the Sacrament of Penance, especially in your Jan/Feb issue. Our Catholic community here in Tintagel is quite small and for decades I have had no official time which is just for Confessions as so few were coming. I regularly advertise that I am available at any time for Confessions especially before and after Mass. As a result there is a really high percentage of penitents throughout the year, week

after week. They also come from further afield. I did this even when I was with a big community.

The children helped me to this practice when I was a young curate because they listed the most difficult thing about Confession as “getting there”. The solution takes a while to catch on but it develops and grows all the time. After all, we can cancel other things of lesser importance in favour of this vital apostolate.

*Yours faithfully,  
Fr Bryan Storey  
Tintagel  
Cornwall*

### WHY MARRIAGE IS A CONTRACT

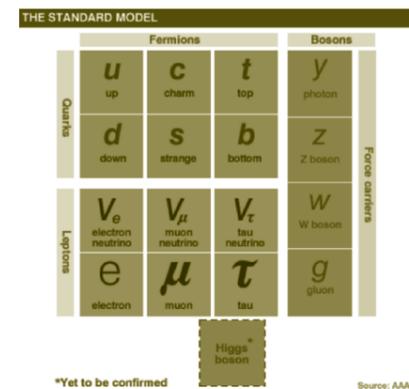
Dear Father Editor,  
I noted with interest the comments by William Oddie and Niall Gooch on gay marriage in the Jan/Feb issue. Unfortunately, we over here are further

along on the absurdity curve, merrily redefining reality at will. Your readers might be interested in a recent piece of mine highlighting the radical difference between the marriage covenant ontologically ordered towards the formation of family and two adults autonomously contracting for “loving” purposes chosen by themselves. The piece can be found at [http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/05/modern\\_gnosticism\\_and\\_the\\_family\\_as\\_contract.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/05/modern_gnosticism_and_the_family_as_contract.html)

*Yours faithfully,  
Keith Riler  
Peachtree St  
Atlanta  
Georgia*

**EDITORIAL COMMENT:** We would indeed recommend this fine piece. Also thought provoking concerning the ideologically inspired redefinition of words is Mr Riler’s parody: [http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/05/the\\_right\\_to\\_be\\_asian.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/05/the_right_to_be_asian.html)

1970s. This describes the three “generations” of matter and antimatter particles (cf. the first three columns in the diagram below), and the so-called gauge bosons, the force-carrier particles. The rows and columns are based on fundamental symmetry properties, described by equations.



The brilliance of this model was that it used mathematical symmetries, enabling the prediction of new particles with definite predicted properties (since verified) such as charge and spin. It unifies three of the four fundamental forces, leaving only the gravitational force to be accounted for. The Higgs mechanism, named after the Edinburgh physicist Peter Higgs, and its related particle, the Higgs boson, form an integral part of the Standard Model, explaining how the elementary particles have the masses that they do. John Ellis, a British theoretical physicist who works at CERN as well as at King’s College, London, explains the Higgs boson as the fundamental quantum of the Higgs field, a sort of “snow” (<http://cdsweb.cern.ch/record/1458922>) through which various particles either ski (if massless, like the photon) or sink (if with non-zero rest mass, like the quarks).

If the published results do verify the existence of the Higgs boson, this will be a milestone in fundamental physics and a towering achievement of both theoretical and experimental physics. The physical and technological problems encountered during this experiment are astounding, involving the analysis of unprecedented amounts of data in very short periods.

**“This fundamental discovery would seem to be further confirmation of the coherence of all physical reality and its interrelation in a Unity-Law of Being”**

However, it is not merely a stunning result for physicists. For those who recognise the relevance of physics to metaphysics this fundamental discovery would seem to be further confirmation of the coherence of all physical reality and its interrelation in a Unity-Law of Being. Fr Edward Holloway used discoveries such as the periodic table and the balance of ecosystems to develop the Unity Law concept.

The Standard Model, as noted above, uses mathematical symmetries to link the properties of particles and predict other particles (successfully). This is not an approach that regards all things as having equal probabilities of occurring. There is, of course, an intrinsic indefiniteness in nature, described in physics by the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, but this is no arbitrary uncertainty; it is a *precise* limit concerning the relationship between momentum and position for each particle. In fact, the mathematical formulation of the electric force (Coulomb’s law) can be derived from it. The very notion of a “field”, such as the Higgs field, is a mathematical and physical model describing the interrelationship of matter at the subatomic level, what Holloway would have called an “equational” relationship since in this vision (that espoused by *Faith* movement) the cosmos is a vast, ordered equation.

One has to be careful here, however, not to invoke the beauty of the mathematical symmetries involved as a “proof” of the existence of a creator. The philosophical work required is more complex and more fundamental. What is necessary is a philosophical analysis of nature in which the very existence of equational fields of force in the material universe is linked to a metaphysical view of what an object is and how it is related to other objects. The full working out of such a metaphysics is at the heart of the intellectual work of the Faith movement.

The sorts of particles studied at CERN in these experiments are short-lived because they are unstable, but quarks combine to form protons and neutrons;

these, in turn, combine with electrons to form atoms, many of which are stable and enable the formation of complex molecules such as DNA. This ascent of complexity can be linked directly to the unity and increasing independence of material objects using a reworking of the concept of the “analogy of being”.

Much work still needs to be done by physicists to determine the precise nature of the Higgs particle and its significance for our physical understanding of the material universe. The Standard Model describes the fundamental particles from which we, and every visible thing in the universe, are made, and the forces acting between them. However, astrophysics indicates that the matter that we can see or detect appears to be no more than about 4 per cent of the total matter in the universe. It may be that a more exotic version of the Higgs particle could help us understand the remaining 96 per cent of matter, the so-called “dark matter”.

However, even if the results turn out not to be significant enough to indicate the discovery of the Higgs boson, the intellectual and technological work involved in looking for it are a testament to the unique brilliance of the human mind, which is itself a reflection, we believe, of the Mind of God in whose image we are made.



## Cutting Edge Science and Religion News

### The Higgs-Boson Discovery: Science and Metaphysics

By Dr Gregory Farrelly

In a recent press release (<http://press.web.cern.ch>), the ATLAS and CMS experiments at CERN in Switzerland-France presented their latest preliminary results concerning the search for the elusive Higgs particle, sometimes called the “God particle”. Both experiments observe a new particle in the mass region around 125-126 GeV/c<sup>2</sup>, which may or may not be the sought-after Higgs boson.

“We have reached a milestone in our understanding of nature,” said CERN Director General Rolf Heuer. “The discovery of a particle consistent with the Higgs boson opens the way to more detailed studies, requiring larger statistics, which will pin down the new particle’s properties, and is likely to shed light on other mysteries of our universe.”

This discovery (if so it proves to be) is the result of recent experiments at CERN’s LHC (Large Hadron Collider) involving the acceleration and collision of protons in opposing beams with the

highest energies ever achieved on earth. This happens in tubes with the lowest vacuum pressures ever produced and using superconducting magnets at the lowest temperatures ever obtained. By detecting the showers of particles produced by these collisions some of their properties can be determined.

Past experiments at CERN and elsewhere (but using lower energies) together with theoretical work linking the electromagnetic, weak and strong forces led to the “Standard Model” of particle physics, formulated in the



YEAR OF FAITH 2012  
2013

## Doubt or Believe!

To begin our new column, which develops from and replaces our “Road from Regensburg” column, Dudley Plunkett explores some implications and contrary forces in undertaking to spread the virtue of Faith during the Year of Faith. He concludes with some practical experiences and observations which we hope to develop upon in this column. Mr Plunkett is senior academic tutor at the Maryvale Institute in Birmingham.

Discordant voices are being raised about the Year of Faith announced by Pope Benedict.<sup>1</sup> The Pope sees his proposal in the context of his whole pontificate as a commitment by the Church to “lead people out of the desert”<sup>2</sup> of “a profound crisis of faith” (*Porta Fidei*, 2), but there is also a sceptical challenge from those who perceive an intent to impose a backward-looking theology, a “hermeneutic of retrenchment”.<sup>3</sup> By identifying, as Fr John Sivalon alleges, a “trilogy of the demonic: secularism, relativism and pluralism” Pope Benedict “dreams of a re-established, romanticised culture of Mediaeval Europe”. The former Provincial of the Maryknoll Missionaries continues to his egregious punch-line: “While it is said to be a time of renewal, the ‘Year of Faith’ is really dedicated to the idolatry of doctrine, power and hierarchy.” These assertions could perhaps be dismissed as a fanciful tantrum if they did not manifest a problem notably cited by Pope Benedict, namely that reason “manipulated by ideology” tends to the “marginalisation of religion” and its relegation to the purely private sphere.<sup>4</sup> Such secular reasoning has found its way into the Church, and Catholics are divided as to what constitutes the essence of religion. Deference to secular thinking becomes an obstacle to the reaffirmation of

# Continuity and Development

## Notes and Quotes from the Year of Faith

Christian faith and mystery, and to ignore that this is happening only exacerbates the crisis of faith.

### How Can This Conflict be Resolved?

In the first place it is inconceivable that a resolution will come from arguments about who is right or wrong, because in such arguments there is already an implicit acknowledgement by both parties that secular reason is the arbiter. Theology has to insist upon its own perspective, prescinding from the rules of the game set by rationalists who, in their own act of faith, disbelieve in the mystery of Christian faith. Secondly, however, the authoritarian imposition of doctrines that is being alleged by progressive voices is not an acceptable option, and the despotic imposition of secular ideologies dressed up as “spirit of Vatican II” theology is an even worse prospect. The third scenario would seem to be where the two tendencies continue, each on its own path, in a dynamic but not necessarily destructive tension, with secular rationalists seeking to discredit the motives and actions of the Church leadership in the post-Vatican II era, while those who affirm a hermeneutic of continuity urge that the Good News be understood as primarily concerned with eternal life rather than secular interests.

The Pope’s striking effort to evangelise secular culture in Westminster Hall can be seen in this context as a basic text, since it seeks the same resolution. Reason, or more properly “secular reason”, needs faith, because it is faith that will save the values and convictions of civilised western society from being trodden under foot by ahistorical pragmatism, relativism and totalitarianism. Secular reason is the agent of political power; faith is the agent of transcendental values. Consistent with these arguments, the Year of Faith is aimed at truth, justice and goodness, not centralising power. It is not offering a strategy of political influence, but of conversion. It is more a matter of living the faith than proving it, as the document clearly states repeatedly with full scriptural authority: “‘Faith working through love’ (Gal 5:6)

becomes a new criterion of understanding and action that changes the whole of man’s life (cf. Rom 12:2; Col 3:9-10; Eph 4:20-29; 2 Cor 5:17).” (*Porta Fidei*, 6)

Catholics who read *Porta Fidei* in the light of the documents of Vatican II can see how consistent it is with Council teaching, and also with the *Catechism* and with the project of a faith-filled pastoral and evangelising programme, these being the three main criteria that Pope Benedict proposes for the Year of Faith. Then they will be in a position to decide whether to lend their energies to a coalition of secular reasoning and “progressive” thinking in the Church, or to rally instead to the prophetic vision being put forward by Benedict XVI. And if the latter, they must ensure that they do not minimise the vision and risk jettisoning its spiritual power.

### A Prophetic Vision

It surely cannot be denied that the Holy Spirit is at work in these times, in which the western world at least has fallen into atheism, a real spiritual darkness, and that He is guiding the Church in its response to humanity’s real needs. This is a vision that offers the prospect of unity and spiritual renewal for the Church. Moreover, it impels the Church towards the new evangelisation of people and cultures that the last two popes have so strongly advocated, and that Pope Benedict now re-affirms: “Today too, there is a need for stronger ecclesial commitment to new evangelisation in order to rediscover the joy of believing and the enthusiasm for communicating the faith.” (*Porta Fidei*, 7)

To nullify the authority claims of the Church that stem from Jesus’s commission and the Spirit’s Pentecostal anointing is to buy into secular reasoning. Even if it is inconceivable to the secularist that the Church should be allowed to claim its own authority, outside as it were of all rational proofs and empirical evidence, the Church has nevertheless to insist that its authority comes from God, that humanity must render unto God what is God’s, and that it is not enough for the

Church to be a goodwill agency spending its energies on social and compassionate action while ignoring the other three pillars of the faith affirmed in Acts 2:42, and adopted by the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as its basic, cohesive structure: doctrinal truth, sacramental reality and the postulate of a deeply personal relationship between each human being and his Creator.

“Authoritarian imposition of doctrines that is being alleged by progressive voices is not an acceptable option, and the despotic imposition of secular ideologies dressed up as ‘spirit of Vatican II’ theology is an even worse prospect”

The error of endorsing the social and moral action of Christianity almost exclusively, as engaging most directly with secular world agendas, is fatal for faith, only deepening the crisis and abandoning the challenge to the faithful to believe Jesus’s words: “I am the way, the truth and the life.” *Porta Fidei* leaves us in no doubt on this point: “The Year of Faith... is a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Saviour of the world.” It is therefore not to be a year simply of assertion of doctrines, and certainly not of ideologies, but of faith in the message and mystery of Jesus Christ and a response to its practical implications: “By faith [author’s emphasis], countless Christians have promoted action for justice so as to put into practice the word of the Lord, who came to proclaim deliverance from oppression and a year of favour for all (cf. Lk 4:18-19).” (*Porta Fidei*, 13)

### The Pastoral Challenge

A CDF Note summarises the practical challenges of the Year of Faith as concerning the universal Church, the dioceses, parishes and other church bodies.<sup>5</sup> At the global level, the key event is to be the XIII General Assembly

“The Year of Faith is not to be a year simply of assertion of doctrines, but of faith in the message and mystery of Jesus Christ and a response to its practical implications”

of the Ordinary Synod of Bishops in October 2012 dedicated to The *New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith*. Other major events are the World Youth Day in Brazil, in 2013, and initiatives intended to foster ecumenism and Christian unity. Further, a Secretariat is being established within the *Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation* to coordinate all new evangelisation initiatives. However, the CDF Note is a broadly conceived document that offers little to guide a specific parish or church group setting out its own Year of Faith programme beyond recommending such general categories as prayer, catechetical events, opportunities for reflection on the *Catechism* and Vatican II documents, relevant homilies, focus upon the liturgy, especially the Eucharist, and evangelising activities. The *Working Document* for the Synod<sup>6</sup> offers a diagnosis of the “silent apostasy” of many Church members (*Instrumentum Laboris*, 69) and a much fuller statement of principles to guide the new evangelisation, but any more practical pastoral recommendations from the Bishops and the Pope will only be forthcoming later.

It may therefore help en flesh the essentially pastoral concern of this article to reflect on how one church group is seeking in the meantime to engage in the new evangelisation and respond to *Porta Fidei*. The *Faith Alive* group in Southampton has in the past decade initiated Alpha courses, an ecumenical programme sharing ideas about leadership, formation and outreach methods with other denominations, a city guildhall event with a Catholic inspirational speaker and prayer teams, a city mission, an introductory programme for “new seekers”, that is people interested in the Church and who might wish to continue with the RCIA, displays outside a church on a main road and a manned gazebo to provide information and resources to passers-by during the papal visit, and the Anchor catechetics course making use of the “way of beauty” for evangelising parishioners, seen as a primary target. The group is

now considering how to form leaders for the Keeping in Touch (KIT) programme which reaches out to inactive Catholics.

However, it must be admitted that such work often suffers from a lack of coordination and continuity, and indeed wider inspiration. Church activities depending upon volunteers tend to be spasmodic and often dependent on self-formed leadership, so that parishes are increasingly seeking to appoint people to full-time pastoral roles to coordinate catechetical and evangelising initiatives and to form volunteer leaders and teams. Also, while there is increasing support for parish-level catechetical programmes on the internet, local online interactive approaches are much rarer, and yet can be very effective in gaining the interest especially of young seekers. And, finally, parishioners engaging in such evangelising initiatives depend upon the encouragement of their priests and bishops and their own openness to the Holy Spirit who is the main resource for the Church’s new evangelisation mission. As *Porta Fidei* affirms: “It is the gift of the Holy Spirit that makes us fit for mission and strengthens our witness, making it frank and courageous.” (*Porta Fidei*, 10).

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei*, (vatican.va/holy\_father/benedict\_xvi/motu\_proprio/documents/hf\_ben-xvi\_motu-proprio\_20111011\_porta-fidei\_en.html).

<sup>2</sup>Homily for the beginning of the Petrine Ministry of the Bishop of Rome (24 April 2005): AAS 97 (2005), 710.

<sup>3</sup>I take as an example a recent article of a kind that is likely to become commonplace: John C Sivalon, “Vatican declares ‘Year of assault’” (*National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org, 4 June 2012).

<sup>4</sup>Benedict XVI, Westminster Hall Address, 17 September 2010 (http://www.vatican.va/holy\_father/benedict\_xvi/speeches/2010/september/documents/hf\_ben-xvi\_spe\_20100917\_societa-civile\_en.html).

<sup>5</sup>Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Note with Pastoral Recommendations for the Year of Faith* (2012) (vatican.va/roman\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\_con\_cfaith\_doc\_20120106\_nota-anno-fede\_en.html).

<sup>6</sup>Synod of Bishops, XIII Ordinary General Assembly, *The New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith*, *Instrumentum Laboris*, Vatican City, 2012 (vatican.va/roman\_curia/synod/documents/rc\_synod\_doc\_20120619\_instrumentum-xiii\_en.html).



# Comment on the Comments

by William Oddie

“Archbishop Mennini seems to have a clear agenda, and it is that of the Holy Father ... it could be that in 10 years’ time our Bishops’ Conference will have a very different look”

## Towards The New Evangelisation?

When Archbishop Antonio Mennini was appointed as papal nuncio in London, observers of the affairs of the English Church had a good look at his record, for clues to what his policy would be in one of the most important areas of a nuncio’s work: making recommendations to the Congregation for Bishops and the Holy Father on who to appoint to dioceses which become vacant.

We were all well aware what the explanation was of the great conundrum, for the English Church, about the reign of John Paul II: why was it, when he had appointed most of our bishops, that nearly all of them went out of their way to undermine his vision for the Church? The answer, of course, was that a succession of nuncios had “gone native”, and had advised the Holy Father to appoint the men suggested to him by our own existing bishops, and especially by Cardinal Hume and then Cardinal Murphy O’Connor: in other words, nuncios had been agents for the continuing project of the English bishops endlessly to perpetuate themselves and their de-Romanising, even secularising, vision for the English Church.

On Archbishop Mennini’s appointment, I hopefully speculated that an interview he had given in Russia (where he had previously been nuncio) might indicate that he was firmly behind the Pope’s agenda on the fight against secularisation. It was, I said, “good and hopeful stuff, which encourages one to hope that he will be using his obvious capacity to work out what’s going on in a particular secularised culture to help the Church here to begin the fightback, in the most effective way open to him – that is, by helping the Pope to appoint bishops who will do everything they can to implement rather than to undermine the Holy Father’s agenda.”

Well, the raising to the episcopate of Mgr Philip Egan could hardly be a more

striking demonstration that that is precisely what Archbishop Mennini does intend. To Portsmouth, the diocese in England where more than in any other the subversion of everything Pope John Paul stood for has proceeded unchecked ever since the appointment of its present bishop in 1989, the Holy Father has appointed the right-hand man of Bishop Mark Davies, probably the most passionately orthodox bishop in England today. You will remember, perhaps, *The Tablet’s* speculation (<http://protectthepope.com/?p=5133>) about Cardinal Cormac’s dismay at Bishop Davies’ appointment to Shrewsbury: “Bishop Davies’ appointment has certainly delighted conservatives”, said the *Tablet* blog; “he recently handed the running of a parish to a traditionalist group, who exclusively celebrate the old rite. It would appear that Cardinal Murphy-O’Connor was absent when the congregation [of bishops] settled on Bishop Davies for Shrewsbury. ‘That’ll teach me to miss the plane,’ he is said to have quipped.” However, as Fr John Zuhlsdorf commented in his welcome for Mgr Egan’s appointment, speculating on the implications for the future, “Cardinal Murphy-O’Connor ... turns 80 on 24 August and will no longer have a voice in the Congregation as a member.”

When I reported, in my *Catholic Herald* blog, that Bishop Davies had agreed to the establishment of a foundation of the Institute of Christ the King, Sovereign Priest at the threatened landmark Church of Ss Peter and Paul, New Brighton, as a centre for the celebration of Holy Mass and the other Sacraments in the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite and as a centre for Eucharistic devotion and adoration, I noted that this represented another very considerable episcopal surge in a generally Ratzingerian direction, and expressed the hope that “We may now ... look forward to a series of such [episcopal] appointments from the new

nuncio...” “This is, I hope and assume”, I continued, “the way things are now going.”

Well, it seems, fingers crossed, that I was right. The choice of Monsignor Philip Egan to succeed Bishop Crispian Hollis at Portsmouth is Archbishop Mennini’s first real appointment (it is generally thought that the appointment of Mgr Peter Brignall as the new Bishop of Wrexham was probably already in the pipeline), and it is a cracker. If you want an idea of Mgr Egan’s theology, you might like to look at the following video <http://www.esnips.com/displayimage.php?pid=19884633> of a talk he gave in 2009, on the authority of *Humanae Vitae* (in which he argued that its teaching was infallible); a delighted John Smeaton, on the SPUC website welcomed the appointment and quoted Mgr Egan:

“It seems to me that there is a persuasive case for believing that the doctrine of *Humanae Vitae*, regardless of the pastoral difficulty it causes, regardless of the philosophical and theological arguments thrown against it, regardless of the historical conditioning of its neo-scholastic framework, has been, and is being taught infallibly, that is, irreversibly and without error, by the Church’s ordinary universal magisterium.”

His appointment inspired Damian Thompson to one of his splendidly irreverent Hollis-teasing posts on the *Telegraph* website (Mr Thompson is going to miss Bishop Hollis now he has retired). Under the headline “The new bishop is in for a treat”, he reported that there was “excitement in traditional Catholic circles at the appointment of Mgr Philip Egan as bishop of the hippy-dippy diocese of Portsmouth. Mgr Egan is a Ratzinger loyalist who takes a firm line on dissent. He doesn’t waffle in the ‘bishopsese’ favoured by other prelates (eg, ‘today we cherish our gathered-ness as a community’).

And he will be the only English Catholic bishop with a PhD – a real one, as opposed to the Dolly Parton/Richard Chartres honorary variety.”

“I wonder”, he continued, “how the new bishop will get on with Paul Inwood, Portsmouth’s venerable but groovy ‘director of liturgy’. Inwood is a composer belonging to the Birkenstock school of aural torture. He once wrote a piece called Alleluia Ch-Ch, the ‘Ch-Ch’ representing clapping. Mgr Egan, you have been warned.”

Well, we may be fairly sure that the message on the liturgy in Portsmouth diocese will now be very different. But the appointment of Mgr Egan has a relevance well beyond that diocese. From it, we can deduce a number of things. First, that Archbishop Mennini has considerable respect for Bishop Davies, whom he clearly sees as the kind of bishop we need more of in this country: he almost certainly found out about Mgr Egan, who has so far maintained a fairly low profile, from Bishop Davies: the fact that he has followed his advice shows what kind of bishop he is now looking to appoint. Fr Zuhlsdorf (“Father Z” [pronounced Zee]) commented that “since the Nuncio ... is still pretty young he is not likely to ‘go native’. He surely doesn’t want this to be his last job.” This is a point worth making: we have been used to being given Nuncios who have been sent here as their last appointment before their retirement; they had nothing to lose by comfortably fitting in with the local bishops: this one does.

Damian Thompson had already perceptively noted, from the text of an address given to the Bishops of England and Wales by Archbishop Mennini soon after his arrival in England, that there seemed to have been “a shift of authority back in the direction of Rome” – and, he added, “not before time”. Like others, he surmised that this could have implications for the way in which bishops would now be appointed: “According to a highly placed Vatican

source”, he went on, “the previous Nuncio, Archbishop Sainz, did not impress everyone with his nominations for bishops. This Nuncio seems to have a very clear agenda, and it is that of the Holy Father, which makes a nice change.”

Things are now moving on. The Congregation for Bishops (which in Cardinal Marc Ouellet has a firmly Ratzingerian prefect, who may well with the appointment of Mgr Egan be confirming that England’s problems have at last been noticed in Rome) will soon be making a good number of other episcopal appointments in England, and they will be relying on Archbishop Mennini’s advice; it has been surmised (though as far as I know, unsupported speculation is all it is) that Cardinal Ouellet is waiting for the retirement of Cardinal Murphy O’Connor from his Congregation before he moves ahead with these appointments, though he wasn’t deterred from appointing Mgr Egan before this event. East Anglia and Leeds (Bishop Roche, lucky old thing, is off to Rome to become Secretary of the Congregation of Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments) are waiting for new bishops. The bishops of Plymouth, Hallam and Brentwood are over 75; the Bishop of Salford and the Archbishop of Liverpool are nearly 74 (already there is speculation that in this new dispensation Bishop Davies will be the obvious appointment for Liverpool). There are two other dioceses in their seventies: Lancaster and Hexham & Newcastle. Quite a few other dioceses will soon likewise be *sede vacante*; a good third of the dioceses of England will over the next year or two have new bishops.

An interesting piece, by Father Raymond J de Souza, on the way Cardinal Ouellet, since arriving in Rome, has already “reconfigured” the Church in his native Quebec was published on *The Catholic Register* (“Canada’s Catholic News source”) in March:

“How do you reform an episcopate and provide new leadership for the Church

in a particular nation? Canada is now the model for the Church universal on how it can be done.

“The dramatic appointment of Christian Lépine as the new archbishop of Montreal, only six months after he was ordained an auxiliary bishop of the same diocese, has drawn attention to Canada as the exemplar of how an episcopate can be reconfigured for the challenges of the new evangelisation.

“...The safe way to appoint bishops is to select archbishops from long-serving bishops, and bishops from long-serving auxiliaries, and auxiliaries from long-serving officials in chancery offices. Ouellet, sensing that a new direction was needed for the Church in Quebec, did not advise the Holy Father to take the safe option.... [Instead he appointed] young bishops, novice bishops, bishops from outside of Quebec – all this is a significant departure from the norm. Ouellet evidently decided that the norm in Quebec needed changing, and so has advised the Holy Father to change it – emphatically.”

One swallow, they say, doesn’t make a summer. All the same, there seems to be a reasonable hope that Cardinal Ouellet will now, having noticed (probably with the Holy Father’s direct involvement) this country’s needs, set himself to showing “how an episcopate can be reconfigured for the challenges of the new evangelisation” here, too; so it could be that in 10 years’ time our Bishops’ Conference will have a very different look about it.

We all know (and most of us could come up with a longish list) of good, faithful priests worthy to be appointed bishop, who in the bad old days would never even have been considered for “promotion” to episcopal rank, precisely because of their known fidelity to the authority of the Magisterium. Now, it seems, there has been a most wondrous change; things as I write are looking more hopeful for the mission of the English Church than they have for many years.



# Book Reviews

## Religion for Atheists – a Non-Believer’s Guide to the Uses of Religion

by *Alain de Botton, Hamish Hamilton 2012. 320pp, hardback, £18.99.*

“New Evangelisation” is one of those ideas that are in constant danger of being hijacked by bishops and diocesan bureaucrats as a way of carrying on with the same old things but disguising the fact with a shiny new gloss. For its originator, Blessed John Paul II, it was precisely the opposite: a call to do absolutely everything differently.

For Pope John Paul, the evangelising task of the Church today must not only use new methods and means of expression, but be suffused with a new ardour. He saw two main ways of kindling this ardour: one, as expressed eloquently in his *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, was through that contemplation of the face of Christ which the whole Church engaged in during the Millennium Jubilee. The other could be called contemplating the face of the (post)modern world.

That world, as he and numerous commentators have attempted to describe, presents a completely new challenge to the Church: hence the need for a new evangelisation. Hitherto, the Church has faced the task either of converting pagans (ie worshippers of other gods), or of constantly renewing the vigour of Christendom. Today our world is instead a post-Christendom world, in which many vestiges of Christianity remain but have taken on an alien identity, to the extent that they can be

– and sometimes are – actually used against the Church which was their matrix.

The process by which this happened – by which concepts such as personal freedom, human rights and equality have been slowly distorted to mean something quite other than they did when Christian Europe gave birth to them – has been laboriously traced by historians of ideas such as Charles Taylor and Alastair MacIntyre. The interest of such writers is usually to illuminate the contemporary world for Christians, and so to begin the process by which the Church might creatively respond to this unprecedented and complex challenge.

Alain de Botton, however, attempts something quite different, which might be seen as turning this enterprise on its head. His desire is to extend this process of appropriation of religious ideas by a secular world more or less indefinitely. If William Booth could ask why the devil should have all the best tunes, de Botton asks, in effect, why should religion have all the best ideas and practices?

In some ways this is not a new idea, of course. Machiavelli, Voltaire, Matthew Arnold and some of our own politicians are among those who have argued that a religion they would scorn to believe in themselves has many social uses and that its benefits should not be discarded lightly. That is not exactly de Botton’s position, however, even though it is hard to say exactly what his position is. The one thinker he explicitly comes closest to is Auguste Comte, with his religion of humanity, even though he mocks Comte’s grasp of reality and admits the word religion must be thrown out altogether.

Indeed it is hard not to mock de Botton’s own thesis, or indeed the numerous photographs which illustrate it, such as one of an imaginary “Department for Relationships” or of a “Psychotherapeutic Travel Agency [which] would align mental disorders with the parts of the planet best able

to alleviate them.” Sensitive readers are advised not to look too closely at what the couple in the foreground of one photograph are doing to celebrate the “yearly moment of release at the Agape Restaurant”, which is apparently a secular version of Easter High Mass at Westminster Cathedral.

De Botton’s argument is easily summarised, and, sadly, just as easily dismissed. Of course religion is not true and there is no God, he opines, yet many of the ideas religions have spawned are “sporadically useful, interesting and consoling” and should be deliberately adapted by atheists. Each chapter of the book takes a different aspect of these ideas and suggests how that could be done, for example within the categories of communion, forgiveness, education and art.

There is really no need to indulge in a lengthy refutation of this thesis, because it has been done in advance with his usual brilliance by Chesterton in *The Thing*:

Before we call either Culture or Humanism a substitute for religion, there is a very plain question that can be asked in the form of a very homely metaphor. Humanism may try to pick up the pieces; but can it stick them together? Where is the cement which made religion corporate and popular, which can prevent it falling to pieces in a debris of individualistic tastes and degrees? The problem of an enduring ethic and culture consists in finding an arrangement of the pieces by which they remain related, as do the stones arranged in an arch. And I know only one scheme that has thus proved its solidity, bestriding lands and ages with its gigantic arches, and carrying everywhere the high river of baptism upon an aqueduct of Rome.

**Mgr Keith Barltrop**  
Bayswater, London

## The Catholic Girls’ Survival Guide for the Single Years

by *Emily Stimpson. Emmaus Road Publishing, USA, available on Amazon. Paperback 140 pages.*

This book is wise, practical, useful and, alas, necessary. Whenever I go to Catholic events these days, I seem to see so many bright, attractive, delightful girls who would love to be married and aren’t. They have good jobs and often own property: they are fun and good company and virtuous and hard-working. Why aren’t they married?

Back to that in a moment. Meanwhile, here’s a survival guide. It is centred on a recognition of the great goodness of God, and it is cheering and uplifting. It’s not written by a smug married lady, but by a woman who knows about the single life. It has an upbeat message and sees life as a gift. It takes seriously the many challenges to chastity that surround us all today. It tackles the real issues faced by women in the modern West, and looks at things realistically. It offers inspiration, and is centred on deep faith in a loving and all-wise God.

Some bits are rather too American: in the clothes section I at first wondered what “jeggings” were (latest fashion: a mix of jeans and leggings – rather ugly, actually, and the author of the book thinks so too) and talk of “dates” made me think at first of dried fruit rather than of young men. But don’t worry about that: the content of the book soars above any transatlantic differences.

Advice includes: managing finances, coping with heartbreak (massive redecoration of your house / loud singalongs with the radio / shopping for a well-deserved new outfit / baking a delicious cake and sharing it with friends – and those are just a few of the ideas listed), and solving domestic challenges when alone (water pipes, windows that stick, machines that won’t work). There is a very good section on beauty – appreciating

“De Botton opines that many of the ideas which religions have spawned are ‘sporadically useful, interesting and consoling’”

beauty (in nature, in music, in people’s kindnesses) and encouraging it in oneself. The book emphasises that God loves us – He loves his daughters, He wants them to be happy, He has given them gifts and He values their appearance and their laughter and their desire to do good things.

Now, back to marriage. Here are some of my own thoughts on the subject. First, there’s not enough of it, especially among Catholics. And it’s men who have to do the proposing – yes, even in the 21st century, that’s the reality. It begins with the first date: the chap has to ask. “They are afraid of being hurt, if a girl turns them down,” I was told. Well, be a man. It’s not exactly like storming the Normandy beaches, is it? Of course it’s true that in the maelstrom that is today’s general social scene, a virtuous young Catholic feels alone and confused and isolated – it may seem impossible to find a mate. But that is not true at a Catholic event, a FAITH Movement gathering, a pro-life conference, a get-together at a major Catholic venue known for its orthodoxy and devotion. The girls are there. So are the chaps. But the latter won’t get on and do anything! They hover, they ponder from a distance, they may even fantasise. “I often think about a particular girl, when I get home, and wish I had got talking to her,” one said bleakly. Oh, for goodness’ sake. Get on with it! Go over to the girl during coffee-after-Mass, and say “Hallo! I’m James.” And get talking.

“A virtuous young Catholic feels alone and confused and isolated”

And girls: if a decent man, in a Catholic environment, gets chatting, and it’s clear that he’s not a sex-hound, and is open and pleasant, and things move forward to an honourable date, say YES. If he isn’t love’s young dream, if he has crooked teeth, if he seems a bit of a bore – still, say YES. You owe it to him in decency and in courtesy, in commonsense and in

charity. Many a happy marriage has begun with a girl thinking: “Oh, he isn’t my type at all.” And if things don’t move in that direction – well, you might find he has nice friends, or he might turn out to be right for one of your friends, or you might just have a pleasant evening, or he might introduce you to some new ideas, books, music or interests. Be gracious. Be charming. Be wise.

And buy this book. It is a good read, it’s uplifting and funny and full of common sense. It is an overdue book: we need it, and its message.

**Joanna Bogle**  
New Malden

## John Paul II – The Road to Sainthood

by *Jim Gallagher, CTS booklet, £2.95.*

## Year of Faith with John Paul II

by *Jim Gallagher, CTS booklet, £2.50.*

## John Paul II

by *Jim Gallagher, CTS Children’s Books, paperback, 24 pages, £2.95.*

As we begin to grasp the fullness of the legacy of Blessed John Paul, so the books and pamphlets are arriving. It feels strange to realise that it is more than seven years since his death – soon it will be a decade. Already much of what he achieved has become part of our Catholic culture, and somehow now just seems normal – World Youth Days, vast open-air Masses, informal Papal question-and-answer sessions with the media, and an understanding of the Petrine task as something vigorously missionary that involves preaching to vast crowds on every continent.

The CTS has done a competent job with Jim Gallagher’s simple booklet telling the story of John Paul’s life – the childhood marked by his mother’s early death along with that of his



brother; the deep, strong bond with his father; the grim years of the German occupation and his tough job in a stone quarry; the mysticism and prayer-life; the youth drama groups; the ordination in a Poland coming to grips with what was to be a decades-long imposition of Communism. The booklet is readable, informative and well-produced. Jim Gallagher has grasped something fundamental – that Pope John Paul sought to give people back their own identity, so often robbed from them by materialism, by political oppression or by poverty. This is a profound insight, and is well explored in this booklet, along with an understanding of John Paul’s own courage and inner strength, his deep immersion in prayer and his confidence in God and in the motherly protection of Mary. The booklet has some good photographs, and could perhaps usefully have had more. The style sometimes lapses into an over-use of exclamation marks – but then John Paul’s life really was one marked by extraordinary drama, signs of Providence, astonishing achievements and even miracles. So perhaps the exclamation marks are justified after all.

A Year of Faith begins in October, and the CTS has produced an attractive pocket-sized set of meditations by John Paul II to link with this. The sections cover topics ranging from Christ and Mary to the priesthood, the consecrated life, peace, the saints, mission and vocation. It’s a good read, and well illustrated with pictures of Blessed John Paul greeting young people, celebrating Mass, talking to Mother Teresa, praying the Rosary, and more. A useful carry-around booklet for everyday use.

A new generation is emerging for whom John Paul is something of a legendary figure. The CTS children’s book, delightfully illustrated, was originally produced in Italian and has a charming and vivid feel to it. It is easy to read and a delight to handle, and tells the story of a remarkable life with a sense of pace and adventure that

also manages to introduce a spiritual message. In describing John Paul’s achievements it is odd that it does not mention the collapse of Communism or indeed his visits to his native Poland – surely central events of his Papacy and of recent world history. There is a definite, if gentle, Italian bias to the book: the Assisi gathering, the huge youth event at Tor Vergata in 2000, John Paul’s denouncing of the Mafia. This book would be a good introduction to the story of John Paul II – but an intelligent child will ask for more. Which, on reflection, is rather a good thing and is perhaps the purpose of the book. Meanwhile it would be a useful addition to the library of any Catholic primary school, and indeed of any young Catholic family.

**Joanna Bogle**  
New Malden

### The End of the Present World and the Mysteries of the Future Life

*by Fr Charles Arminjon (1881), trans. by Susan Conroy and Peter McEnerny (Manchester, New Hampshire: Sophia Institute Press, 2008), 311 pages, from Amazon UK at £11.56.*

“Reading this book was one of the greatest graces of my life.” So said St Therese of Lisieux in what must rank as one of the most powerful books recommendations of all time. Readers of St Therese’s autobiography may recall that she read this book before entering the Carmel and before even recognising her vocation to enter. The book is filled with the spirituality that she followed in her years in the Carmel. More than one reader of her autobiography must have read her reference to this collection of conferences and wondered if this book is available – now it is. As the introduction explains, it seems that this book has lain forgotten for many years and never previously been translated into English.

One of the aspects of St Therese’s spirituality that strikes even the casual

reader is her awareness of the reality of heaven. She lived in this world aware that our true homeland lies beyond. For example, when she first realised that she was dying of TB she responded to this illness not with despair but with joy; joy because she recognised it as the “call of the Beloved” to come and be with her in heaven. Such a perspective is only possible if one is firmly and easily rooted in the awareness of eternity. When reading the book it is not difficult to see how the topics it covers managed to fill her with this awareness. The book treats of the signs that will accompany the end of the world, the Anti-Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the judgment, the state of our glorified bodies, eternal beatitude, as well as more stern topics such as the pains of purgatory and the fate of the damned.

Of the topics that will be familiar to devotees of The Little Flower, perhaps particular note should be made of its treatment of sacrifice and “the mystery of suffering in its relationship with the future life”. Two of the nine conferences are devoted to this topic. The Christian must suffer, on his road to heaven, because Christ suffered on His royal road: “It cannot be granted that Jesus Christ wanted to open up two differing paths leading to Heaven” (p.289). In this context the book elaborates that suffering is not to be feared but rather embraced as “a sure pledge of His tenderness... This guarantee, this real testimony of the Beatific Vision, which made the souls of the saints sigh with joy, is not the brilliant successes of this world, or temporal glory or happiness, but *trials and suffering*” (p.294). It was because St Therese was confident in this truth that she was able to see in her father’s sufferings a sign that God loved her father. It is surely only strong faith that is able to see such a thing.

While the book has much to commend it, there are two particular issues that a modern reader may find distracting. The first relates to the fact that the book assumes the scientific opinions

of its day, namely the 19th century. This comes across, for example, in the book’s attempt to locate the physical place where hell must be and its conclusion that it must be at the centre of the earth. A reader immersed in our contemporary scientific viewpoint is likely to think that any location that we can conceivably dig down to can surely not be the location of hell, otherwise we could get the damned out! This may seem like a pedantic criticism but it surfaces as an issue a number of times.

The second issue concerns a number of then-contemporary issues that do not have the same relevance for us today. For example, the focus on the French Revolution and the form of secular ideologies that followed lacks the immediate relevance that it would have had for St Therese. Finally, it might be noted that the French-ness of the book’s author is also occasionally apparent: could any other nation produce a book in which Napoleon gets referred to as a hero? Nonetheless, despite these criticisms, this is an exceptional book and one that deserves to be read by every follower of St Therese and by many others too.

One final comment: This is a book for adults even though St Therese read it as a young teenager. My only serious regret in reading this book is that I did not read it when my mind was as fresh and formable as St Therese’s was when she read it in her youth.

**Fr Dylan James**  
Shaftesbury

### Jesus & the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist

*by Brant Pitre, Doubleday 2011, 240pp. Available from Amazon at £13.31.*

Readers of Volume 2 of Pope Benedict’s *Jesus of Nazareth* will know that he supports the view that the fourth chalice was at the Cross. Brant Pitre explains this and four other

characteristics of the Eucharistic sacrifice we have today, tracing its origins back to the time of Christ.

Jesus is the Messiah, the new Moses, who changes water into wine at Cana, as Moses changed water into blood for Pharaoh. He ushers in a new Exodus, foretold in the Transfiguration when he was discussing this with Moses and Elijah (in St Luke’s gospel).

In the manna, we have a miraculous bread, not some secretion of the tamarisk tree (as I was taught for years). This was the ‘bread of angels,’ which was placed in the tabernacle with the tablets of the Ten Commandments and Aaron’s staff. It was thought by some rabbis that the Messiah would bring the new manna to strengthen his people. This is really what we mean when we say “Give us this day our daily bread”: Give us this day our bread from heaven – Jesus, our Bread of Life.

At the time of the Exodus the tabernacle contained, along with the Ark of the Covenant, the Menorah and the golden table of the Bread of the Presence. In some translations it is called the “Shewbread”. I have always thought that this was part of Jewish rubrics, but Pitre highlights its much greater significance.

The Bread of the Presence consisted of twelve cakes (rods) set on a table of pure gold. It was offered every Sabbath as *an everlasting covenant*. As long as the Bread was inside the tabernacle, the Menorah had to be kept burning (note the parallel with the sanctuary lamp). It was also a thanksgiving sacrifice as well as a meal for the priests who offered it. On the great feasts in Jesus’ time, the priests in Jerusalem would remove the bread and raise the golden table of the Bread of the Presence saying, “Behold, God’s love for you!” This was because it was a sign of the covenant between God and His holy people, which also expressed the desire of the people to see God and live, and to know that He loved them.

## “Pope John Paul sought to give people back their own identity”

The Last Supper was not merely the new Passover, but the new bread and wine of the Presence, showing God’s love for us. Instead of the twelve cakes, there are twelve disciples, there is the bread and wine, and the new and everlasting covenant offered by Jesus our Priest, and eaten not at the golden table, but at Jesus’ Table in the Kingdom of His Father (Luke 22:30).

Many will have read Rabbi Edersheim on the Passover, but he was of course unable to draw out its development as our Eucharist. Here, the author deepens our awareness of how Jesus takes the worship which He inspired, and was meant to fulfil and perfect.

**Fr James Tolhurst**  
Chislehurst

# Notes From Across the Atlantic

by David Mills



## ABORTION AND HEDONISTIC CULTURE I

“There are people here who, everything they do in public life, they gauge how *The New York Times* will react,” says an unidentified New York City councilman, talking to *The New York Observer* in a story on political candidates’ energetic pursuit of *The Times*’ endorsement. *The Times*, the story explains, “is still seen as an unbiased arbiter”.

Our eyebrows went up, too, but this is New York. The newspaper’s kind of candidate is “somebody who is well-spoken, physically put together, has a sense of humour”. Ideologically, he should be an on-the-one-hand-and-on-the-other kind of guy. “Be in favour of good government and the environment, but anti-development absolutists should run for community board president. Ideas for closing the income gap are encouraged, but so is responsible budgeting.”

Except, and you had to know this was coming: “Going wobbly on abortion rights or gay rights is a disqualifier.” A political operative explains, “You get the sense that for the single mother who makes \$29,000 a year, they [the editors] care a lot more about her right to an abortion than her right to decent health care from her union.”

## ABORTION AND HEDONISTIC CULTURE II

“We got to where he was letting me off, he turned off the engine, and he began jabbering incoherently about men and women. Then he lunged, shoving his tongue in my mouth while running his hands over my breasts and up and down my torso.” Thus Emily Yoffe’s youthful acquaintance with Fr Robert Drinan, SJ, friend of her family and in all his years in Congress (1971 to 1981)

an ardent advocate of abortion “rights.” Yoffe is the “Dear Prudence” advice columnist for the liberal website *Slate* and someone whose report you’d think would be noticed.

But not when she turns in a liberal icon. The story appeared on *Slate.com* on June 21, and as we write six days later, no report has appeared in the pages or websites of *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, or *The New Republic*. *The Washington Post* simply reprinted David Gibson’s Religious News Service story on its website, as did *The Christian Century* and *The National Catholic Reporter*.

## SOME MODERN ANTI-CATHOLICISM

Anti-Catholicism lives. In a glowing review of a movie called *A Perfect Family*, Rex Reed writes that the main character Eileen is “a devout, self-obsessed Catholic so enslaved by dogma and ritual that she crosses herself and gives thanks to God before she so much as eats a vegetarian tamale.” We had thought gratitude a good thing worth expressing, but maybe we’re self-obsessed and enslaved by dogma.

Another example: “‘What do you think?’ someone asks. ‘I don’t have to think. I’m a Catholic,’ says Eileen. I laughed like a loon.” (Loons, of course, don’t laugh.) The movie tells the story of a Catholic woman fighting to be named Catholic Woman of the Year while her dysfunctional family falls apart, and it apparently includes every cliché you’d expect, as well as teaching us about “misplaced faith” (Catholic) and “real family values” (not Catholic).

According to the IMDB website, the movie grossed \$108,000. Someone lost

a lot of money making this movie, and, you know, that makes us happy.

## DISOBEYING THE LAW OF THE LAND

In the heat of current controversies over religious freedom, it is rarely noted that the churches, and particularly the Catholic Church, have been the guardians of social order and even of pluralism. The churches have been reticent to impose their views on others – the Catholic bishops have not even suggested making contraception illegal – and quick to extend their services to anyone who needs them.

But there are limits. And not just when the state tries to make the churches do things they can’t do. Sometimes it tells them not to do things they have to do.

Alabama’s immigration law, still unsettled, “makes it illegal for a Catholic priest to baptise, hear the confession of, celebrate the anointing of the sick with, or preach the word of God to, an undocumented immigrant,” as the Archbishop of Mobile, Thomas Rodi, said last year when he joined a suit against the law. It rules out anyone, priest or layman, encouraging them to go to Mass or giving them a ride to the church, letting them come to Bible studies or Sunday school, driving them to the doctor, giving them the food and clothing they need, counselling a pregnant woman against abortion or helping her take care of her baby.

As Archbishop Rodi concluded, “No law is just which prevents the proclamation of the gospel, the baptising of believers, or love shown to neighbour in need. I do not wish to stand before God and, when God asks me if I fed him when he was hungry or gave him to drink when he was thirsty, to reply: Yes, Lord, as long as you had the proper documents.”

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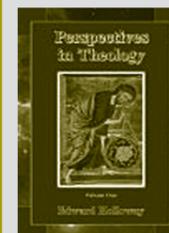
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Faith Movement offers a perspective upon the unity of the cosmos by which we can show clearly the transcendent existence of God and the essential distinction between matter and spirit. We offer a vision of God as the true Environment of men in whom “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 and Son of Man, 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.

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