

faith

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OF FAITH AND REASON

The Papal Vision and the Hermeneutic of Observation

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Ronald Walls

The UN Implements a New Vision of Gender

Marguerite Peeters

The Mass as Sacrifice: Towards Theological Development

Thomas Crean and Hugh MacKenzie

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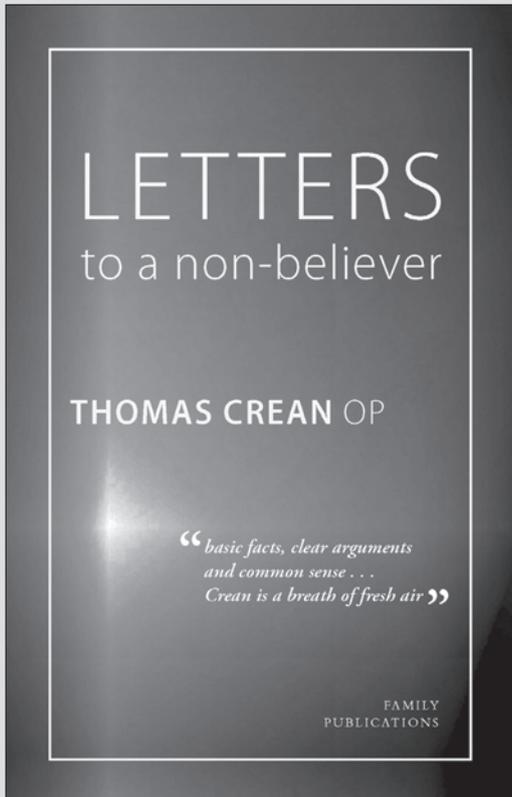
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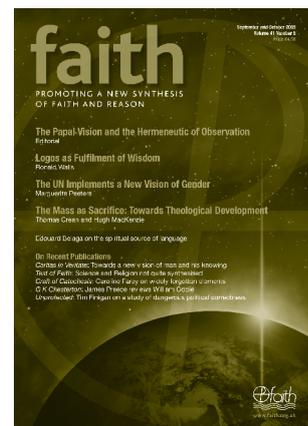
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faith

September and October 2009

Volume 41 Number 5

The Papal Vision and the Hermeneutic of Observation *Editorial*

“When the Spirit of Truth comes He will guide you into all truth.” John 16:13

One of the sadder spectacles of recent times has been the savaging of Pope Benedict for his gesture of unity towards the Society of St Pius X. The orchestrated broadcast of the holocaust-denying interview with Bishop Williamson set up a media frenzy that overshadowed any coverage of his quite genuine concern for unity in the heart of the Church which he made the principal theme of his *Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum*. Any one of several of his close advisors could have stepped up and taken some of the blame for failing to warn him of the possible consequences of Bishop Williamson’s views on the holocaust. Yet it seemed that a spiritual *sirocco* overtook the Eternal City as everyone went for siesta with a shrug of the shoulders, leaving the successor of St Peter swinging in the wind.

The Papal Vision

In addition to his desire for unity within the Church, Pope Benedict clearly desires an acceptance of the harmony of the ordinary and extraordinary forms of Holy Mass and sees the proper and reverent celebration of the Sacred Liturgy to be essential in the renewal of the Church and in the recovery of direction which was lost in the aftermath of Vatican II.

In a somewhat similar vein, in his recent Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (CIV – see our *Road from Regensburg* column for an overview), Pope Benedict denies that the Church has “two typologies of social doctrine, one pre-conciliar and one post-conciliar, differing from one another: on the contrary, there is a *single teaching, consistent and at the same time ever new*.” (n. 12)

Benedict’s idea of a “hermeneutic of continuity” is a more basic principle of his pontificate and ties together his concern for both doctrine and liturgy. He is calling us to a radical affirmation of revealed truth given by Christ to the apostles and preserved in the tradition of the Church. Essential to this is the idea of magisterium, seen as the fulfilment of the promise of Christ “I will be with you always” so that in the Church, the Word “certain in all His ways” is ever present. It is for this reason that Vatican II cannot be seen as a fundamental departure or a “new constitution” for the Church. Such a discontinuity would not be simply a matter of a change of liturgical form or social doctrine, it would ultimately present us with a new Christ, different from the Christ we worshipped and believed in before.

Calling the Church back to the heart of truth is an essential foundation for Pope Benedict’s missionary and evangelical initiative. In his latest encyclical and numerous other addresses, the Holy Father has determinedly proposed to the world – to scientists, university professors, muslims, atheists, secularists – an invitation to embark on a common search for the truth, which

“by enabling men and women to let go of their subjective opinions and impressions, allows them to move beyond cultural and historical limitations and to come together in the assessment of the value and substance of things. Truth opens and unites our minds in the *lógos* of love” (CIV 4)

In doing so, he is somewhat provocatively affirming the ability of the human mind to know the truth in the real world, as a “gift received” (CIV 34 & 77). If we believe in the wisdom of God as one wisdom shared with us both in creation and revelation, then the call to the common search for truth is a brilliant solution to the problem of tolerance and dialogue when faced with the claims of revealed religion. Hence, towards the beginning of his Regensburg address in 2006, Pope Benedict recalled fondly the *dies academicus*. This was an occasion when teachers from every faculty appeared before the students of the whole university. The Holy Father said that this made possible a “genuine experience of *universitas*” whereby the different specialisations recognised that despite the difficulties of communication, they made up a whole, “working in everything on the basis of a single rationality with its various aspects and sharing responsibility for the right use of reason.”

As we reported in our last *Road from Regensburg* column Vincent Nichols, the new Archbishop of Westminster recently made Pope Benedict’s Regensburg conclusion his own. They both emphasise the importance of overcoming the positivistic interpretation of science through what the Archbishop called a “deepening appreciation of the role of faith [... and] its harmony with true reasoning.” Pope Benedict argued:

“The scientific ethos [... is] the will to be obedient to the truth, and, as such, it embodies an attitude which belongs to the essential decisions of the Christian spirit. The intention here is not one of retrenchment or negative criticism, but of broadening our concept of reason and its application. [...] reason and faith [must] come together in a new way, [...] overcom[ing] the self-imposed limitation of reason to the empirically falsifiable.”

Humans Discover Before Presuming

From the standpoint of the proposal of a new synthesis which is core to the aims and ideals of the *Faith* movement, we wish to draw attention to one problem in the philosophy of science which we believe needs to be clarified if the key Papal appeal concerning the “broadening of reason” is to come to fruition. His latest encyclical offers, we think, some significant epistemological help. The question reduces to whether or not we believe modern scientific discovery can affect metaphysics.

“The common search for truth is a brilliant solution to the problem of tolerance and dialogue.”

In speaking of science, the Pope appears, at Regensburg, to give some support for a *reductionist* understanding of the object of natural sciences, which process is proposed as following upon holistic “reasoning”, that is metaphysics. On the other hand in *Caritas in Veritate* he seems seamlessly to include scientific knowing within the wider gamut of knowing, as an immediate, non-abstract, *holistic* relationship.

At Regensburg he speaks of the holistic, formal, “intrinsic rationality” of the object of human knowing, “the mathematical structure of matter”, as a “presuppos[ition]”. Rather than these unity-level “rational structures” being intrinsic to what “modern scientific reason” discovers *a posteriori*, the Pope argues that science’s “methodology [... is] based” upon “accept[ance of] the rational structures of matter and the correspondence between our spirit and the prevailing rational structures of nature *as a given*” (our emphasis). Whilst we would certainly concur that this “correspondence” is the essential contemporaneous context of scientific activity we would deny the idea that holistic aspect of our knowledge of the physical are *a priori* to this activity. It is a common approach, followed in varying degrees by Cardinals Dulles, Ruini and Schonborn (see our May issue) and by the prominent Christian scientists featured in the Faraday Institute’s interesting new resource described in our *Cutting Edge* column.

But the phenomenon of scientific observation *discovers* (not presumes) the nature of matter, its “rational structures”, and the phenomenon of observation itself *reveals* the spirit-nature inter-related “correspondence”. The former discovery leads to science’s predictive ability, the latter contemporaneous, related, discovery leads to metaphysics. Both certainly involve past discoveries feeding into our present knowledge of the nature of things, as these things and our knowledge of them dynamically develop. But the dynamic of discovery through observation of our environment, with which we are inter-related and inter-defined, remains fundamental to our state of knowledge.

Science Does Observe the Form

The problem with positing the above distinction between scientific knowledge and other kinds of knowledge is that it risks a form of idealism whereby “form”, that which makes things to be as they are, is excluded from empirical scientific knowledge and must occupy an idealistic place somewhere hovering in between matter and spirit, between the concrete physical realm and the mind of those who investigate it. (We use the term “matter” for the structured matter-energy which makes up the physical realm, not in the more exclusive scholastic sense of a distinct metaphysical principle which individualises universal forms).

In the discussion of form in recent issues of *Faith* (and see our current Letters page), we have proposed that science cannot be properly considered to exclude the knowledge of formal and final causes. Whether we are speaking of the structure of the atom or the structure of the eye, there is

always a formal and final context. In the case of carbon atoms which can be arranged in such a way that they form a diamond, or in such a way that they form graphite, it is surely the *form*, the intelligible structure, that makes the difference. This observation, analysis and description of this form is something that is part of the science of physics and chemistry, not something excluded from them and relegated to an idealist realm, sanitarily excluded from scientific observation.

If we allow only material and efficient causation to be the proper province of material sciences, and reserve formal and final causation to a metaphysics that claims superiority, there will inevitably be the same problem as we find when people invoke an argument from the “God of the Gaps.” If we say “There must be a God because we cannot explain the fossil record” then that God becomes ridiculous when someone explains the fossil record. Similarly, if we say that the material explanations of science may be separated from metaphysics, we are likely to be embarrassed when the physical sciences discover key truths about the form of material things. We can postpone the fateful day by insisting that metaphysically, “form” is to do with something outside the “reductionist” methodology of science, but surely it would be better to tread the path of finding a synthesis between science and philosophy so that the two areas of knowledge are genuinely seen in practice to be expressions of the one Wisdom of God.

Physical Discovery Feeds Into Metaphysics

Pope Benedict’s lecture does go on to point the way out of materialism. When speaking of the above “correspondence” he says “the question why this has to be so is a real question, and one which has to be remanded by the natural sciences to other modes and planes of thought – to philosophy and theology.”

Necessarily intrinsic to all experience of the physical, which includes scientific observation, is simultaneous awareness that we are the sort of people who can investigate the universe. Rather than leaving this as an uninvestigated discovery, as scientific reductionism and materialism would have us leave it, the Holy Father invites us to remit the question to those areas of study which have the appropriate competence, which comprise human subjectivity and creativity within their appropriate object: namely philosophy and theology. This is not to close the door between the laboratory and the sacristy, rather the opposite; what we *discover from* the natural sciences cannot be hermetically sealed off from philosophy and theology as though it were some totally separate area of wisdom. If the primary object of physical science is the physical realm in its inter-dependant relationships, the object of metaphysics is the *very same* physical realm as *it relates* to the spiritual.

As per Aquinas, words used about the transcendent Creator are used analogically upon their use concerning the creation. The post-moderns have something right, we think,

The Papal Vision and the Hermeneutic of Observation

continued

when they point out that our personal angle, our individual experience of our environment as we encounter it, is foundational to the semantic of our language. What they miss is that at the heart of this semantic and of the very success of language as a communal project is a relationship of the knower with that which is distinct from him, the objective realm.

Immediate Intuition in *Caritas in Veritate*

For Edward Holloway every human observation inherently involves a complementary interaction *and interdefinition* between “me and my environment”, a fundamental aspect of which is the relationship between the knowing spiritual mind and ordered matter. Our spiritual self-consciousness is materially incarnated and, with our body, immersed in a material environment “in which we swim like a fish” (*Perspectives in Philosophy*, II, p.82).

Modern science’s discovery of objective facts is no exception to this basic pattern of human observation. The objective physical, including its mathematical structure, is always known in relationship with the spiritual, and this indeed includes rational intuition of the absolute spiritual Mind of God founding the very being of matter.

Concerning this latter intuition, in footnote 88 of *Caritas in Veritate* Pope Benedict comments that St Augustine

“indicates the existence within the human soul of an ‘internal sense’. [...] an act that is not the result of reflection, but is almost instinctive, through which reason, realising its transient and fallible nature, admits the existence of something eternal, higher than itself, something absolutely true and certain.”

The text at which this reference appears goes on to make a similar point about all our knowing:

“In every cognitive process, truth is not something that we produce, it is always found, or better, received. Truth, like love, ‘is neither planned nor willed, but somehow imposes itself upon human beings’ (*Deus Caritas Est*, 3)” (CiV 34).

John Henry Newman, whom the Pope has recently put forward for Beatification, puts the point this way, at the beginning of his section on “The sanction of the Illative Sense” in *The Grammar of Assent*:

“It would be out of place to demand of fire, water, earth, and air their credentials, so to say, for acting upon us, or ministering to us. [...] But what we are still less able to doubt about or annul, at our leisure or not, is that which is at once their counterpart and their witness, I mean, ourselves. We are conscious of the objects of external nature, and we reflect and act upon them, and this consciousness, reflection, and action we call our rationality.”

This natural “almost instinctive” immediacy of the inter-related truths, or “counterparts”, concerning God, our own

minds and our own physical environment is we think, as did Newman, in tension with theories of that knowledge is mediated by the process of abstraction. It is much more in tune with the gradual, developmental model of knowledge acquisition towards which modern scientific methodology pushes. We discuss this in our Letters page.

Mind and Matter: An Immediate, Foundational Metaphysical Relationship

Later in his encyclical Pope Benedict seems to depict the natural rise to a metaphysical knowledge oriented to a transcendent Giver, *on the basis* of observation of objective matter by spiritual mind:

“All our knowledge, even the most simple, is always a minor miracle, since it can never be fully explained by the material instruments that we apply to it. In every truth there is something more than we would have expected, in the love that we receive there is always an element that surprises us [...] In all knowledge and in every act of love the human soul experiences something ‘over and above’, which seems very much like a gift that we receive, or a height to which we are raised.” (n. 77)

“if we say that the material explanations of science may be separated from metaphysics, we are likely to be embarrassed when the physical sciences discover key truths about the form of material things.”

What human persons observe and discern to be true of the physical realm never denies that that very intelligent observation is a metaphysical relationship, which in turn relates to a greater intelligence, a Divine Person. But we should not affirm that this self-knowledge, or any aspect of our knowledge of the physical realm, is hermenetically *a priori* to such encounter with the physical. As we have mentioned past knowledge certainly necessarily feeds in but at heart metaphysical knowledge of mind and matter, and their interrelationship, is a present, immediate grasp and gift. To re-make our ‘God-of-the-gaps’ point, as the first modern philosopher of science, Francis Bacon, prophetically warned, holistic levels safe from science’s influence will prove to be chimeras, and leave us all reductionists.

We should always allow that scientific discovery will have determinative input into how we describe the above interrelationship. As Aristotle and Aquinas recognised, metaphysics flows from our observation of the physical. Modern science is observation of the physical.

Pope Benedict goes on in CiV to affirm the necessary contextualization of the most objective and fruitful use of knowledge, the production of technology, by the complementarity of knower and known:

“the object of metaphysics is the very same physical realm as it relates to the spiritual.”

“In technology we express and confirm the hegemony of the spirit over matter. [...] man recognises himself and forges his own humanity. Technology is the objective side of human action whose origin and *raison d’être* is found in the subjective element: the worker himself. [...] It reveals man and his aspirations towards development” (n.69)

In the following paragraph he deplores the denial of the inherent moral and spiritual context of technology, an ideology “that threatens to confine us within an *a priori* that holds us back from encountering being and truth.” He provides the balanced picture again between knower and known, without an *a priori*, in going on to say: “The key to development is a mind capable of thinking in technological terms and grasping the fully human meaning of human activities, within the context of the holistic meaning of the individual’s being.” (n. 70)

Faith and Reason

Furthermore God’s wisdom is shown through both the natural world and through revelation. Paragraph 48 of *Caritas in Veritate* states:

“*Nature expresses a design of love and truth.* It is prior to us [...] Nature speaks to us of the Creator (cf. Rom 1:20) and his love for humanity. It is destined to be ‘recapitulated’ in Christ at the end of time (cf. Eph 1:9-10; Col 1:19-20). [...] Nature is at our disposal not as ‘a heap of scattered refuse’[Heraclitus], but as a gift of the Creator who has given it an inbuilt order, enabling man to draw from it the principles needed in order ‘to till it and keep it’ (Gen 2:15).”

As Pope John Paul II put it in *Fides et Ratio*:

“It is the one and the same God who establishes and guarantees the intelligibility and reasonableness of the natural order of things upon which scientists confidently depend, and who reveals himself as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (n.34)

In a footnote to this passage, Pope John Paul referred to Galileo’s letter of 1613 to Fr Benedetto Castelli, arguing that the two truths, of faith and of science, can never contradict each other, and to the teaching of *Gaudium et Spes* 36 which echoed Galileo in teaching that properly conducted research in any field will not be opposed to faith (provided that moral norms are respected) since “the reality of the world and of faith have their origin in the same God”. And this is through the one simple *Logos*.

In his 2008 address to the university of *La Sapienza* which he was eventually prevented from giving because of the protests of a small number of the faculty, Pope Benedict proposed the use of an expression from the Council of Chalcedon, in an entirely different context, to describe the relationship between philosophy and theology: “without confusion, without separation.” The same could also be applied to that area of knowledge which is the natural sciences. They are not to be confused with theology, nor should they be separated from it.

Contra Relativism

To revindicate such a vision and to affirm its radical benefit or the life of the Church today seems to be a key project of Pope Benedict. In Britain today we see in practice everything that Pope Benedict has warned of under the heading of the “Dictatorship of Relativism.” Good Christians are interviewed by the police in their homes for daring to express Christian teaching on homosexuality, a charity worker is sacked for even discussing such views with a fellow worker, home-schoolers are placed under suspicion, a nurse is sacked for praying with a patient, and campaigners seek to force organisations in the name of equality to employ people who want to cross-dress part-time. Pope Benedict’s call to embark on a common search for the truth is a heresy in modern Britain where the very notion that there is truth in morality is seen as discriminatory.

Yet we pray that Britain be the place where a recovery begins. The progress of sex-education has now reached a point where it is dangerously close to provoking a public backlash. The advice of NHS Sheffield encouraging young people to masturbate because they should have “an orgasm a day” for healthy living has earned the opposition of the anti-bullying group Kidscape. At least one school has prompted angry protests after giving parents just a little too much information about their proposed sex-education programme with animated cartoons of young people masturbating. Over four decades in this space we have argued that the radical rejection of the intrinsically procreative purpose of the marriage act will tend to the “sex is for fun” philosophy, the destruction of the family and the abuse of children. When it is so brazenly presented by the secularist elite, we may hope that ordinary parents wake up to just what is being done to their children.

As they do so, they will find that the only place where the values that they rather hazily desire for their children can be found is in the Catholic Church and in that broad ecumenical alliance that cuts across denominations. An example of this is to be found in the excellent work of the Challenge Teams UK who offer presentation for teenagers encouraging them to abstain from sex before marriage. Such an alliance around certain basic truths of the natural moral law is a good basis for genuine and effective ecumenism. There is also an opportunity, largely unexplored with the noble exception of SPUC, for fruitful dialogue on these issues with the Muslim community.

It is sad that the response of the Catholic Church in the face of the secularist onslaught has been so weak. Bishop O’Donoghue has courageously drawn attention to this weakness, not being afraid to criticise the working of the Bishops’ Conference. It is not a question of “attacking the Bishops” but of calling for a necessary regrouping in the face of an unprecedented onslaught on the truth of our human nature.

Logos as Fulfilment of Wisdom in Israel

by Ronald Walls

Fr Ronald Walls discusses the roots of the Johannine concept of Logos, one much used by Pope Benedict. He discerns as much influence from within the reflections of the People of Israel as from Greek philosophy. Fr Walls converted from Presbyterianism sixty years ago, and now ministers in the Orkney Islands. He has written several biblical/homiletic works and an autobiography – *Love Strong as Death*, Fordham University Press.

In the mid-1920s it was fashionable amongst many theologians and students of theology – certainly in the divinity faculty at the University of Edinburgh – to be suspicious of the Gospel according to John, because, it was thought, this Gospel had imported a manner of thinking that was alien to the tradition embodied in the Old Testament Scriptures. Suspicion was focused upon the word *logos*, which symbolised the Greek mode of metaphysical reflection on God and mankind’s knowledge of God. The Greek mode of thought was regarded as abstract and metaphysical – at odds with the Hebrew concept of a living God.

This fear of the Greek way of thinking and suspicion of the word *logos* rested upon a very careless reading of the Old Testament. More thought should have been given to the meaning of the phrase “the word of God”. Had this been done, it would have led to the conclusion that the word *logos* did not embody a concept alien to Old Testament revelation but could be used to sum up the completion of revelation as understood by the Old Testament. This completion is expressed in the Prologue of the Gospel according to John where the word *logos* is prominent and is translated into English as “Word”. In order to establish this fulfilment it would seem appropriate to begin by looking at the word “word” as it occurs in the Old Testament.

Wisdom

To many people, especially those brought up in the Reformed tradition, the phrase “the word of God” is taken to denote the words of Holy Scripture. Many Catholics, too, share this notion, for at every celebration of the Eucharist, after the readings from Scripture, they hear the words “This is the word of the Lord”. These words do come from God, through the inspiration of the sacred authors, but they are not the *logos* of the Prologue to the Gospel according to John. They are words that come by inspiration of the Holy Spirit but they are not the Word of God. The following sentence from the end of the Book of Consolation, written towards the end of the sixth century B.C. introduces a deeper concept denoted by the word “word”.

“The word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do” (Isaiah 55: 11).

The words spoken through the prophets will, it is true, accomplish their purpose; but this saying from Isaiah means more than that. The text carries this footnote in the

Jerusalem Bible: “The word is personified here, see Pr. 8:22+”; and in the passage from Proverbs to which reference is made, which was written, it is thought, a century later than the text from Isaiah, the word “Wisdom” appears and is equivalent to “word” in the Isaiah text. The word, now equated with Wisdom, is not a mere messenger but is also a sharer in God’s creative power; and it has become personified.

“The Lord created me when his purpose first unfolded,
before the oldest of his works.
From everlasting I was firmly set,
from the beginning, before earth came into being.
The deep was not, when I was born,
there were no springs to gush with water” (Prov 8: 22-24).

The Wisdom of God, according to Proverbs, is generated from God, but is not a part of the creation; indeed, Wisdom takes part in the work of creation.

“When he laid down the foundations of the earth,
I was by his side, a master craftsman,
delighting him day after day,
ever at play in his presence,
at play everywhere in his world,
delighting to be with the sons of men” (Prov 8: 29-31).

It is this sharing in the work of creation to which Isaiah refers in the above sentence from the Book of Consolation. We learn also from this passage in Proverbs, and from other passages in Scripture, that the creation, because it comes about through Wisdom, is not chaotic but a rationally ordered system. It is also clear from the Wisdom writings in the Old Testament that the wisdom which Wisdom imparts to men and women is practical; it is the ability to align one’s life according to the truth.

The function of Wisdom is thus not simply to bring about the creation as an ordered whole, but also to enable men and women to share in the wisdom that flows from God, to become able to understand the creation and live in it according to its laws and so find happiness. The Wisdom of God desires to share itself with the human race, enabling it to come close to him. The image of children at play shines out from this passage in Proverbs. Already, in this fifth century B.C. passage from Holy Scripture, we have an adumbration of the joy of the Good News that is announced in the New Testament. In the passage from the eighth chapter of Proverbs, especially the final phrase “delighting to be with the sons of men” are we being given a hint of the incarnation of the Wisdom of God?.

“The teaching of the Wisdom literature was [...] that God was always with his people, seeking to share his mind and life with them.”

In the mid-second century B.C. we find in the book of Ecclesiasticus (The Wisdom of Ben Sirach), an even more explicit expression of the desire of Wisdom to come down from heaven and take part in human life. Wisdom speaks:

“I came forth from the mouth of the Most High,
and I covered the earth with mist.
I had my tent in the heights,
and my throne in a pillar of cloud.
Alone I encircled the vault of the sky,
and I walked on the bottom of the deeps.
Over the waves of the sea and over the whole earth,
and over every people and nation I have held sway.
Among all these I searched for rest,
and looked to see in whose territory I might pitch camp.
Then the creator of all things instructed me,
and he who created me fixed a place for my tent.
He said, ‘pitch your tent in Jacob,
and make Israel your inheritance’.

I have taken root in a privileged people
in the Lord’s property, in his inheritance.

I am like a vine putting out graceful shoots,
my blossoms bear the fruit of glory and wealth.
Approach me, you who desire me,
and take your fill of my fruits,
for memories of me are sweeter than honey,
inheriting me is sweeter than the honeycomb.
They who eat me will hunger for more,
they who drink me will thirst for more.
Whoever listens to me will never have to blush,
whoever acts as I dictate will never sin”
(from Ecclesiasticus 24: 3-22).

In his famous 2006 Regensburg lecture Pope Benedict XVI stated “The truly divine God is the God who has revealed himself as *logos* and, as *logos*, has acted and continues to act lovingly on our behalf”. This is an apt comment upon what Holy Scripture says concerning the Wisdom of God. God reveals himself in the ordered Universe as this Wisdom or *logos*, and this *logos* accompanies and cares for the creation thereafter. In particular the *logos* cares for and guides the human race, notably those within that race whom God has chosen as the vehicle of his revelation and the bringer of blessings to the whole of humanity. It is this Wisdom that is the *logos* of the Prologue in St John’s Gospel, a word translated into English as “Word”.

The first piece quoted above from the Wisdom literature (Proverbs 8:22) was written in the fifth century B.C. It was in that century, when Israel was re-establishing itself as a nation in Judaea, after their seventy years exile in Babylon, that the Old Testament as we now have it was put together. The Wisdom literature had been assimilated by the teachers of Israel, so that the teaching of the Wisdom literature was not something alongside the general teaching of the Old

Testament but the teaching that provided its underlying concept – that God was always with his people, seeking to share his mind and life with them. There is an article entitled “Wisdom Literature” in “Dictionary of the Bible” by John L. McKenzie, S.J., which states briefly and boldly: “The style and content of wisdom and wisdom literature run through most of the books of the O.T.”

This style and cast of mind is seen very clearly in the way that the history of Israel is presented not as the record of a sequence of events but as a philosophy of history – the meaning of the events encourages or corrects the people. The cast of mind or style of the authentic Old Testament revelation, as shown in the final redaction of the Scriptures in the 5th century B.C., can be seen much later in St Paul, who was a strict Pharisee and more zealous for the tradition of his people than any Jew of his time. He wrote:

“I want to remind you, brothers, how our fathers were all guided by a cloud above them and how they all passed through the sea. They were all baptised into Moses in this cloud and in this sea; all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink, since they all drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ” (1 Cor 10:2-4).

St Paul knew that Christ was the incarnate *logos*, and he knew also that this *logos* had not retired into inactivity after the creation of the world but had been ever present in the care and guidance of his people. The Wisdom of God, to become the *logos* in the New Testament, had been guiding the history of Israel, of all mankind, since the beginning of time.

The principle underlying the teaching of the Wisdom literature, so beautifully expressed in Ecclesiasticus chapter 24, is the same as that expressed by Pope Benedict XVI: “The truly divine God is the God who has revealed himself as *logos* and, as *logos*, has acted and continues to act lovingly on our behalf.”

The cast of mind, which was the product of Wisdom literature can be seen also, although expressed indirectly, in the very first lines of the Old Testament. This concept of Wisdom, later to become *logos*, regarded as a Person who mediates the creative power of God, opens the way to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. In Genesis chapter 1 the transcendence of God, the almighty Father, is stressed by his invisibility, and the nothingness of what is other than God is described by reference to dark emptiness and water, and the Spirit of God is there too, unseen and hovering, ready to do the work appointed to it by the Father. (It is worth noting that in this narrative of creation Father, Word and Spirit are all mentioned. This accords well with the classic dictum that all actions of God *ad extram* are acts of the Blessed Trinity and not of individual Persons.)

Logos as Fulfilment of Wisdom in Israel continued

It may be accepted that the Old Testament Scriptures are cast in a mould that was formed by the Wisdom literature, but the question might be asked: Did the *logos* as used in the Gospel according to John have exactly the same connotation as the word “Wisdom” as used in the Old Testament, or had it brought in new connotations?

It is true that the wisdom that divine Wisdom wishes to impart to men and women possessed a strong ethical element. In his book, *Israel's Wisdom Literature* (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1936), Prof O.S. Rankin lists the features attributed to divine Wisdom in Proverbs chapters 1-9. Among these are: “a proclamation of Truth (*Emeth*), Righteousness (*Zedek*), Knowledge (*Da'ath*), and Judgment (*Mishpat*). The emphasis is certainly on practical reason but it is on reason; all of these features are concerned with truth. To possess wisdom, according to the Wisdom literature, was to be able to align one's mind and will with the designs of God, that is to live according to the truth. Greek philosophy and Israelite pursuit of wisdom both seek to find the truth. Differences in their goals, if there be any, are only about minor matters.

The Greek Concept

The conclusion must not be too hastily made that St John's substitution of the Greek word *logos* for the Old Testament word “Wisdom” signified the importation of Greek philosophical concepts. *Logos* is a Greek word, but by the time it had been received into the Judaeo-Christian theological vocabulary, it had already been modified in meaning by influences that were not purely Greek. We have to ask what those who used the word *logos* or its equivalent in their own vernacular – Greek included – meant by it when used in a religious context. The word *logos* cannot be taken to mean simply what Greek philosophers had meant by it. The development outside Israel of the concept of Wisdom, which eventually became the ‘Word’ of St John's Gospel, is the theme of chapter 9 of Prof. Rankin's overlooked classic (written when he was a Presbyterian minister in a little parish in Wigtonshire). Rankin's argument is very detailed and its cogency depends upon that detail. The few quotations given here may, however, give some idea of the main thesis.

Rankin places his discussion of the development which ended in the prologue to the Gospel according to John against the background of the rise of a definite monotheism and the concept of the transcendence of *El Shaddai* (‘The Highest’). Rankin then writes:

“Under the necessity of connecting the world of men with the God, who in majesty and nature was so far above this world, there were two courses which Judaism could take and which it took. It transformed the deities of foreign worship into angels, who were more or less equivalent to abstract ideas or divine attributes, and on the other hand

it turned such abstract ideas into what may be called hypostases or personifications of the divine activity and power. It is sufficiently evident in the literature concerned that Wisdom is regarded as a Being dependent on God but in some sense separate from Him.”

Roots

According to Rankin, it is Wisdom who appears in the Prologue to John, and the question is now asked: “Why did the Evangelist substitute “the Word” for “Wisdom”?” The answer usually given, and which seems to carry most probability with it, is that the writer of the Prologue applied the *Logos* speculation of Alexandrian Judaism, perhaps indeed that of Philo. Bultmann acknowledges that Stoic teaching, which influenced Hellenistic Jewish writers, was able to do ample justice to the idea of the *Logos* as a cosmic power, and that in the Wisdom literature of Judaism there is the idea of Wisdom as an immanent power of understanding and knowledge. But he argues that there is reason to search for the richer idea of the *Logos* or Word as *the deity of revelation, as the divine Bearer of revelation*, in sources of religious belief of a much earlier date than that of Hellenistic Judaism. In seeking for this Bultmann draws attention to the Mandaean doctrine of the cosmic, or heavenly Man, Enosh-Uthra, who is described as ‘a (or, the) Word, a son of words.’ This means that, since Mandaean sources reflect Iranian religious thought, Persian mythology is probably the ultimate source of the concept of the Word as divinity of revelation.”

The Rankin argument then cites H.H. Schraeder, who follows up the lead given by Bultmann: “The prologue of the fourth Gospel is a reconstruction and Christianising of a Gnostic Aramaic hymn in which the term translated by the Greek ‘*Logos*’ was the Aramaic ‘*Memra*’.” This author believes also that this Jewish Gnostic hymn extols the identity of the divine Messenger who should come into the world – that is the cosmic Man – Enosh. This author would also consider that the Enosh tradition as preserved in the Mandaean sources has its counterpart in the account of the heavenly Man (Aramaic: son of Man) in the seventh chapter of the Book of Daniel. Rankin ends his paraphrase of Schraeder's argument:

“In regard to the origin of the conception of the cosmic Man (*Urmensch*), Schraeder indicates this when he says that the idea connects with ‘the only religious speculation of ancient Oriental religion which had fully developed the idea and had given it a central position in its teaching, namely, the religious speculation of Iran’.”

Rankin sums up by giving his own assessment of the value of the views of those he has been quoting:

“The aspect of Schraeder's conclusions which is of immediate interest to our enquiry into the character of

“St Paul knew that Christ was the incarnate *logos*, [...] ever present in the care and guidance of his people.”

Wisdom and its origin is his view that the Word (*Memra*) which he takes to be substantially the same as the personified Wisdom of the Wisdom literature was united by Jewish Gnosticism with the heavenly Man. [...] The conception of the heavenly, pre-existent Man, which was of such consequence for Jewish Apocalyptic and Christian thought, is, if Schraeder is right, derived from Persian religion. [...] Indeed, it is in Iranian religion in the form this took under the reformer Zoroaster, Bousset and others think, that Wisdom arose.”

The Children of Israel were chosen to be a particular agent in the salvation of the world. The considerations presented in this article show us that, none the less, they were not cut off from the universal search of mankind for God. A sign of this was that they shared in the production of and respect for the Wisdom literature, which was to be found in the whole oriental world of the time of Israel. The Children of Israel were a people set apart but their minds were open to all serious speculation on matters of faith. During their seventy years sojourn in Babylonian exile they were able to reflect upon and assimilate wisdom that reached back into the distant past. They were aware that almighty God – *El Shaddai* – did not begin to care for and direct humanity with his calling of Abraham. Ever since man fell the Lord had been with him, and knowledge of God, even if at times only dim, was always accessible to the human spirit. The Prologue to St John’s Gospel tells us that “The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world.” He was coming at last in flesh but he had

always been with mankind; his Wisdom guiding mankind in all serious religious speculation, including the ancient myths. In fact the presence of the Word of God in men and women was because they are made in God’s image. God’s image is his Wisdom or Word, present in every human being. The Judaeo-Christian tradition uniquely purifies and founds the truth of all this through its recognition of the truly transcendent nature of God’s Being, who deigns to come into his creation.

Our salvation is no less than the perfect realization of this image of the transcendent God in our souls. St Paul sums up the meaning of salvation in his letter to the Ephesians, where he describes the Church as “The fulness of him who fills the whole creation” (1:23); and again where he says: “In this way we are to come to unity in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God, until we become the perfect Man, fully mature with the fulness of Christ himself” (4: 13). Here St Paul is speaking in language that fits well into the idiom of the Wisdom literature; and maybe he is, without knowing it, speaking of the fulfilment of the ancient Iranian myth of the cosmic Man, Enosh Uthra, when mankind, through the Word Incarnate and under his rule, will become kith and kin of almighty God.

Catholicism a New Synthesis

by Edward Holloway

Pope John Paul II gave the blueprint for catechetical renewal with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Catholicism: A New Synthesis seeks to show why such teaching makes perfect sense in a world which has come of age in scientific understanding. It offers a way out of the current intellectual crisis, a way which is both modern and orthodox.

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Discerning the Historical Source of Human Language *by Edouard Belaga*

Edouard Belaga, researcher at the Institute of Advanced Mathematical Research, at Strasbourg University, argues that at the origins of the People of God, probably of humanity itself, there was a sudden 'inspired' emergence of human language. Dr Belaga was an upcoming Mathematics and Computer Science researcher at the Moscow Institute of Control Problems when he was forced to leave the country in the late 1970's for his dissident loyalties.

The problem of the emergence and evolution of natural languages is seen today by many specialists as one of the most difficult problems in the cognitive sciences, if not of science *tout court*. As the cognitive scientists Christiansen and Kirby put it:

“Language is one of the hallmarks of the human species, an important part of what makes us human. Yet, despite a staggering growth in our scientific knowledge about the origin of life, the universe and (almost) everything else that we have seen fit to ponder, we know comparatively little about how our unique ability for language originated and evolved into the complex linguistic systems we use today. Why might this be?”¹

Human Language

A key, we think, to beginning to unravel this enigma is the close relationship of language to mathematics.

There are some significant linguistic phenomena that are characterised or accompanied by the presence of some clear-cut, non-trivial mathematical structures. This has been observed in ancient, ‘fossilised’ languages – i.e., in languages that fell out of use a long time ago, but which were well preserved in ancient texts. The presence of such structures, for instance in ancient Hebrew, cannot be explained (away) as resulting from the conscious efforts of systematization by savants.

The undisputed expert on Hebrew grammar Professor Weinberg explains:

“It has been well known for a while, at least since the beginning of the last century, that Hebrew grammar is essentially schematic and, starting from simple primary rules, it is possible to work out, almost mathematically, the main groups of word-building.”²

In more modern technical parlance, the

“mathematics involved [is] that of a finitely generated partially ordered semi-group, also called ‘semi-Thue system’ by mathematicians, ‘rewrite system’ by computer scientists and ‘production grammar’ (Chomsky’s Type Zero) by linguists.”³

There is a formal, extremely parsimonious, strikingly crystallographic structural beauty in verbal systems of Semitic and some other Afro-Asiatic languages. It is made all the more perplexing by the fact that it is most clearly discernible in the most ancient Semitic ‘fossilised’ texts.

Moreover, as part of a human language, this structure provides a unique basis for an incredibly effectual, efficient, nuanced, and versatile expressive power of description and communication of actions, mental and physical states and phenomena, etc., in brief, of all that defines the human being as an active, intellectually alert agent of personal and social life.⁴

We can go yet further when affirming the unique, counterintuitive nature of the verbal structures of Semitic languages, especially the fossilised ones, such as Biblical Hebrew with its verbal root system. These ancient languages have a tight, ordered etymological interdependence⁵ and a mathematically meaningful, fully formalisable architecture.⁶ It means that they are, conceptually and structurally, strikingly similar, though expressively vastly superior, to the best artificial Assembler languages, the basic low-level computer languages. In fact, the verbal structure of these languages closely mimicks the expressive power of computer architectures.⁷ This is an absolutely novel, phenomenon nowhere else so clearly apparent in natural languages. It cries out for a new explanatory linguistic emergence paradigm.

Insufficient Explanations

Now, one should not underestimate the obvious importance of neurological constraints and imperatives for the functioning and development of human speech. There is no doubt, in particular, that many very important, linguistically discerned, defined, and analysed characteristics of language usage and formal linguistic structures, such as those of Biblical Hebrew, can be meaningfully referred to the capabilities and limitations of the human brain and the physiology of the human voice tract. We claim, however, that the plausibility, if not the very legitimacy of the “mind is computer” explanatory schemes should be denied here from the outset, even if one resolves to totally ignore both their well-known theoretical pitfalls and the related ideological obsession with, what the prominent computational linguist, Jerry Hobbs, has wistfully termed, “the first, best hope of materialism”.⁸ David Israel, a writer in the same field, suggests

“No thesis has played a more central role in Cognitive Science and contemporary philosophical conceptions of mind than the thesis that cognition is computation. But this thesis hardly wears its meaning on its sleeve and differing conceptions (and misconceptions) of computation may lie behind what seems a widespread consensus.”⁹

In short, the fundamental weakness of this and similar ‘emergence explanatory schemes’ is ignorance of the epistemological need to found logical computability and formal reasoning upon something outside the system, as shown by mathematicians Gödel and Turing, and by philosophers such as John Searle and, especially since he became Pope, Benedict XVIth himself.

“The fundamental weakness of some ‘emergence explanatory schemes’ is ignorance of the epistemological challenge to found formal reasoning upon something outside the system.”

As a matter of fact, such schemes are usually more or less explicitly inspired and informed by one of the several well-known erroneous interpretations of the Church-Turing Thesis.¹⁰ In reality

“The Church-Turing thesis does not entail that the brain (or the mind, or consciousness) can be modelled by a Turing machine programme, not even in conjunction with the belief that the brain (or mind, etc.) is scientifically explicable, or exhibits a systematic pattern of responses to the environment, or is ‘rule governed’, etc.”

The ‘brain is computer’ dogma goes back to the famous dictum of the French revolutionary and scientist Pierre Cabanis: “the mind secretes thought as the liver secretes bile”. Certainly, such metaphors may have a certain applicability at certain organic levels. But any such ‘mind as computer’ photo of our brain activity, or of our linguistic ability, has no bearing whatsoever on the mystery of the emergence of either such activity or ability.

“The formation of the computer does not predate the reality of mind.”

Moreover such a solution is forgetful of the history of the emergence and evolution of the Theory of Computation and Algorithms and of actual computers themselves. Human computational abilities, so much part of our culture today, are the fruit of a complex historical process involving the best scientific minds of the 20th century who created new theoretical disciplines sometimes in an atmosphere of deep doubt and controversy,¹¹ if not intellectual despair.¹² Their insights have been implemented by some of the best engineers, entrepreneurs, at universities and government agencies of the most developed nations of the world.

The formation of the computer does not predate the reality of mind.

Furthermore the truly important scientific questions which emerge in our search to understand the universe and ourselves could not have been well understood, let alone answered, in the cultural, conceptual and theoretical framework which was existing at the time of their emergence.

The Development of Mathematics

The Hungarian–American physicist Eugene Paul Wigner speaks of “the unreasonable effectiveness of mathematics in natural sciences”¹³. Steadily evolving before our eyes, since at least the 17th century, has been “the miracle of the appropriateness of the language of mathematics for the formulation of the laws of physics”.

Starting with Pythagoras’ discovery of the theorem bearing his name, inspirational insights have been the crucial factor in the emergence and evolution of Mathematics. The renowned Russian mathematician Igor Shafarevich goes further:

“Viewed superficially, Mathematics is the result of centuries of effort by many thousands of largely unconnected individuals scattered across continents, centuries and millennia. However, the internal logic of its development much more resembles the work of a single intellect developing its thought in a continuous and systematic way, and only using as a means a multiplicity of human individualities. Much as in an orchestra playing a symphony written by some composer, the theme moves from one instrument to another, so that as soon as one performer is forced to cut short his part, it is taken up by another player, who continues it with due attention to the score.”¹⁴

Building on this metaphor, we will below propose a certain ‘linguistic inspiration’ as the driving force behind the emergence and, in part, evolution of language.

With all its tremendous and steadily accelerating expansion, resembling the expansion of the Universe after the Big Bang, Mathematics invariably refers, for purposes of both education and research, to its elemental axiomatic framework and basic laws of rigorous deduction. The existence of such a relatively elementary, and yet exquisitely and robustly structured framework is crucial for the intrinsic unity and reliability of Mathematics and for its unreasonable effectiveness in the natural sciences. This is especially true in the cases of counterintuitive implications of new, mathematically fully corroborated, laws.

The Source of Language

The sources of mathematical and computational insights have been, we believe, neither biological, nor social, but purely inspirational and intuitional – as a tragedy of Shakespeare or as the Requiem of Mozart. Furthermore systematic language has been at some historical juncture inspirationally created or invented.

The evolution of natural languages, as we know them today, was dramatically affected eight to ten thousand years ago by a linguistic Big-Bang. That is there was a sudden emergence of a radically new language germ, markedly similar to an essentially modern “natural super-assembler”, thrown into the ‘primeval linguistic soup’ of its contemporary environment. This emergence was restricted to just a single human family, if not to a single individual, and cannot be accounted for by a previously existing linguistic framework. It is the ancestor of the Semitic family of languages and of some Afro-Asiatic, Indo-European, and possibly other such families.

Language has been described as a vehicle for creating knowledge, for interpretation of meaning or of being, for the construction of identity, of truth, of intangible cultural heritage, etc. Our initial, only oral, proto-language, one would think, was ideally adapted to be a vehicle for a dramatic, prodigiously eloquent, unprecedentedly effective, radically new, previously unthinkable and unspeakable, eminently active vocation of man.

Discerning the Historical Source of Human language continued

As the well-documented history of this and following epochs witnesses, the germ of these linguistic families has borne extraordinary fruits. On the geopolitical scene, we have seen for instance the emergence of radically different and rich Middle East cultures. In the religious sphere we have the emergence of a dramatically new tradition which, starting with a single man, his family, and then a nation, has spread all over the world forming Judaeo-Christian civilization.

The modern history of language and belles-lettres knows analogous cultural upheavals provoked by linguistic or philological revolutions carried by a single person, even if certainly much less radical and influential. Such has been the case, for example, of the Russian poetic genius Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837) who almost singlehandedly initiated the modern culture of Russian literature, better – the Russian modern culture *tout court*.¹⁵

“The gift of language has its source in the human capacity to be inspired.”

It is interesting to note that Umberto Eco's book, *The Search for the Perfect Language*, describes the

“profound influence on European thought, culture, and history [... of] the idea that there once existed a language which perfectly and unambiguously expressed the essence of all possible things and concepts[, which] has occupied the minds of philosophers, theologians, mystics and others for at least two millennia. [...] From the early Dark Ages to the Renaissance it was widely believed that the language spoken in the Garden of Eden was just such a language, and that all current languages were its decadent descendants from the catastrophes of the Fall and at Babel.” (Publisher's synopsis)¹⁶

Conclusion

Only such a scientifically mature perception of the phenomenon of man and his linguistic abilities can show how the gift of language has its source in the human capacity to be inspirational. We must be free from popular, infantile determinism. Through such an approach we can grow in understanding of the mystery of human intelligence, and of the noble, mysterious, superhuman and supernatural inspirations of the founders of our civilization and science. ■

Notes

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Prospective Development of the UN's Gender Architecture *by Marguerite Peeters*

The director of the Brussels Institute for *Intercultural Dialogue Dynamics*, describes how global leaders are preparing to impose their new post-modern values upon the lives of millions. This article confirms the relevance of Pope Benedict's much maligned meditation on the sexes last December – see our March '09 editorial. It is based upon a report issued last June by the Institute.

Introduction

At this time there are discussions underway at the global governance level to overhaul the 'gender architecture' of the UN system. These discussions are expected to end before the end of August and to result in a "consensus decision" of UN member states' delegations on the structure of the new Gender Architecture. Quietly, a major institutional development with deep and wide political, cultural and anthropological implications across the globe is about to happen at the UN level. The new structure will deal with what is most fundamental in our human identity: male and female equality, their social roles, the nature of their differences and relationship. Hence the vital importance of grasping the stakes of the global governance "gender equality" norm – what both words – "gender" and "equality" mean in the language of the norm-setters, who is at the rudder of global governance, what their strategic vision and agenda are.

1. The Origins of the Gender Concept, its Ambivalence and Current Challenges

A quick reminder about the gender equality concept. Forged by US gender feminists in the 1970s against the backdrop of May '68, the postmodern notion of gender became the object of an alleged "global consensus" at the 1995 UN Beijing conference on women. The gender concept was created in dialectical opposition to "sex" (i.e. male and female biological differences) to describe those differences considered to be "socially constructed". The gender ideology process treats motherhood and human spousal/heterosexual identity as social constructions or stereotypes that must be deconstructed to grant each individual an equal access to "free choice". It interprets "equality" exclusively in terms of social, cultural, economic, civil and political power and rights. The anthropological structure of man and woman as a given is not taken into account.

In the late 1990s, "gender equality" was transformed into a transversal priority of international cooperation, leading into the Millennium Development Goals forged by the UN Secretariat in 2001. It has become one of the foremost norms of contemporary global governance.

The "gender equality" UN norm is inclusive of and inseparable from the other UN norm of "reproductive health and rights", which is itself inclusive, inter alia, of "safe abortion" and of universal access to contraceptive information and services by 2015. Global governance increasingly interprets gender equality as being explicitly inclusive of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights. In this light the new US administration's policy concerning these rights, articulated at the beginning of the recent Gay Pride month provides a politically significant boost to the UN's current gender agenda (see appendix).

The majority of people living in the developing world are still deeply attached to their cultural traditions and universal human values which western civilization has deconstructed, such as the family, male and female complementarity, and the role of woman as mother and educator. Abusing their trust, global governance agents of change use the fuzzy expression "gender equality" in the developing world allowing it to be understood as a policy enhancing a greater recognition of the inherent equal dignity of the woman, while in fact it hides their own agenda. For a while, until they force governments and cultures effectively to interpret gender equality according to their agenda, there is an ambivalence and the aspirations of the people coexist with their agenda. A healthy awareness of the need to promote the dignity of woman in the developing world may thus be engineered by those in power and become entangled with the global gender revolution. In this regard, one of the most preoccupying features of the new Gender Architecture is its seamless approach to normative and operational activities, which will force national and local implementation of norms forged at the global level and as the "experts" – not national cultures – interpret them.

2. Current UN Gender Machinery

The machinery at present in place within the UN system to implement "gender equality" and women's empowerment is impressive. It was greatly strengthened following the Beijing conference. Yet the agents of change want to consolidate it further.

The UN currently has four "gender-specific entities". "Gender-specific" means "specifically mandated to promote gender equality and women's empowerment". These four entities are:

- OSAGI : Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women created in 1997 as part of the UN Secretariat.
- DAW: Division for the Advancement of Women (UN Secretariat).
- UNIFEM: UN Development Fund for Women (Fund created in 1976 after the first women's conference in Mexico).
- INSTRAW: UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (institute created in 1976).

In addition, following the UN's 1995 Beijing Conference on Women, the "global norm" of "gender equality" was applied or 'mainstreamed' throughout the UN system. The mainstreaming exercise was effective. It produced tangible results. One of them is that achieving gender equality is now considered as belonging to the "mandate" of "all organizations of the UN system, including Departments and Offices of the Secretariat, Funds, Programmes and Specialised Agencies": these bodies "are required to address the gender perspectives of their distinctive substantive programmes and activities".

“Developing countries can get ready for a cultural tsunami.”

An analytical comment on the UN use of the word “mandate” appears necessary. The mandate of UN bodies in fact did not *formally* change following the Beijing conference. But the conference fundamentally reinterpreted the meaning of the equal dignity of male and female recognised in the UN Charter in 1945 (see charter preamble which refers to the “equal rights of men and women”). “Gender equality” is a very different, postmodern notion, redefining male and female identity. Hence the Beijing “consensus”, a “soft” document with no binding character on governments or the UN as an intergovernmental body, proves stronger than hard law, which it reinterprets by stealth. The end result is enforcement of soft “consensus” documents by means of existing hard law and formal mandates.

Among the UN entities playing a special role in the current global “gender revolution”, it is worth mentioning UNFPA (population, “reproductive health and rights”), UNDP (development), WHO (“reproductive health and rights”) and UNESCO (education, gender training).

In addition, following Beijing, gender units, gender advisers and departmental focal points were established “throughout the UN system, including in the Secretariat”. “At the Regional level, the Regional Commissions of the UN support Member States in addressing gender equality issues from the regional and sub-regional perspectives. At the country level, Gender Theme Groups contribute to and monitor gender mainstreaming in the work of the UN Country Teams.”¹ For ‘support’ here it seems reasonable to read ‘pressure’.

3. From Consultative, Informal Power to Effective, Global Implementation Power

As part of the framework of UN reform, Kofi Annan tasked a “High Level Panel” to reflect on “System-Wide Coherence”. The Panel recommended

“strengthening the coherence and impact of the United Nations institutional gender equality architecture by streamlining and combining existing gender institutions into a consolidated United Nations gender equality and women’s empowerment entity”².

Talks about a new Gender Architecture began at the Millennium plus five Summit in 2005. On 15 September 2008, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on System-wide Coherence (A/RES/62/277). Discussions between Member-States began after the UN Secretariat issued its “Concept Note on a Strengthened Architecture for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women” on August 1, 2007. The Secretariat thereafter issued several papers: Note on the United Nations Support to Member States on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (June 5, 2008); Institutional Options to Strengthen UN Work on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (23 July 2008); Options for Strengthening Institutional Arrangements on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (March 5, 2009), a paper drafted by the Secretary General’s Special Adviser on Gender Issues, Rachel Mayanja; and Consolidated Response following discussions of the paper “Further Details on Institutional Options” (June 3, 2009).

Member states’ delegations are now pressured to come to an agreement on the new Gender Architecture during the 63rd session of the General Assembly (the current session, ending at the end of August). Their decision will be taken by “consensus”. The option most likely to be adopted is the Composite Entity model, which would

“combine Headquarters policy and normative support functions currently performed by Departments of the Secretariat with those for the country level operational and technical support characteristic of Funds and Programmes.”³

From the beginning of what we may call the “gender revolution” in the 1970s to now, when the goals of a minority of western agents of change are about to take on a more visible, global and powerfully financed institutional form, the normative and operational activities of the gender equality process has been led by “experts”, NGOs, UN Secretariat bureaucrats, panels – not by the man-on-the-street or his legitimate representative. The new entity, which at the time of writing it seems the August General Assembly will set up, seems intended to give these minorities decisive leverage over the majority effectively to enforce their agenda globally. Informal processes such as “gender mainstreaming” and “consensus-building” were critical. The new architecture would formalise the implementation/enforcement process.

4. Reasons Given

The UN and its partners among women’s groups nonetheless want to go further in the operationalization of their vision. They want to “overhaul” the system in place and consolidate the UN gender architecture. Below are some of the major arguments that they use to justify the need for a new entity:

- Intergovernmental policy making is fragmented.
- The system is lacking a recognised driver with authority and positioning to lead.
- Lack of accountability, inconsistency in political will.
- Non-performance.
- “Woefully inadequate” human and financial resources “at all levels”.
- Inadequate country-level support, weak capacity and poor positioning at the country level.
- Insufficient emphasis on country ownership⁴

In the words of Ban Ki-moon,

“At the moment the UN gender architecture lacks a recognised driver. It is fragmented. It is inadequately funded, and insufficiently focused on country-driven demands. There are gaps between policies and implementation. Authority and accountability are weak.”⁵

5. Stated Goals

The stated purpose of the Gender Architecture is to close the above-mentioned “gaps”.

The various documents issued by the UN Secretariat since 2007 are consistent in outlining the following main features for the new body:

Positive Development of the UN's Gender Architecture continued

- Seamless effectiveness both in the field and at headquarters – both at operational level and at the normative level (synergies between policy research, analysis and substantive “support” for intergovernmental processes).
- Analytical, normative and operational leadership on gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Single driver for gender mainstreaming in the UN system.
- Level of authority needed to hold all entities accountable for performance.
- Leader of innovative and catalytic country-driven programming, gender mainstreaming and capacity-building.
- Targeted technical cooperation and capacity-building in line with national strategies.
- Collaboration between Member States, the United Nations system and civil society, particularly women's NGOs and networks.

As described by the UN Secretariat in a document issued on June 3, 2009, the functions of the new entity can be subdivided into four clusters:

- **“Normative support:** servicing the intergovernmental UN bodies where commitments, norms and policy recommendations on gender equality and gender mainstreaming are discussed and agreed upon; supporting the monitoring of these commitments...
- **“Analytical work:** preparing studies and reports supporting the multilateral decision-making process related to the normative work; assessing progress made in gender mainstreaming policies...
- **“Gender mainstreaming:** promoting the integration of the gender dimensions in the work programmes of all UN departments; supporting gender mainstreaming processes undertaken by the funds and programmes as well as the specialised agencies...
- **“Programming, advisory services, technical assistance, training and capacity development:** carrying out catalytic, targeted and multisectoral programming; providing advisory services worldwide for the effective implementation of the commitments and norms adopted at the global level in the area of gender...”⁶

The option most likely to be adopted by delegations is the Composite model combining the features of a Department of the UN Secretariat with those of a UN Fund/Programme. Should this option be chosen, almost 89 percent of the staff of the new entity would be in the field. It would be governed by an Executive Board, which would give it greater “flexibility” than a Department. The General Assembly may choose either to establish a new Executive Board or utilise an existing one such as the one of UNDP/UNFPA or UNICEF. The estimated staffing costs for the Composite entity are well over 1 billion dollars (1 Billion and 25 million).

6. Likely Effects

A few analytical remarks about the functions, structure and governance of the Gender Architecture appear appropriate:

What do “national ownership”, “servicing member-states”,

“country-driven”, “support” of member-states mean in UN language? At this stage of the gender revolution, some 15 years after Beijing, the agents of change want countries – national governments and cultures – to “own” the gender agenda, to become themselves the drivers of the process that will transform their own values from within so as to align them with the norms coming from UN headquarters. Although taking the low-profile of an “assistant”, “supporter” or “facilitator”, the UN gender machinery wants to “lead” countries, both at the normative and at the operational levels. There is therefore no real service, no real advice, no real support, no real ownership, but rather surveillance, unrelenting pressure, imposition of conditionalities: developing countries well know out of bitter experience that there is no development assistance without implementation of gender equality and reproductive health and rights policies and laws (as the experts interpret these “norms”).

The new entity will grant experts and other global norm-builders even more power than they already enjoy. Possibilities for effective intergovernmental control will keep on diminishing. The normative power being in the hands of like-minded experts, there will be little if no room for pluralism. There will be more, faster and more aggressive cultural neo-colonialism: developing countries can get ready for a cultural tsunami imposing on their governments and cultures the western “gender equality” model and all it hides and contains.

The Panel recommended “strengthening the coherence and impact of the United Nations institutional gender equality.”

The insistence on the “seamless approach” connecting the UN's normative and operational activities in the field threatens democratic pluralism, in the sense that there will be greater pressure for countries to implement the “norms” forged by UN experts at headquarters in the way these experts, not individual governments, interpret them. UN alleged “support” in the area of gender equality could then turn into a Diktat.

Should the General Assembly decide to put the new entity under the governance of the Executive Board of UNDP/ UNFPA, the new Gender Architecture would be led by the most powerful agents, not only of the Beijing conference, but of the Cairo conference on population – of the reproductive and sexual health and rights global agenda.

7. Conclusion: The Need for Education

To grasp the stakes of the new Gender Architecture, let us have the courage to take a hard look at the current balance of power at the global governance level: are real people, rooted in their local cultures and traditions, at the rudder, or is global governance effectively governed by a postmodern western intelligentsia, western experts, minorities and lobbies?

With western governments (US and EU) in support of the Beijing gender agenda and its many ideological ramifications, the new UN Gender Architecture will, in all likelihood, perform the functions presented in this report. In spite of the global financial and economic crisis, great funds will be allocated to

“A healthy awareness of the need to promote the dignity of woman in the developing world may be engineered by those in power and become entangled with the global gender revolution.”

the new entity. Gender equality has been since Beijing, and does remain under the current Secretary General, one of the UN's core priorities.

Developing countries can get ready for even stronger pressure, coming from the various bodies of the UN (Funds, Agencies, Programmes, regional commissions, country teams) and from bilateral donors, to increase their pace of implementation of the “gender equality” agenda. Effective implementation and “ownership” of gender equality and reproductive health will continue being forcefully imposed as conditions to obtain development assistance. The LGBT lobby will continue to gain ground in the developing world. Change will happen fast, aligning policies, laws and cultures along the UN “norms”, everywhere in the world.

The greatest challenge lies in education. Laws, policies, norms, culture educate the citizen: they either help him or her recognise what is real, true and good, or deconstruct his or her reason, conscience and heart. When law is founded, not on what is given, but on the deconstruction of what is given, it loses its legitimacy.

What is it that makes developing countries so vulnerable to the invasion of concepts, values and norms that transform their cultures from within and neo-colonise them, in ways that could become irreversible? Apart from poverty and dependence on development assistance, it is ignorance of the content of the western cultural revolution – an ignorance that can be overcome. In reality they have the human and cultural capacity, the possibility and the values to resist this imposition, but will they have the knowledge and will to do so?

The new Gender Architecture – a giant with clay feet standing on sand, not on the firm ground of reality and what is good for the human person, will sooner or later collapse, even if now, it seems virtually impossible to escape the cultural, political and anthropological tsunami it will inevitably provoke.

APPENDIX:

Extracts from President Obama's “Proclamation in Honour of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month”

“Due in no small part to the determination and dedication of the LGBT rights movement, more LGBT Americans are living their lives openly today than ever before. I am proud to be the first President to appoint openly LGBT candidates to Senate-confirmed positions in the first 100 days of an Administration. [...]

“The LGBT rights movement has achieved great progress, but there is more work to be done. LGBT youth should feel safe to learn without the fear of harassment, and LGBT families and seniors should be allowed to live their lives with dignity and respect.

“My Administration has partnered with the LGBT community to advance a wide range of initiatives. At the international level, I have joined efforts at the United Nations to decriminalise homosexuality around the world. Here at home, I continue to support measures to bring the full spectrum of equal rights to LGBT Americans. These measures include enhancing hate crimes laws, supporting

civil unions and Federal rights for LGBT couples, outlawing discrimination in the workplace, ensuring adoption rights, and ending the existing “Don't Ask, Don't Tell” policy in a way that strengthens our Armed Forces and our national security. We must also commit ourselves to fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic [...]

“These issues affect not only the LGBT community, but also our entire Nation. As long as the promise of equality for all remains unfulfilled, all Americans are affected. If we can work together to advance the principles upon which our Nation was founded, every American will benefit. [...]

“NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2009 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month. I call upon the people of the United States to turn back discrimination and prejudice everywhere it exists.”

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton: ‘In Recognition of Gay and Lesbian Pride Month 2009’

“[...] the gay rights movement [...] has grown into a global movement to achieve a world in which all people live free from violence and fear, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

“[...] I extend our appreciation to the global LGBT community for its courage and determination during the past 40 years, and I offer our support for the significant work that still lies ahead [...]

“The persecution of gays and lesbians is a violation of human rights and an affront to human decency, and it must end. As Secretary of State, I will advance a comprehensive human rights agenda that includes the elimination of violence and discrimination against people based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

“Though the road to full equality for LGBT Americans is long, the example set by those fighting for equal rights in the United States gives hope to men and women around the world [...]

“This June, let us recommit ourselves to achieving a world in which all people can live in safety and freedom, no matter who they are or whom they love.”

Notes

¹ReformUN.org Latest Development, 4-5, Issue 309. *Discussion of the SG note on Strengthening Funding Architecture*. June 4, 2009.

²UN Secretary General. *Options for Strengthening Institutional Arrangements on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*. March 5, 2009.

³ReformUN.org, *op. cit.*, 15.

⁴*Consolidated response* following discussions of the paper *Further Details on Institutional Options*. June 3, 2009.

⁵*Note on the United Nations Support to Member States on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*. June 5, 2008.

⁶Consolidated response, *op. cit.*

The Mass as an Actual Sacrifice in Catholic Tradition *by Fr Thomas Crean*

Fr Thomas Crean O.P. brings out an aspect of traditional Catholic doctrine concerning the sacrifice of the Mass, that seems to have been prominently neglected in recent times. In response the Editor of *Faith* suggests some lines for orthodox theological development – a theme, we think, close to the heart of Pope Benedict’s vision. Fr Crean’s latest book *Letters to a Non-Believer* is about to be published by *Family Publications*.

I want to consider a way of talking about the Mass which has become quite common in recent years and which isn’t exactly wrong, but which when presented as a definition of the Mass seems at least to involve a false emphasis, and which often seems to carry with it ideas about the Mass which I do think are mistaken.

I am talking about describing or defining the Mass as *the renewal or re-presentation or re-actualization of the Paschal Mystery*. While I don’t say that such phrases can’t be justified, I do think they need a lot of qualification which they don’t always receive, and that without such qualifications, they are misleading. And there’s no doubt that ‘the Paschal Mystery’ is a phrase which is very popular in modern accounts of the Mass, or indeed of the liturgy in general. For example, the Italian *Nuovo Dizionario di Liturgia*, published in 1988, speaking of the post-Vatican II liturgical reform, states that: ‘the Paschal mystery has become the foundation of, and the key to, the meaning of the entire Christian liturgy’. Notice, there, the words, ‘has become the foundation’; the implication is that it wasn’t before, that this is something new. That may already give us pause: how can something become the foundation for the liturgy if it wasn’t before? Or if we’re meant to understand, not ‘has become in reality’ but rather ‘always was in reality, but now has become so also in our understanding’, that raises the obvious question, did the Church then previously have a deficient understanding of the liturgy and of the Mass? That would also be a problematic position for a Catholic theologian to adopt. Clearly we need to look at this phrase ‘paschal mystery’ rather closely, and see if it is simply a new and concise way of expressing what the Church has always held about the Mass, or if it is indeed expressing a new conception of the Mass, and if so, whether this new conception can be justified.

Now, as a matter of fact, when people talk about the Mass as the renewal or the re-presentation of the Paschal Mystery, they don’t really seem to have the whole Paschal Mystery in mind. The phrase ‘Paschal Mystery’ presumably means everything involved in our Lord’s passing over from this world and entering into his glory: his death, the descent of his soul to Limbo, his preaching to the spirits who were in prison, the freeing of the just souls, the Resurrection, the Ascension and perhaps also the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. But when people today talk about the Mass as the re-presentation or renewal of the Paschal Mystery, they don’t normally seem to be thinking of all these things. I’ve never heard anyone claim that the Mass is a renewal of Christ’s descent into Limbo, for example. What people normally seem to mean when they talk of the Mass as a re-presentation or re-actualization of the Paschal mystery is that it is a re-presentation or re-actualization of Christ’s death and resurrection. But this leaves me feeling somewhat uneasy, as I don’t think it corresponds exactly to traditional explanations of the Mass.

Traditional Theology

Let’s consider some traditional descriptions, beginning with perhaps the most authoritative of all such, that given by the Fathers of the Council of Trent, in the 22nd Session:

“Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, when he was about to offer himself once on the altar of the Cross to God the Father, making intercession by means of his death, so that he might gain there an eternal redemption, since his priesthood was not to be extinguished by death, at the last Supper, ‘on the night that he was handed over’, left to his beloved Spouse the Church a visible sacrifice, such as the nature of man requires, by which the bloody sacrifice achieved once upon the Cross might be represented and its memory endure until the end of the age, and its saving power be applied to the remission of those sins which are daily committed by us.”

Here we have the key points I’d like to recall about the Mass. It is a visible sacrifice; it represents and so is the memorial of the sacrifice of the Cross; it applies to our souls here and now the power of the Cross. In the first canon of this 22nd Session, the Fathers of Trent define that in the Mass ‘a true and proper sacrifice’ is offered to God, and in the third canon they define that the sacrifice of the Mass is not a bare commemoration of the Cross but is itself propitiatory. It is offered, they say, ‘for the sins, punishments, satisfactions and other necessities of the living and the dead’.

We may want to notice why it’s not incoherent to say both that the Mass *represents* the Sacrifice of the Cross and also that it’s not a bare commemoration. The Mass is itself literally a sacrifice, therefore propitiatory; but it’s not literally the same event as the sacrifice of the Cross, since our Lord does not die again at Mass. So the Mass is a literal visible sacrifice, which represents and ‘applies the merits’ of the literal, once-for-all sacrifice of the Cross.

My second quotation is from Leo XIII’s encyclical letter, *Caritatis Studium*. This letter was written to the Bishops of Scotland in 1898, to mark the 20th anniversary of the re-establishment of the hierarchy in that country. Towards the end of the encyclical, Pope Leo mentions the losses suffered by the Scottish people as a result of the Reformation. He writes:

“There is one thing amongst all others, the loss of which is more deplorable than words can express; We allude to the most holy Sacrifice in which Jesus Christ, both Priest and Victim, daily offers Himself to His Father, through the ministry of His priests on earth. By virtue of this Sacrifice the infinite merits of Christ, gained by His Precious Blood shed once upon the Cross for the salvation of men, are applied to our souls.”

“The Mass represents this sacrifice by the separate consecration.”

This is Pope Leo's description of the Mass: it is a sacrifice, by which the infinite merits of Christ's death, gained on the Cross, are applied to souls here-and-now.

My next quotation is from Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Mediator Dei*, published in 1943. In section 74, he explains how the Mass, in St Paul's phrase, 'shows forth' the death of Christ until he comes. The Pope writes:

The divine wisdom has devised a way in which our Redeemer's sacrifice is marvellously shown forth by external signs symbolic of death. By the transubstantiation of bread unto the body of Christ and of wine unto his blood both his body and blood are rendered really present; but the Eucharistic species under which he is present symbolise the violent separation of his body and blood, and so a commemorative showing forth of the death which took place in reality on Calvary is repeated in each Mass, because by distinct representations, Christ Jesus is signified and shown forth in the state of victim.

The Mass, then, is a visible sacrifice, which the Council of Trent says that our human nature requires, because Christ's death is shown forth by the separate consecration of his body and blood. This is also the explanation which St Thomas Aquinas gives of the sacrifice of the Mass in the *Summa Theologica*.

This point, about the twofold consecration, is explained with great clarity in my last quotation, which comes from the *Simple Prayer Book*, as published in 1957. The section entitled 'Short Instruction on Holy Mass' contains the following passage:

You know that our Lord died only once, on Good Friday. But in the Mass, His death on the Cross is commemorated by the separate consecration of the bread and wine. He cannot really die again. His Body and Blood cannot really be separated... But in the Mass, the bread is first changed into our Lord's Body, and then the wine is changed into His Blood. Thus it looks as though the Body and Blood were separated, and this recalls the real separation, the real shedding of our Lord's Blood on Mount Calvary... In the Mass, His death is represented, or 'shown forth', as St Paul says.

That's the last of what I should claim are traditional descriptions or explanations of Holy Mass – they could of course have been multiplied indefinitely. Two things stand out. The first is the emphasis put on the Cross. The Mass is the memorial of the sacrifice of the Cross: it represents this sacrifice by the separate consecration of the Host and Chalice, and it applies the merits of our Lord's death on the Cross to our souls. But secondly, the Mass is itself a sacrifice here and now. None of these quotations claims that the essence of the Mass consists in making the past event of the Crucifixion literally present: they do not say that God works a miracle with time, causing a past event to exist here and now. The Mass represents this past event: it is one with the sacrifice of the Cross inasmuch as the victim and the priest are the same, but it is not literally the crucifixion.

If it were, it would not be an 'unbloody' or clean oblation. Nor would it be a visible sacrifice, since we don't actually see the past events of Calvary during the holy Mass.

Contemporary Theology

Do contemporary descriptions of the Mass deny any of this? No, not usually: but many such descriptions, some with a 'semi-official' status, often don't quite 'hit the same note', and, to my mind, seem somewhat unclear about what they do mean. What happens, in these modern descriptions, seems to be two things: first, as much emphasis is put on the Resurrection as on the Cross, or in other words the Mass is defined by reference to 'the Paschal Mystery'; and secondly, there is a playing-down, or obscuring, of the doctrine that the Mass itself is a true and proper sacrifice. Let me give some examples of these two tendencies, by a series of more modern quotations.

My first modern quotation is again from the *Simple Prayer Book*, not this time from the 1957 but from the 2005 edition. On pp106-7 there is a section called "The Mass simply explained". Unlike their predecessors in 1957, the authors do not here call the Mass itself a sacrifice, nor do they say that it brings to our souls the fruits of the sacrifice of the Cross. Nor do they say that it shows forth our Lord's death by means of the twofold consecration. I'd suggest that we have here some regrettable omissions in comparison to the pre-Vatican II *Simple Prayer Book*.

Instead, the authors say this: "The Church calls to mind the passion, death and resurrection of Christ, which are made present in the Eucharist". One problem with this formulation is that it could suggest that the Mass is what it is because the Church calls something to mind. But this is not true: the Mass is a reality because a validly ordained priest speaks the words of consecration over valid matter, not because of the anamnesis or calling-to-mind, which only occurs after the consecration. But I should like in particular to examine the claim that Christ's *death* and resurrection are made present in the Eucharist; that this is what the Mass is. I'd suggest that there are two problems with this. First, is it traditional to say even that the Mass 'makes Christ's death present?' On the Cross, our Lord's body and blood were separated physically, here they are separated sacramentally: which is sometimes called his 'mystical immolation'. So we must certainly say that the Mass perpetuates his *sacrifice* sacramentally. But this is not the same as saying that the Mass makes our Lord's *death* present. Christ really offers a sacrifice at Mass, but he does not really die again. Secondly, this phrase of the modern *Simple Prayer Book* gives the same prominence to our Lord's death and resurrection of Christ in its description of the Mass. But my earlier quotations spoke of the Mass as a memorial of our Lord's death, not of his resurrection; and St Paul himself says that we show forth his death until he comes, and not that we show forth his death and resurrection. For both these reasons, to define the Mass as the making-present of Christ's death and resurrection seems to be a novelty.

The Mass as an Actual Sacrifice in Catholic Tradition

continued

Now, we have to be careful here. I don't want to deny that there may be some sense in which we are present to the resurrection of Christ during the Mass. After all, all the mysteries of Christ's life are present to Him as God in his eternity and his eternal knowledge. So presumably, wherever he is present, we can talk about a presence of the mysteries of his life. Then again, we certainly *commemorate* the resurrection (and the ascension) in the Canon just after the consecration. And also at least since the time of Amalarius of Metz, in the 9th Century, the commingling of the particle of the host into the chalice just before the priest's communion has been taken to symbolise Christ's resurrection on the third day. But none of this, in my opinion, justifies us in giving equal emphasis to our Lord's death and resurrection in our account of the holy Mass. For his death is not simply commemorated in words: it is represented by *the very act which makes the Mass what it is*, namely, the twofold consecration. The transubstantiation of the bread and wine have as their term, respectively, our Lord's body and his blood, and so we can speak of a sacramental separation of this body and blood: and therefore of a real sacrifice, and a representation of his death. But the Mass does not involve a sacramental *re-uniting* of our Lord's body and blood: in the commingling of the particle of the host with the chalice, it is only the sacred species which are re-united, not the body and blood themselves. So it seems to me a mistake to put the Cross and Resurrection on the same level in one's explanation of the Mass, or, in other words, to define the Mass by means of the paschal mystery.

Now the putting of the Cross and Resurrection on a par in explaining the Mass is not just an isolated slip in the modern *Simple Prayer Book*. We find the same thing in a catechism entitled simply *The Eucharist*, produced by the Irish Dominicans in 2004, with a *nihil obstat* from the Archdiocese of Dublin. This catechism is excellent in many respects, but it also has some things which I think would have had the Fathers of Trent, not tearing their robes, but at least scratching their heads. Question 70 of this catechism asks, "what does the Eucharistic memorial make present?" The answer given is "The Eucharistic memorial makes present the complete paschal mystery, the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, so that we may now become part of this mystery." Then as if fearing not to have been sufficiently clear, five questions later the author asks, "Does the Mass make present Christ's resurrection?" The answer is "The Eucharist makes present not only the sacrifice of Christ, but the resurrection which crowned his sacrifice. It is the risen Christ, who, in the Eucharist, is the living Bread." The implication is that in whatever sense the Mass is Christ's sacrifice, it is in the same sense his resurrection. But this is not true. The Mass is literally Christ's sacrifice; it is not literally his resurrection.

My next quotation comes from a CTS pamphlet published in 2004 by the current Bishop of East Anglia, Michael Evans, called *Is Jesus really present in the Eucharist?* On pp. 9-10, we find a discussion of a key concept in this new way of talking about the Mass: the concept of *memorial*. Bishop

Evans writes:

The word "memorial" is very important in Eucharistic theology, and means far more than simply a recalling or remembering. For the Jews, celebrating a memorial involves evoking the past and reliving it in such a way that a past event is made effective and fruitful here and now [...] In our remembering, God brings the past event more and more firmly into effect, so that we can share in its benefits and look forward in hope to its final fulfilment.

[...] Jesus took the ritual of the Passover Meal, and brought its deepest meaning to its fulfilment... This new Passover Meal is a personal memorial. The heart of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus is made present and effective for us here and now.

The Role of Remembering

Now, *salva reverentia*, I don't find this explanation of the special, 'religious' meaning of memorial very clear. Bishop Evans says first that a memorial involves much more than just remembering something. For the Jews, he explains, a memorial means first of all evoking the past – but surely that is what the word always means? A war memorial, for example, evokes a past sacrifice. He adds that it means making the past fruitful. Now we can see in ordinary life what this could mean: for example, as I remember a kindness shown me by someone in the past, I may be moved to do a kind deed myself. That could be described as the past becoming fruitful.

But how does one go from that to saying, as he says at the end of the quotation, that by the memorial which is the Mass, the "life, death and resurrection" of our Lord are all made present? Does he mean just present to our memories, and so moving us to imitate Christ? Surely not, that would be pure Protestantism: it would also contradict the insistence that at least in a Jewish or Catholic context, a memorial is something much more real than simply a recalling or a remembering. But *what* is it more? How on this account is the Mass itself a true and proper sacrifice, and not simply us remembering the past, along with the real presence of our Lord beneath the eucharistic species, and the actual graces which God gives to us as we remember?

The Council of Trent, Leo XIII, Pius XII and others do give us a real idea of the relation between the Cross and the holy Mass, even if they don't settle all possible theological questions: the Mass represents the Cross by the sacrificial consecration; it is therefore the memorial of the Cross, and it also applies its fruits. But what is meant by saying that the Mass makes past events present because at Mass we make a memorial of these events, but that this being-present of the past events is far more than just our remembering them? To me, all this conveys no definite idea. Bishop Evans' words also lead to a problem that I've already mentioned: if, as he seems to be saying, at Mass God uses our remembering to cause the Mass to be whatever it is, that would seem to imply that a Mass where no one is thinking about the death and resurrection of Christ would be invalid.

“Rather than try to somehow extrapolate the Cross into the Mass, it is better to say that the Eucharist went to the Cross.”

The Irish Dominican catechism also wants to put an explanatory weight on the term ‘memorial’ which it seems to me it is unable to bear. In question 69, the authors ask ‘Where did the Christian notion of “memory” come from?’, and they answer, ‘It came from the Old Testament, and from the Passover in particular. A “memorial” did not simply recall a past act of God, but made that saving act real, actual and life-giving in the present celebration.’ To this, I think we’re entitled to respond, ‘what, literally?’ When the people of Israel kept the Passover in Jerusalem, did the parting of the Red Sea and the drowning of Pharaoh’s horsemen literally exist in their celebration, and not simply in their memories? Surely what really happened was that as they obediently remembered the past and looked forward to the future God gave them actual graces in view of the future Redemption, a redemption prefigured by the crossing of the Red Sea. In any case, whatever may have happened at the old Passover feasts, to suggest that the Mass is what it is because we are remembering something is surely to put the cart before the horse: the Mass is what it is, namely a sacrifice; and therefore it makes us recall the same sacrifice, offered on the Cross.

“The Mass is [...] not literally the same event as the sacrifice of the Cross.”

But notice also what happens when memorial becomes the dominant concept in trying to understand the Mass. Obviously, if we are assembling first and foremost to remember our Lord, we shan’t want to think exclusively of his death; we’ll want to think of his life and resurrection as well. So Bishop Evans does indeed put all these three things on a par, and makes them equally part of his description of the Mass: at Mass, he says, *the heart of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus is made present... for us here and now*. And to me, again, that sounds rather different from saying that the Mass is a clean oblation, which represents the sacrifice of the Cross, and brings to us its fruits.

There’s something more. Not only is there a departure here from the traditional explanation of the Mass in favour of a description of the Mass as a making-present of the death and resurrection of Christ, if not his whole life, there also seems to be a glossing over of the importance of the twofold consecration. To recall: after the consecration, our Lord’s body is present under the species of bread because of the conversion; his blood is present under the appearance of bread not because of the conversion, but by concomitance, because in heaven his blood is really united to his body. Likewise, the precious blood is present under the species of wine by reason of the conversion, but his body is present there only by concomitance. This is the teaching of the Council of Trent, Session XIII, cap. 3. But Bishop Evans’s account does not seem to leave room for this sacramental separation since he writes on p. 12, “We are not sure whether Jesus would have said, ‘This is my body’, or ‘This is my flesh’, but both words really mean the whole bodily-existing human being, the whole person, rather than just one element of him.” But if there was, then, no sacramental separation of our Lord’s body and blood at the Last Supper, there presumably would be none at the

Mass either; but then, would the words of consecration still be sacrificial words? What seems to be lost in all this is the fact that the Mass itself, while wholly relative to the Sacrifice of the Cross, drawing its power and significance from the Cross, is still a true and proper sacrifice here and now. The Mass here and now is a visible sacrifice, and not simply the arena or occasion at which past events become present in a very obscure way.

Conclusion

To sum up. I have three concerns about many modern descriptions of the Mass which emphasise the notion of the Paschal Mystery. The first is that, contrary to tradition, they appear to give equal importance to the Cross and the Resurrection. The second is that they seem to render unclear the sense in which the Mass itself is a true and visible sacrifice, the offering of which is, under the new covenant, the supreme act of the virtue of religion. And thirdly, the statement, often found in these descriptions of the Mass, that a memorial of past events causes the events to be actually present and is not simply our remembering them is to me completely opaque.

And if I were asked, finally, why this new way of speaking has become dominant, I should suggest that it may correspond to an unease with the whole idea of sacrifice, and with the accompanying notions of the debt of sin, propitiation, expiation and satisfaction. These uncomfortable realities will clearly be less in evidence when the Mass is talked of as a renewal of the resurrection, and when we speak of the Mass as somehow the fruit of our remembering, and not as corresponding to our need to offer a real sacrifice here and now for our sins. But the eclipsing of notions which are a part of the deposit of faith must surely have a deleterious effect on the spiritual lives of the faithful. I should suggest, then, that the traditional language, the language of the Council of Trent, of Leo XIII and of *Mediator Dei*, needs to become normative once again as we catechise our people about the testament of Jesus Christ, the holy Mass.

A Response: Possible Theological Development

Hugh MacKenzie

Fr Crean helpfully brings out some important aspects of Catholic doctrine concerning the Mass. It is surely true that the use of the phrase “paschal mystery” can become somewhat vague and woolly when speaking of the Mass and at times seems to reduce it to no more than the abiding effects of the death and resurrection of the Lord in the most general way.

Clearly the Church intends to teach us something more specific than that about the Mass as sacrifice. We would think that Fr. Crean provides a solid basis upon which we should consider some theological development concerning the eternal sacrifice of the glorified Jesus in the Mass. We would place the emphasis upon the fact, not of course denied by Fr Crean, that the presence of the Lamb that was slain for our sins is inseparable from his risen and glorified presence before the Father in heaven.

The Mass as an Actual Sacrifice in Catholic Tradition

continued

Memorial does mean more than mere remembering. As Fr Crean alludes to, even among the Jews of the Old Testament, the Passover was not just a recalling of the Exodus, but the continuing reality of spiritual and corporate liberation by which God was redeeming his people in the present. It also presaged and contained the promise of the final and plenary liberation from slavery to sin and death that was yet to come with the advent of the Messiah. There was a sense in which past salvific events had key dimensions which extend across history.

In a far greater way, the total work of redemption that is offered to the Father that was consummated on Calvary includes the ministry of the Lord through time in his Church to each one of us and is completed in the eternal ministry of the glorified Lord in heaven. As the fathers taught and the liturgies of the Eastern churches show very clearly, the Eucharist is simultaneously a memorial of the cross, the living presence of the crucified and risen Lord, and also an earthly participation in the eschatological or heavenly sacrifice of Christ who pleads before the Father for those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. It is simply one and the same Christ who is offered on Calvary, in the Mass and in heaven. This is why the Mass commands the presence and adoration of the angels and saints around every earthly altar as much as they do around the heavenly one. "What we have come to is the mountain of the living God where the angels are gathered for the feast". (Hebrews 12:18f).

"It is simply one and the same Christ who is offered on Calvary, in the Mass and in heaven."

It helps to understand that sacrifice does not primarily consist in pain and death but the total submission and self-giving which is accepted by God as submission to his grace, and with that then brings the grace to his creatures of deeper union and communion with his own Godhead. Christ is always our Sacrifice in this sense in any order of providence, but since the disaster of sin his sacrifice is enacted through suffering and death which he accepts in perfect charity for each one of us. He still gives Himself to bring us into union with the Trinitarian life, but now offers apology and compensation for our degradation and the existential blasphemy of our fallen condition by his own human holiness and obedience unto death for our wounded nature and the Father's wounded glory.

The Cross and the Mass are not two sacrifices but one and the same reality. They are different events in time. Indeed each and every Mass is a new event in time. But the death of the Lord on the Cross is not the sacrifice of salvation as an isolated or standalone event, independently of the Mass. It is universally salvific precisely because the Lord had given himself into the hands of his Church to be offered as a sacrifice throughout time and space. In short rather than try to somehow extrapolate the Cross into the Mass, it is better to say that the Eucharist went to the Cross.

The specific events of the crucifixion are once and once only, never to be repeated, the essential, human high point of God's sacrificial self-gift to us (cf: the ancient hymn in

Phillipians 2). But the victim who so offered himself in obedience and love in the face of physical destruction had instituted the means by which he, who has so become "humbler yet", could be offered as propitiation for sinners as yet unborn. So the effects of the Cross are applied to the lives of succeeding generations precisely through the prior institution of the Eucharist. It is a single sacrificial reality/ offering encompassed within multiple events.

Christ's Body: Distinction and Unity

So the Mass does "show forth the state of victim" but as the Mass happens this side of the resurrection and ascension the separation of the body and blood of the Lord is sacramentally symbolic. To focus upon the separate consecrations is indeed to focus upon an aspect which sacramentally shows forth the Lamb whose blood was shed and who is given for all as Victim. Indeed, as with all sacramental signs, it is this showing forth which enacts the sacrifice. Furthermore this is through a privileged intimacy of encounter with Christ's body under the appearance of bread and Christ's blood under the appearance of wine. But we would want to emphasise that there is an actual "separation" only at the level at which the parts of a thing are separate, not at the holistic level of Christ's risen body. To say that the Lord's blood is present in the consecrated host and his body in the consecrated chalice "only by concomitance" does emphasise a real physical aspect of the Mass, by which the sacrifice is made present for us. But in terms of emphasising the one, holistic person of the glorified Christ, this is a real physical, non-separated presence, brought about, moreover, by the consecration.

It is simply one and the same Christ who is offered on Calvary, in the Mass and in heaven.

If I say to someone "I give you my hand" it is an act of my hand which is both literal and symbolic as an act of loving union (in this case the significance will vary according to the context). Through the joining of hands what I am really doing is giving my whole self body and soul. And the rest of my body is literally, physically present too, because it is joined to my hand by the concomitance of my physical nature. I give my whole self inseparably by natural concomitance. The focus of significance and symbolism in the action is my hand as the means of self giving, but this does not mean that the rest of me is any less present. The actual points of physical contact are parts of the skin of the hand. In an analogous way, we know that the *whole* Christ is given and received under either Eucharistic species. But this does not mean that separated species are without sacrificial and sacramental meaning.

We are right to remind ourselves that the Mass is truly and specifically a sacrifice, The One Great Sacrifice indeed – the same that was offered on Calvary by the suffering Lord; the same that is offered in heaven by the glorious Lord. This same sacrifice is the reality of every Mass offered for the living and the dead, which can then be applied to the specific and local intentions and needs of the faithful from the East to West and from the rising of the sun to its setting until the final consummation of all things.

Letters to the Editor

The Editor, St. Mary Magdalen's Clergy House, Peter Avenue,
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KNOWING FORMALITY AND KNOWING REALITY: WHAT IS THE LINK?

Dear Father Editor,

I am glad you feel, as I do, that our exchange has been a constructive one (Letters, May 09). However, if you should begin to feel that – in the words of your reply to Mr Skarpa – “the debate is going nowhere”, just let me know: I too have a concern for the patience of the wider readership.

Well then, in the first place, I should like to register agreement with you on one point at least, so we can identify the common ground. I would align myself with you against the positions of Dulles and Schönborn (and Gilson) *insofar* as they say that modern science *by its very nature* excludes the consideration of formality. Stephen Barr is of course quite right to say that, even if scientists sometimes don't acknowledge it, formality is right there at the heart of science. Yet, I do think that form has not been accorded its proper 'dignity' as *cause* in scientific discourse (which Barr admits is proper to it) – because methodologically speaking, science concentrates upon efficient and material causality. Even though scientific experiments are yielding non-reductionist *results*, these results are achieved by reductive *method*. Many influential scientists seem unable to go beyond this method, and so they lack an adequate vocabulary for the non-reductive results they achieve. This touches upon the “limitation of reason” identified by Pope Benedict at Regensburg.

Now, passing on to what you identify as your “main concern”: thomistic epistemology. Let me begin with your assertion that “modern realism must

acknowledge that all knowing is context relevant in much the same way as the physical realm”. If we understand this in an unqualified sense, no knowledge could be had at all, because in order to know one thing, I would have to know its “dynamic relationship” to everything else, which would be impossible. We must therefore understand the context dependent character of knowledge in some other way.

In Thomas's thought, knowing is context dependent in a number of ways; indeed, he sees acquiring new concepts as a process of spotting and understanding *specific differences* – and how can one spot a difference unless one also has a context from which something can stand out? For example: if my only experience of animals up to time *x* has been of dogs, then my definition of “dog” will be the same as my definition of “animal”; if however at time *x* I chance upon a gecko, then my definition both of “animal” and of “dog” will change, because now “animal” has to include the very different reality of a gecko (it becomes a *genus*), and “dog” will now relate to “animal” as to a broad epistemological *context (genus)* of which it is a specifically differentiated part (it becomes a *species*). Now – bear with me! – someone else might have only encountered crocodiles, iguanas and newts by time *x*; so when he encounters the gecko, he will have no reason to differentiate between “animal” and “reptile”, until such times as he should see a dog or cat or chimpanzee. All this is to show that Thomas does in fact see the process of acquiring knowledge as “context relative”. But let us be clear: the specific difference, which in relation to a known *genus* makes a new concept, is rooted in a discrete and specific datum of the senses, which in its turn is based on real difference in the physical world. While in the physical world differences have a history and a relationality as ancient and as wide as the cosmos, in the intellect they are considered in their specificity – their “formal” specificity – relative to the

intellectual “matter” or “context” of the *genus*. So “context relative” means something quite different in the fields of conceptual knowing and material being.

Does this make our knowledge false by reducing the radical fluidity and interconnectedness of the universe to the fixity of a concept (the ‘intelligible expression of an essence’)? No – because the universal species is always dynamically ordered towards knowing the real. This touches upon your critique of Thomas' dictum that “the understandable species is not that which is understood, but that by which the understanding understands”. Here we have, not two *exclusive* meanings of the verb “to understand”, but two stages of the one intellectual process of knowing the singular under the aspect of universality: the intellect perceives a specific difference and so *comprehends the essence* of a thing (first stage); then it is in a position to *define the thing itself* by means of what it has comprehended, in an act of judgment (the “return to sense-images” – *conversio ad phantasmata* – the second stage). First we comprehend the universal (*potentially* present in sense-data); then we are able to know the particular in a way that goes beyond mere sense-knowledge. I see these stages as complementary rather than exclusive; and if Thomas's teaching is not clear from this one text, we should look for other texts and trustworthy commentators to help out.

There are other things I would like to add, but as I said, I don't want to test your patience! So one short point, then a conclusion: I would not agree that the universal ‘form’ or species is the “same identical form” as the form as *causa essendi*. Recall that in Aristotle as in Thomas, “form” covers a notoriously broad range of meanings: the best I can think of as a common definition is “a certain determination of a given substrate”. In the present case, the substrates are clearly different – and this affects the nature of the determination (form) in a decisive way. In thomistic terms, form-as-intellectual-species is a “likeness” of the knowable



Letters to the Editor continued

thing, ordered towards the same, and adequate to the knower's task of knowing. Thomas says that true knowledge is the "adequation of the intellect to the thing": this means that the intellect *makes itself* similar – according to its own mode of being and operating – to the thing known (it also means, incidentally, that a *more* adequate grasp of things known adequately is a future possibility). Thus, there is no flying or leaping of forms, no hovering back and forth between the two stools of world and mind. If that is how one reads Thomas, no wonder one wants to embrace something a bit more "down to earth"!

Yours faithfully
John Deighan
Scots' College
Rome

EDITORIAL COMMENT

We are grateful for having reached significant "common ground", namely that "form has not been accorded its proper 'dignity' as *cause* in scientific discourse", and our common *denial* that "modern science *by its very nature* excludes the consideration of formality". However in terms of this "nature" of science, rather than common scientific "discourse", we would disagree that "methodologically speaking, science concentrates upon efficient and material causality", thinking that the Barr quote makes this point (see also our current editorial, under "science does observe the form".)

We would indeed affirm that "in order to know one thing, I would have to know its 'dynamic relationship' to everything else". We know all things partially, with reference to their environment, including ourselves as a non-absolute knowing mind. All things are in a hierarchical, kaleidoscopic network of formal "contexts". Realism would make us demur from the statement " 'context relative' means something quite different in the fields of conceptual knowing and material being." A mental concept of a genus immediately refers to, relates to, an actual and context or function in the universe.

An aspect of realism is being able to say that "The individual Red Rum is truly a horse." Universality seems to be intrinsic to individual things and this seems to be a problem for scholastic form-matter hylemorphism. In this theory the individual form-matter composite of Red Rum is distinct from the individual Shergar. In the scholastic theory of 'knowledge by abstraction' the form of 'horseness' is abstracted from the phantasm of Red Rum, *because it is unintelligible and particular* in its state of being immersed with individualising matter. This theory involves denying intrinsic intelligibility, *and thus universality*, to the form immersed with matter – by being abstracted the form becomes universally intelligible, as the *species impressa*.

"It still maintains the very unscientific scholastic belief that individuality is an unintelligible metaphysical principle."

This stage of the knowing process has as its object the intelligible universal form. The second stage is invoked to make the unintelligible individualised form the object of the process. Whilst our spiritual intellect's knowing of physical things is said to need as object the uniquely knowable universal, the final object of our spiritual, intellectual knowing is proposed as the non-universal individual. Yet it was because this couldn't be such an object of the intellect that abstraction was proposed. It seems to be in this context that the second stage process is termed a personal 'judgment of existence', and thus the whole process is, as Mr Deighan terms it, "orientated towards the real." This does not resolve how the particular is truly universal. It still maintains the very unscientific scholastic belief that individuality is an *unintelligible* metaphysical principle.

This scholastic emphasis is all maintained through the "real distinction of essence and existence" such that whether something is fictional or is truly part of the actual network of

relationships that make up the actual cosmos under God is irrelevant to defining its (static) essence. So a horse in a novel and in actual existence can have exactly the same essence, even though clearly its metaphysical relationships with spiritual mind are radically different. These latter relationships are irrelevant, in this vision, to what something is, its essence.

Mr Deighan's last paragraph suggests a way out of this which seems to give significantly different identities and functions to the form in the individual thing and the form in the mind. He thus sensibly moves away from a crude correspondence theory of truth, but towards something in which the realism of our universal knowledge is no longer so clearly defended.

We think that modern science's discovery of the inter-related, hierarchical unity of all the parts of the cosmos provides a solution: namely that individuals are defined through their universal relationships – see for instance our Sept 2006 editorial: The Catholic View of Matter: Towards a New Synthesis.

A NEW VISION?

Dear Father Editor,
Faith movement is engaged in the vitally urgent and important task of trying to forge a new synthesis of Faith and Reason – the subject of one of Pope John Paul II's encyclicals.

In the 18th century we saw an attempt to supplant Christian Faith with Reason itself. The reductive and mechanistic tendencies that were inherent in this have their legacy in the ecological crisis and sense of alienation that we witness today. If God is acknowledged it is only in a Deistic, radically distant sense.

The Romantic Movement with its stress on the primacy of feelings and the imagination, arose as a counterblast to the aridity of the 'mechanists'. But the excesses of the Romantics have led to the moral and intellectual vacuity

“The use (or misuse) of language to obscure unpalatable truths is not new.”

of the hippy/new age culture with its acceptance of drug taking and general flight from reality. Here, if God is acknowledged, he/she is identified with Nature itself.

In the light of the above, I would suggest that to revive our Western culture what we really need is a synthesis of Faith, Reason and imagination, for ‘where there is no vision the people perish’ (*Proverbs*).

Scientists are the great exponents of the rational intellect: the mathematical order underlying the visible universe is truly astonishing. But great scientific breakthroughs often begin as intuitions, insights, great leaps of the imagination. It is the great strength of science that its speculations are open to verification through empirical testing.

However, recent scientific advances in the realm of the quantum world have shown that there comes a point when objective testing and validity is no longer possible. We can only talk in terms of probabilities and admit that the mind of the observer is an active participant in what is going on. Scientists are also taking on board the need for a more organic and holistic approach to the material world.

The acceptance of the role that the imagination sometimes plays in scientific advance together with the recognition that 100% truth and verification is impossible to achieve can indicate how a synthesis of Faith, Reason and Imagination could come about. and our Trinitarian Faith is ideally suited to play a pivotal role.

In this (admittedly oversimplified) vision the Father is the planner, the organiser, the Divine rational source that gives creation its unity. The Spirit is the Divine creative energetic principle working in all of diverse matter forging it into ever more complex and integrated systems until it reaches its peak in Man who is co-creator of beings, relationships, art, architecture, music, machines, literature, laws, sport etc., etc. ‘The Glory of God is a man fully alive’.

But as indicated, we can sometimes overstress either the Transcendence or Immanence of God, it is Jesus Christ who provides the bridge; who provides the reality check (particularly on the cross); who keeps our feet planted firmly on the ground whilst allowing our imagination to soar across the heavens. Christ is both Icon of the Father (who is thus revealed as being far more than a merely rational super-being) and true Man, the real peak and summit of all creation, and exemplar of man, who will one day gather up all the diverse workings of the Holy Spirit and present them as a glorious symphony in the presence of Our Father in heaven. Creator and creation will be united in perfect harmony and bliss.

This is my vision but I have to stress that it makes more sense when viewed through the lens of panentheism rather than through creation *ex-nihilo* with God specially creating individual souls for each human being.

Yours faithfully
G J Egan
Fairview Avenue
Wallasey
Merseyside

HONESTY ON STEM CELLS

Dear Father Editor,
I was very pleased to read, in the *Cutting Edge* column of the July issue of *Faith* magazine, the brief summary of two recent breakthroughs in adult stem-cell research.

The Church is portrayed by the media as being completely opposed to stem-cell research, and relatively few people are aware that there are two completely separate areas of research, namely embryonic stem-cell research, which involves the destruction of human embryos (and is therefore opposed by the Church), and *adult* stem-cell research.

Part of the ignorance is due to the media dropping the terms “embryonic” and “adult” when reporting on stem-cell

research; since most of the reports have concentrated on justifying the creation of cloned human embryos for research into and treatment of neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson’s, “stem-cells” has become synonymous with “embryonic stem-cells” in the public imagination. Even the current GCSE Science curriculum focuses on work with cloned embryos when referring to stem cells. Adult stem-cell research is barely mentioned; the fact that the successes, in human treatment terms, have come from the use of adult stem-cells is glossed over.

This use (or misuse) of language to obscure unpalatable truths is not new. In July 1996, I wrote an article in *Faith* magazine explaining how the transplantation of foetal tissue, which had progressed further than many people had realised, was being reported in misleading ways, with scientists going to great lengths to avoid direct references to a human foetus. I suggested that IVF technology would soon be used to create embryos as “tissue banks.” The difficulties associated with obtaining nerve tissue at the correct stage of development and differentiation from aborted embryos means that foetal tissue transplantation is no longer in favour, but the creation of human embryos specifically as sources of stem cells, and the push to use “spare” embryos from IVF treatments is gathering momentum.

Much more needs to be done to alert the public to the treatment successes obtained through the use of *adult* stem-cell research.

Yours faithfully
Mac McLernon
Belvedere
Kent



The Truth Will Set You Free

by Caroline Farey, Director of the BA in Applied Theology (Catechesis) at Maryvale Institute

TOWARDS GETTING CATECHETICAL METHOD RIGHT

There have been two very 'hot topics' in the Church since the Second Vatican Council, that surpass all others if one takes as one's measure the number of documents on the subject that have come from Rome in the last forty years. These are the liturgy and catechesis. Concern for the liturgy has been taken up by a large number of Catholics who read avidly what the Pope, Bishops and curia have to say, and conferences and courses on the renewal of liturgical practice are well subscribed. On the other hand, not catechesis itself, but the Church's documents on catechesis, are taken up by very few indeed; the Church's vision here is rather like an abandoned orphan. Few seem aware, let alone interested beyond a glance, of the nature and degree of renewal being urged upon us in successive documents on the subject.

For many it is a case of 'know the faith and teach it – what else is there to say?' *The General Catechetical Directory*, however, speaks of those with this attitude as "unable to appreciate how profound is the proposed renewal, as if it were merely a matter of eliminating ignorance of doctrine."¹ The Church's documents focus on catechesis as an "integral Christian formation", that is, as holistic education in the faith based on the pedagogy of God, rather than instruction alone. This article is concerned with the Church's understanding of catechetical pedagogy. This pedagogy flows from doctrine, and good methods flow from this pedagogy.

Let us begin with a paragraph, in the midst of a wealth of advice and direction, from the *General Directory for Catechesis*:

'The Church, in transmitting the faith, does not have a particular method nor any single method. Rather she discerns contemporary methods in the light of the pedagogy of God'.²

Here, the Church indicates that for catechesis, discerning and choosing the method of communication of the Faith of the Church needs careful consideration. This task, we are told, depends upon knowing what the Church means by the 'pedagogy of God' and then on specific and deliberate attention to discerning catechetical methods in its light.

Priests and catechists, then, need a *double* formation for effective catechesis in accordance with the mind and heart of the Church. They need a formation, firstly, in a knowledge and appreciation of the deposit of Faith itself. Priests, of course, receive this in the seminary and it is their responsibility to pass it on, and, especially, to ensure that parents and catechists receive this in due measure. Secondly, priests and catechists both need formation in the 'pedagogy of God' and then in how to examine methods and methodologies in its light, in order to discern those methods that are appropriate for communicating the Faith and those that are not.

Very often it is believed that parents, and especially teachers, know so much more than the priest does about *methods* to use for communicating the Faith (other than preaching, in which the priest is especially trained). Knowledge and skill in various 'methods of communicating' are seen to come, either

directly from 'experience with young people', or from 'teacher-training', or from the frequent use of published resources that have methods of teaching written into them by 'experienced' people.

People may be called 'experienced' because of what they have been doing for many years. Yet this does not mean that they are experienced in the 'pedagogy of God' or in discerning appropriate methods of communication in accordance with it. For catechists to learn how to choose this or that activity or method they need considerable help in this type of assessment and awareness, discernment and judgement. The task can seem to be rather more demanding than most people are prepared for.

An especially helpful work to assist this discernment was published recently, called *The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Craft of Catechesis*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008.³ The three authors have been involved in the formation of catechists for many years and have helped countless catechists precisely in how to discern and choose the most appropriate methods in the light of God's own *pedagogy* as elucidated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The Catechism is acknowledged generally as an outstanding contribution to making the content of the faith of the Church accessible. The book, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Craft of Catechesis*, is unique in its study of the Catechism not only from the point of view of its content, but also for its catechetical pedagogy. Cardinals Joseph Ratzinger and Christoph Schönborn have provided considerable teaching on the Catechism from this pedagogical point of view which these authors bring to our attention, providing pedagogical principles by which catechists can judge all the various methods and activities they use in their regular catechetical sessions.

The authors of the book on the *craft* of catechesis are each so soaked in both the Faith of the Church and the exercise of catechising that they are able to see, more profoundly than many, the extraordinary pedagogical guidance embedded in the Catechism. The pedagogy flows directly from the nature and content of the deposit of faith. The Catechism is not simply an account of the Faith, it is a carefully designed instrument to assist in passing on the Faith. To know God's pedagogy is to follow God's way of communicating Himself to man, in Christ through His Church; the Catechism reveals precisely this.

AN EXAMPLE OF THE PEDAGOGY OF GOD

The book on *The Craft of Catechesis* has a concrete example of how the pedagogy of God can be used to discern good catechetical method:

'Let us examine how the Catechism, in and through its very structure, calls for and enables a holistic formation in, and transmission of, the Faith. As we know, the Catechism is structured in four parts, relating to the areas of the Creed, the liturgy, life in Christ, and prayer. The Catechism is not arranged like this arbitrarily, but because these are the four dimensions of the Christian Faith, and therefore the four

“The Church’s vision here is rather like an abandoned orphan.”

dimensions of a living faith in each one of us’ (p. 16, cf. CCC 3, and Acts 2:42).

It is clear from this that catechesis is to be concerned with all four dimensions, is to be four-dimensional.

Just as the *Catechism* links each of the parts to each other, so catechetical sessions, together with the Christo-centric doctrine to be imparted,⁴ can be linked to the liturgical life of the Church, to moral life ‘in Christ’ and to prayer.⁵ This is a fundamental pedagogical principle for holistic catechesis, that is, catechesis that nourishes all four dimensions of the Christian life. This would mean ensuring not only a time for imparting some aspect of doctrine, but also a link to the consequences of the particular *doctrine* (of the session) for *life* ‘in Christ’, a time of *prayer* linked to the same doctrine and a liturgical element or link to the *liturgy* in some way. How many resources follow such a structure and how many priests or catechists realise the richness of following such a structure for their catechetical sessions?

The pedagogical principle of structuring one’s catechetical sessions holistically in the four-fold way described above, is one of twelve principles that the authors have drawn from the *Catechism*, concerning faithfulness and coherence, prayer, Scripture, liturgy, grace and beauty. *Communication of the Faith* or ‘the *craft* of catechesis’ can be more or less according to the Faith of the Church just as the *content* can be more or less according to the Faith of the Church. Just because someone is teaching, doesn’t mean that anyone is learning. True communication means that learning is taking place. True catechesis means that Christ is being communicated. This is why the Church’s documents are insistent upon methods of catechetical communication following an appropriate pedagogy.

The twelve principles drawn from the *Catechism* are a totally different type of guide to those taken from typical developmental or educational theories. Some educational theories, largely developed in the second half of the twentieth century, were of value for helping teachers to recognise the specific characteristics of different age groups and different kinds of learning. The *General Directory for Catechesis* acknowledges that these theories can sometimes be useful in part but they are not sufficient. The pedagogy of God, which is ‘universally valid’, is also needed and by this all catechetical theories, skills and methods are to be judged.

AN EXAMPLE OF DISCERNMENT OF METHOD

Let us look at a typical contemporary method sometimes called the ‘pastoral cycle’ sometimes ‘shared praxis’. This tends to have between three and five steps or short periods of time, from ten to twenty minutes each. For example, one three-step programme of this kind divides its sessions into three periods: ‘life as we know it – God’s message – new life or message for my life’.⁶ Secular stories and discussion questions are used to stimulate the sharing of experience either at step one or step three or both. The questions are focused on the participants’ lives and opinions. ‘God’s message’ tends to be the shortest moment. Let us analyse what typically happens.

- Firstly, one loses control of the content of the session because many differing points of view can be expressed, often taken from the media or from a typical human point of view; often disparate or far ranging; some opinions tangential; others wholly opposite to the faith. The Church, on the other hand, recognises a good catechetical method as one that ‘guarantees fidelity to content’.⁷
- Secondly, the session quickly moves into the realm of psychology rather than catechesis if one asks about personal background, emotions, feelings, opinions and so on, all of which need great sensitivity. What does the catechist do with the range of feelings, ideas and opinions presented? Are they to be ignored, passed over with a smile, a murmur of thanks, accepted without comment, corrected? Not one of these possibilities seems appropriate in a time set aside for catechesis.
- Thirdly, if one does try to speak of the Faith of the Church after this, it will likely be *corrective* of what someone has said, placing the catechist and that participant in a difficult situation. Not everything that has been said can be corrected and many of the false opinions will, then, be confirmed by the occasion, or the catechist ameliorates the Faith in order not to hurt the feelings of someone in public.
- Fourthly, the Faith of the Church tends to need to be given in a *defensive* manner because of what has been said that is contrary to it – this puts the catechist in a position of needing conviction, clarity and argument as well as knowledge because stating the Faith now looks simplistic, contradictory, like another personal opinion, or, if objectively stated, dogmatic in the negative sense. A catechist is often not equipped for this and the Faith simply not given.
- Finally, far from making it easier to enter into the Faith of the Church, participants have been led into spending their time and attention on typical human responses that they hear all week, and by this may have been led even further away than they were before. The short, precious opportunity so desired by God as a moment for evangelization has been cut short and nothing of the principle of holistic catechesis is yet achieved.

It is not possible to speak here of all the principles or how to translate them into positive catechetical methods in a short article of this kind. This article is an attempt to awaken people to the need to seek out the kind of renewal of methodology to which the Church exhorts us so that the Faith is learnt again holistically, for life, for prayer and, ultimately, better to enable people to love to worship.

Notes

¹GDC 9 (not my italics).

²GDC148 (my italics).

³Dr Petroc Willey, (Maryvale Institute, Birmingham, UK), Rev Dr Pierre de Cointet (Studium Notre Dame de Vie, France) and Mrs Barbara Morgan (Franciscan University, Steubenville, US), *The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Craft of Catechesis*, with an introductory essay by Christoph Cardinal Schönborn, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008.

⁴‘Every mode of presentation must always be christocentric -trinitarian’ (GDC 100).

⁵See, for example, GDC 7: ‘The Catechism of the Catholic Church is ‘a principal requirement for catechesis’.

⁶Diana Klein, *Preparing to be Confirmed*, Great Wakering: McCrimmons, 2002, p8.

⁷GDC 159.



Comment on the Comments

by William Oddie

A Man With A Mission

The Tablet, yet again, has been in the news for becoming – like Alistair Campbell towards the end of his Downing Street years – the story rather than the messenger. “*The Tablet*”, wrote Damian Thompson for the Telegraph early in July “has welcomed Archbishop Vincent Nichols to Westminster with a snide and mean-spirited profile which suggests that he has become more orthodox in his theology in order to achieve promotion in the Church. The article is a massive error of judgment that will infuriate many Catholics. I couldn’t believe my eyes when I read it.”

Once more the boot was applied by *The Tablet’s* acerbic deputy Editor Elena Curti (last seen in this column trying to maul Fr Tim Finigan) who seems to have assumed the role of Editor’s attack dog: though this time she picked an antagonist who is experienced enough and powerful enough to be able to make those at the Bitter Pill come to wonder if this time they have not bitten off rather more than they can chew. This is part of what Ms. Curti wrote:

The bright and personable priest from Merseyside, who as General Secretary ruled the roost at the Bishops’ Conference headquarters at Eccleston Square for eight years from the mid-1980s, was seen by many Catholics at the time as a breath of fresh air [Note: for “many Catholics” read “*The Tablet*”]. Renowned for his openness and pastoral concerns, he was also an espouser of liberal causes. But while his stock was high among more liberal Catholics, the decision-makers in Rome were said to be less impressed. His mentor, the Archbishop of Liverpool, Derek Worlock, watched this in frustration. He reputedly took ‘Fr Vin’ to one side and told him: “We can’t get you into the hierarchy if you carry on like this. You have to make yourself more favourable to Rome.” Vincent Nichols’ critics suggest this explains why he

became more overtly orthodox when he became Archbishop of Birmingham.

“*The Tablet*”, angrily commented Damian Thompson, “has taken leave of its senses (and its Catholicism) recently. Its hatchet job on Fr Tim Finigan was a disgrace, and now the author of that piece, Ms Curti, has written an ill-judged assessment of the new Archbishop of Westminster at precisely the moment he needs our support. Plus, Vincent is a good man who has been bequeathed one hell of a mess. I didn’t think the Bitter Pill could fall any lower in my estimation, but it just has.”

All the same, the *Tablet’s* strictures, though undoubtedly vindictive, were not wholly without reason (whether they were justified or not is another matter). There certainly did appear to be a shift in the new archbishop’s expected policies when he arrived in Birmingham nine years ago, and many in the diocese (I was one) were profoundly relieved by it. And *The Tablet*, who thought he was one of their own, were far from pleased. As I observed earlier this year in a speculative piece on the Westminster succession (one of those runners and riders articles so beloved of the editorial mind) written for *The Catholic World Report*, “When Vincent Nichols went to Birmingham, it was considered a ‘liberal’ appointment. The arch-liberal weekly *The Tablet* could hardly contain its satisfaction that this conservative archdiocese would soon feel the Spirit of Vatican II rippling through its dusty corridors. But *The Tablet* was soon to be bitterly disillusioned: his first action as archbishop was to confirm his predecessor’s withdrawal from a disastrous entanglement (hotly supported by *The Tablet*) in a Catholic-Anglican ecumenical school. He has since given many signs of his support for the present pope; when many of his episcopal brethren were doing everything they could to undermine the *motu proprio* establishing the right to celebrate the ‘old Mass’, he made clear

his belief that the rite of John XXIII ‘is not a relic, not a reverting to the past, but part of the living tradition of the Church’.

I would not be at all surprised if *The Tablet* had not been looking for an opportunity to make clear its displeasure at what they have seen as his betrayal of the liberal cause ever since their bitter disillusion all those years ago over the establishment of the firmly Catholic St. Gregory’s School in Oxford and the dismantling of its truly awful ecumenical (which in effect meant functionally secular) predecessor.

What can hardly be denied is that Archbishop Nichols is a good deal more inclined to support the authority of Rome than once he was; and it is not only *The Tablet* which has observed the shift with some scepticism: he was until very recently (and perhaps still is) regarded by many in Rome as one who in Birmingham behaved as an orthodox pope-supporting prelate should in order to get to Westminster. But that would mean that he was only *pretending* to be orthodox in Birmingham and that as soon as he hit Westminster he would soon revert to type. The fact is not only that he hasn’t yet, but that as soon as he arrived in Archbishop’s House, he made it very clear in a number of ways that he wasn’t going to. *Inter alia*, as *The Catholic Herald* reported within a month of his enthronement,

“Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster ... opened the Year for Priests by urging Catholics to devote an hour each week to pray for priests in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

“The Archbishop made the plea in a homily at Westminster Cathedral in which he said every parish should focus its year’s efforts on a renewal of prayer life.

“He also suggested that parishes introduce Forty Hours’ Devotion, where Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is kept up continuously at a succession of different churches.

**“His pastoral instincts
will undoubtedly soon
be sorely tested.”**

“He said the practice would ‘sustain us in our life together, enable us to thank God whole-heartedly for the gift of our priests’ and be a source for new vocations”.

Doubtless, suspicions in Rome will die down as Archbishop Nichols’ tenure of his office runs its course. All the same, they have been there, and I suspect that his appointment to Westminster was a deuced close-run thing. If I may be allowed the indulgence of quoting my *Catholic World Report* speculations (an indulgence perhaps more permissible if I make it clear that I do so against myself since I got it wrong, predicting the appointment of the Abbot of Pluscarden),

“[...] however unambiguous his present support for Rome and all its works, there remains a suspicion that at heart he is still the unregenerate liberal everyone supposed him to be when he was – as a result – prevented from succeeding Basil Hume. It is generally believed in Rome that when, at the 1999 European Synod of Bishops, Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, then still Archbishop of Milan, was thought to be advocating a third Vatican Council (he was at the least pressing for more ‘collegiality’, i.e. less papal authority) he was supported by the then Auxiliary Bishop Nichols. He was quick to deny it; but his denials were not believed, and the story has persisted in Rome among many who will have influence in deciding the Westminster succession.”

There is already every sign that these suspicions were misplaced, and that after years of amiable drift, Westminster could soon experience the firm and orthodox leadership it (along with the rest of the English and Welsh Church) has long needed. It is worth looking at Archbishop Nichols’ record on national issues during his years in Birmingham. Is it really likely that he could have done all this, and so effectively, without actually believing in it? *The Guardian* recalled his record in a by no means wholly laudatory profile; like *The Tablet*, it focused on his betrayal of the liberal secularist cause:

“In recent years, Archbishop Nichols – once viewed as a liberal – has been a strident public voice, unafraid of defending the traditional values of the Catholic church. His fierce criticism of the BBC for what he called ‘biased and hostile’ programming contributed to the cancellation of Popetown, a series which caricatured the Pope on BBC3.

“Before new sexual orientation laws, guaranteeing equality in goods and services for the gay community were introduced in April 2007, Archbishop Nichols said the legislation contradicted the faith’s ‘moral values’. Speaking at a Mass at St Chad’s Cathedral in Birmingham, he said: ‘It is simply unacceptable to suggest that the resources of the faith communities [...] can work in cooperation with public authorities only if the faith communities accept not simply a legal framework, but also the moral standards at present being touted by government.’

“Nichols failed in his attempts to get the Catholic adoption agencies exempted from sexual orientation regulations, which forced them to consider gay couples as parents. However, he did achieve a major coup when, as chairman of the Catholic Education Service, he forced the then education secretary, Alan Johnson, to retract plans to impose a non-Catholic quota for Catholic schools.”

Nichols is known as a devoted pastor, and his pastoral instincts will undoubtedly soon be sorely tested – as will be his executive decisiveness – by a knotty problem which Cardinal Murphy O’Connor has left in his in-tray, having himself foolishly created it in the first place. For some years, actively homosexual Catholics had regular Sunday Masses in St Anne’s, an Anglican church in Soho. In 2007, Cardinal Cormac created a rod for his own back and for his successors’ by establishing regular Masses for them in a nearby Catholic Church. This problem was flagged up for Archbishop Nichols’ attention immediately his name had been announced for Westminster, by the redoubtable Daphne McLeod,

mild-mannered scourge of the English episcopate, who in a welcoming piece for *The Flock* brought to his attention once more an issue he would undoubtedly be glad to be able to ignore:

“First on the new Archbishop’s list will undoubtedly be putting an end to the sacrilegious Masses held every first and third Sunday of the Month in the Church of Our Lady and St Gregory in Soho. These Masses are now in their third year and the priests, ex-priests and Catholic laity who run them are becoming more brazen all the time. For instance, now they erect a display screen in the church during these Masses claiming that these scandalous Masses are fully in line with Church teaching, even though *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para. 2357 declares homosexual acts to be *acts of grave depravity, which under no circumstances can be approved.*”

There can be little doubt that these masses are not in keeping with Church teaching; and sooner or later this is an issue the new archbishop is going to have to resolve. Apart from anything else, Mrs McLeod is not going to drop this one; and whether they like it or not, the English bishops have become uneasily aware that there are those in Rome who listen to her when she gives them her assessments of what is going on in what some of them see as a remote and mostly God-forsaken part of the Catholic world, of which they know little.

What will Archbishop Vincent do; and how long will it take him to do it? This could be an early and, for many, decisive test of his new episcopate. We may well echo Mrs McLeod’s welcoming hopes, and with her “look forward to watching this new broom make a clean sweep of problems which have troubled the Archdiocese of Westminster for the last few years.” But let nobody underestimate the skill and resolve it will take to do it.



Book Reviews

Who was John? The Fourth Gospel Debate After Pope Benedict XVI' Jesus of Nazareth

by John Redford, *Commendation by Cardinal Avery Dulles SJ, St Pauls, 319pp, £16.95*

Canon Redford has written *Who was John?* in a lucid and at times dryly witty style. At one point he dismisses an argument against the authenticity of the fourth gospel in the following terms: "This is a bizarre combination of extreme scepticism regarding evidence in favour of the tradition combined with unsubstantiated hypothesis accepted in favour of arguments contrary to the tradition." He goes on to observe "It is a combination by no means unknown in Johannine criticism."

His objective in writing this study is to contribute to the debate surrounding the authorship of the fourth Gospel initiated by Pope Benedict's book *Jesus of Nazareth*. Pope Benedict accepts the hypothesis that the fourth Gospel was written by a certain "Presbyter John" who is not to be confused with the Apostle John but who was nonetheless the latter's "transmitter and mouthpiece". Canon Redford in contrast maintains that modern criticism has not overturned the older tradition that John the Apostle was the author of the fourth Gospel. Despite this disagreement Pope Benedict and Canon Redford share a more profound common purpose: regardless of *precisely* who wrote the fourth Gospel both scholars wish to uphold the historical reliability of the fourth Gospel.

Canon Redford's study is on the whole closely argued and basically

convincing. As far as a student or seminarian is concerned the book is well worth the cover price for the bibliography and end notes alone, and it is a more than competent introduction to the field. However *Who was John?* is not an altogether flawless work.

In certain passages it suffers quite simply from being badly edited; in places the syntax veers towards the opaque. Sometimes Canon Redford's arguments suffer a loss of vigour because their presentation is complicated by a perhaps laudable but ultimately distracting attempt to reference as many other scholars as possible. In the earlier chapters of the book Canon Redford references his own previous publications to such an extent that the reader cannot escape the impression that he is reworking old material.

However these are minor criticisms. A good prose style whilst desirable is not the sole criteria by which one may judge good theological writing, and if the material is of sufficiently good quality it bears repeating. This work also has great strengths. Canon Redford touches upon a number of fascinating themes: his contention that John's description of Jesus as the "Word of God" is rooted more in rabbinic literature than in a Hellenistic culture is fascinating and opens a rich seam of possibilities. Moreover in the later chapters of the book when he discusses the evidence for the identity of the beloved disciple to be found within the Gospel his arguments are thorough and convincing.

Canon Redford has provided an admirable introduction to his subject which is not overly simplistic and so patronising to the reader nor so complex as to be restricted only to those already well-versed in the subject. This is no mean feat given how esoteric and specialised modern biblical criticism has become.

This book does not always make for easy reading. However it would be churlish not to acknowledge the important contribution it makes to a field that is of paramount importance

to the state of Christianity today. Any attempt to demystify the field of Scriptural studies and to widen participation in the important questions surrounding Holy Scripture from an academic elite to a more widespread readership must ultimately be of benefit to the Church and so is to be commended. This is both Canon Redford's and the Pope's intention.

Fr Kevin Douglas
Livingston

GK Chesterton and the Romance of Orthodoxy: The Making of GKC 1874-1908

by William Oddie, *Oxford University Press, viii + 401pp, £25*

Around a hundred years ago *The Times* newspaper invited prominent authors of the time to submit articles under the title "What's wrong with the world?" GK Chesterton's response was as short as it was profound. "Dear Sirs," he wrote "I am". In reviewing this book it is tempting to employ a similar, albeit less metaphysical device: "Dear Sirs, Buy this book". I cannot leave things there. Not least because a hundred years later the use of "Dear Sirs" is likely to elicit a chorus of feminist outrage which compels me to add that any madams reading this would do well to buy this book as well (I'm sure that helped).

Reading Chesterton is a bit like watching Star Wars. Not those terrible new ones with the computer generated bunny but the original ones. Don't worry, I'm not about to go off on some tedious exposition about the force. What I mean is simply that the great works of Chesterton, books like *Heretics*, *Orthodoxy* and *The Everlasting Man* leave upon the reader the impression that they have joined the story as it draws to its conclusion or has already ended. Chesterton writes as a man who has been on a long journey. "There are two ways of getting home" he writes, "and one of them is to stay there. The other is to walk round the whole world till we come back to the same place".

The majority of Chesterton's best apologetic writing begins with his arrival at the place his journey finally came to an end, that is with Christian orthodoxy "as understood by everybody calling himself Christian until a very short time ago". He writes as a man who seems to come out of nowhere, as though he sprang into the world a fully formed thirty-four year old Catholic author and genius. The very idea that he might have been born or had parents seems almost absurd, like the idea of one's grandparents having once been babies. Yet, just as the original Star Wars films gave us a tantalising glimpse into the history of the main characters, so Chesterton leaves us in no doubt that his own childhood was of immense importance to the development of his ideas. Chesterton's emphasis on the importance of the nursery to his personal growth is surpassed only by how little he tells us about what he actually did there, or how he came to travel from the nursery to fame and his new found faith.

For fans of Chesterton, William Oddie's book *Chesterton and the Romance of Orthodoxy* is the long awaited prequel. Here thankfully, Chesterton and Star Wars part company. Unlike the rather disappointing Star Wars prequels, this book should be a delight to existing fans of Chesterton and newcomers alike. Oddie tells the story of the man from childhood to his life as a young adult, his marriage and emergence on to the public stage right through to the publication of *Orthodoxy* in 1908. This is not simply a novelization of a man's life. Often with books of this kind fanciful statements are made and we have only the author's word that they are true, but William Oddie has gone to remarkable lengths to research every aspect of Chesterton's life. We are treated to lengthy quotations from primary sources including eyewitness descriptions of the family home, unfinished stories Chesterton wrote as a very young child, a diary Chesterton kept as a boy and school report cards, right through to accounts of his wedding day and letters he wrote to his wife.

It would be a mistake though to think of this book as merely the story of the man. It is primarily the story of his ideas. Quoting extensively from Chesterton's poems, letters and articles (many previously unpublished) William Oddie guides us skilfully through the development of Chesterton's ideas, from the anti-clerical pessimism of his youth to his gradual drift towards orthodoxy and eventual conversion to Roman Catholicism. It is a delight to discover ideas *in situ* that are referred back to in his later works and to be shown the steps that led between them.

All in all this is a practical, well written, highly accessible book that belongs in the hands of everybody who has ever enjoyed the writing of Gilbert Keith Chesterton.

James Preece
Hull

The New Evangelization: Overcoming the Obstacles

*edited by Steven Boguslawski OP and
Ralph Martin, Paulist Press, 177pp,
\$16.95*

My first thought on seeing the title of this work, was that I was going to find here practical guidance on overcoming the obstacles that appear to prevent many from truly encountering the Gospel, whether it be the un-evangelised in our pews or on our streets. What I discovered was that the main obstacles that this work seeks to overcome and discuss are the obstacles that stop us, as Catholics, wishing to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with those around us.

The book contains a series of lectures given at Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit in 2005 and only recently brought to press. The late Cardinal Avery Dulles gave two of the lectures: *Vatican II and Evangelisation* and *Current Theological Obstacles to Evangelisation*. For these two contributions alone this book deserves to be read.

In his first lecture Dulles notes that there has been a blindness to the missionary imperative of the Second Vatican Council, and reminds us that the Council in line with tradition calls for all people to be evangelised, and reminds us that sadly many within the Church "know a good many doctrines of the Church but seem never to have encountered the living Christ". For this reviewer, it was the second Dulles article which was the most telling. He chooses to concentrate on only one obstacle among many, and this he identifies as "an exaggerated form of egalitarianism that puts every religion, every conviction, and every moral practice on the same level, giving no higher status or authority to any particular creed or group". He considers how this attitude has permeated the Church and therefore weakens if not abolishes a missionary spirit. In part, he seems to suggest that it is a false ecumenism that has helped this attitude to become so prevalent. He finally considers the effects of this individualistic secularity on our teaching and belief in the Last Things (Eschatology). If our vision of the life to come is of heaven as a "final and universal human right" one of the main reasons to propose the Gospel to the world is removed.

Ralph Martin in his *Who can be Saved? What does Vatican II teach?* responds to and continues Dulles' investigation. He detects a belief among many Catholics that "Many are called and virtually everybody is chosen." He reminds us that Vatican II does indeed teach us that God offers the possibility of salvation to people who have never heard the gospel, but he then reminds us of the important qualifications that the Council makes, and that many appear to have forgotten.

The late Fr Richard John Neuhaus, once a columnist for this magazine, continues the theme in his lecture *Reviving the Missionary Mandate*, where he examines Pope John Paul II's Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*. Cardinal George of Chicago then looks at the Evangelisation of Culture, concentrating



Book Reviews continued

on the US but with a very direct applicability to the British scene. Francis Martin looks at the Scriptural background to evangelisation and the work of the Holy Spirit. Fr Robert Rivers then turns to a more practical approach in *From Maintenance to Mission: Evangelisation and the Revitalisation of the Parish*. He quotes a couple from his parish who he tells us, asked him “Father all this talk about evangelization is great. But who is going to take care of us while you’re out there taking care of them?” He perceives that our parishes have become preoccupied with our own concerns and have forgotten about those who appear to be outside. He proposes that we need to re-examine the concept of the disciple, reminding us that we all remain learners who must live in a true relationship to the person of Christ. Marc Montminy responds to Fr Rivers from the situation in his own parish.

The book finishes with *A Study of Hispanic Catholics: Why are they leaving the Catholic Church* by Edwin Hernandez, which gives an interesting overview applicable on both sides of the Atlantic. Philp Jenkins’ *Trends in Global Christianity: Implications for the new Evangelisation* concludes the work with a look at areas of Church growth throughout the world. He opens with the not-very-encouraging quote from St Vincent de Paul: “Jesus said his Church would last until the end of time, but he never mentioned Europe.”

Fr David Standen
Stafford

Unprotected. A Campus Psychiatrist Reveals How Political Correctness in Her Profession Endangers Every Student

Miriam Grossman MD, Sentinel, xxiv + 200pp, £8.95

This book is something of a *cri de coeur*. A practising psychiatrist observes that in every other field, professionals are bound to warn their clients about risky lifestyles, whether it is a question of exercise, healthy eating or the use of tanning beds. When it comes to sexual morality, the only message allowed is “make sure you’re protected.” The problem is that sexually transmitted infections, dangers to fertility and psychological devastation are direct consequences of sexual promiscuity which enjoys protected status as a behaviour: otherwise we would be “judgemental.”

Grossman illustrates her case with real life stories of students who have come to her in difficulty. After describing the psychological damage done to girls who have been “protected” physically, she concludes “there is no condom for the heart.” She details the cavalier attitude to HPV which is regarded as an inevitable part of growing up on campus. As she points out, it is not inevitable but completely preventable if young people do not have sex with others who have been sexually active: she calls upon professionals to tell young people the truth.

In a chapter that is perhaps more easily acceptable in the US than in Britain, she offers a “memo” to the APA (American Psychological Association) that “Believing in God is good for you”, arguing again that psychologists should move beyond their own prejudices and accept the evidence, offer young people the truth.

The question of HIV is addressed with devastating honesty, comparing the approach to HIV with the approach to tuberculosis. As a communicable disease, certain legislative measures are in place to protect public health and roommates will be screened and informed of the possible risk. In the case of HIV, one could certainly argue for a degree of discretion but the current orthodoxy is that even utterly irresponsible high-risk behaviour may not be subjected to any kind of sanction.

Post-abortion counselling, as we know from experience in England, is something largely confined to those pro-life groups who accept that there is such a thing as post-abortion trauma. Grossman questions the assumption made through political correctness that there will probably be no consequences. She points out that various websites and public information services helped people after hurricane Katrina to cope with the stress that they had experienced but that there is nothing similar for women who have had an abortion which can be a personal “hurricane” for them. Grossman’s professional experience leads her to challenge the secularist consensus in her profession that since abortion is a normal and good thing, it is necessary to ignore the consequences for women.

This is an important book, coming as it does, from an entirely professional perspective, and drawing from the fruits of clinical experience. It deserves to be read both by those in the field and those responsible for policy. When the secularist agenda is making young people sick, it is indeed time to “blow the whistle.”

Fr Timothy Finigan
Blackfen
Kent



The Road From Regensburg

Papal Dialogue in Search of a Modern Apologetic

ENCYCLICAL ENCOURAGES NEW VISION

The Pope's latest Encyclical letter *Caritatis in Veritate* argues:

- That true human development will only take place upon a truly renewed vision of man.
- Against those dominant views which deny man's spiritual soul, and his call to relationship, primarily with God.
- That science and technology have a key place in modern man's use of reason. He affirms the importance of metaphysics as something which emerges from this use.
- In favour of some specific approaches to the balance of solidarity and subsidiarity, life issues, sexual morality, globalization, the redistribution of wealth, labour unions, financial markets, the environment and other modern social issues.

As a significant step in the Papal magisterium's development concerning the use of reason today, we present some quotations from the Encyclical on the first three themes above. The bold is ours, the italics the Pope's. The quotations begin with their paragraph reference.

A useful overview comes at the beginning of Chapter Five "The cooperation of the human family":

53. Pope Paul VI noted that "the world is in trouble because of the lack of thinking". He was making an observation, but also expressing a wish: **a new trajectory** of thinking is needed in order to arrive at a better understanding of the implications of our being one family; interaction among the peoples of the world calls us to embark upon this new trajectory, so that integration can signify solidarity rather than marginalization. Thinking of this kind requires a *deeper critical evaluation of the category of relation*. This is a task that cannot be undertaken by the social sciences alone, insofar as the contribution of disciplines such as metaphysics and theology is needed if man's transcendent dignity is to be properly understood.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MAN

4. Without truth, charity is confined to a narrow field devoid of relations. It is excluded from the plans and processes of promoting human development of universal range, in dialogue between knowledge and praxis.

9. Open to the truth, from whichever branch of knowledge it comes, the Church's social doctrine receives it, **assembles into a unity**.

19. Hence, in the pursuit of development, there is a need for "the deep thought and reflection of wise men in search of a **new humanism** which will enable modern man to find himself anew."

21. The different aspects of the crisis, its solutions, and any new development that the future may bring, are increasingly interconnected, they imply one another, they require new efforts of holistic understanding and a *new humanistic synthesis*.

25. *the primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is man, the human person in his or her integrity*.

33. Charity and truth confront us with an altogether new and creative challenge, one that is certainly vast and complex. It is about *broadening the scope of reason and making it capable of knowing and directing [...] powerful new forces*.

34. "Ignorance of the fact that man has a wounded nature inclined to evil gives rise to serious errors in the areas of education, politics, social action and morals" [Catechism 407 ...] The conviction that man is self-sufficient and can successfully eliminate the evil present in history by his own action alone has led him to confuse happiness and salvation with immanent forms of material prosperity and social action. Then, the conviction that the economy must be autonomous, that it must be shielded from "influences" of a moral character, has led man to abuse the economic process in a thoroughly destructive way.

43. It is important to call for a **renewed reflection** on how *rights presuppose duties, if they are not to become mere licence*.

54. The Christian revelation of the unity of the human race presupposes a *metaphysical interpretation of the "humanum" in which relationality is an essential element*.

55. Truth unites spirits and causes them to think in unison, attracting them as a unity to itself.

THE HUMAN SOUL AND GOD

26. What eclecticism and cultural levelling have in common is the separation of culture from human nature. Thus, cultures can no longer define themselves within

a nature that transcends them, and man ends up being reduced to a mere cultural statistic. When this happens, humanity runs new risks of enslavement and manipulation.

29. *God is the guarantor of man's true development*, inasmuch as, having created him in his image, he also establishes the transcendent dignity of men and women and feeds their innate yearning to "be more". Man is not a lost atom in a random universe: he is God's creature, whom God chose to endow with an **immortal soul** and whom he has always loved.

31. Paul VI had seen clearly that among the causes of underdevelopment there is a lack of wisdom and reflection, a lack of thinking capable of formulating a **guiding synthesis**, for which "a clear vision of all economic, social, cultural and spiritual aspects" is required. [...] The "broadening [of] our concept of reason and its application" is indispensable if we are to succeed in adequately weighing all the elements involved in the question of development and in the solution of socio-economic problems.

68. The development in question is not simply the result of natural mechanisms, since as everybody knows, we are all capable of making free and responsible choices. Nor is it merely at the mercy of our caprice, since we all know that we are a gift, not something self-generated.

76. *The question of development is closely bound up with our understanding of the human soul*, insofar as we often reduce the self to the psyche and confuse the soul's health with emotional well-being. [...] Social and psychological alienation and the many neuroses that afflict affluent societies are attributable in part to spiritual factors.

SCIENCE AND KNOWING

Some of the Pope's significant epistemological reflections, in paragraphs 34, 48, 69, 70 and 77, are quoted in our current editorial, and their implications for a renewed philosophy of science discussed, mainly under the subtitle "Immediate Intuition".

51. Nature, especially in our time, is so integrated into the dynamics of society and culture that by now it hardly constitutes an independent variable.

74. The rationality of a self-centred use of technology proves to be irrational because it implies a decisive rejection of meaning and value.



Cutting Edge

Science and Religion News

A QUALITY RESOURCE

A new resource has become available very recently which seeks to embrace the important matter of 'science and faith'. The 'Test of Faith' project comprises a DVD and associated print materials. The film has won silver in the category Best Documentary in the 2009 IVCA (International Visual Communications Association) Awards.

Utilising interviews with a number of prominent Christians in high-level science, the film addresses in a three-part (totalling 90-minutes) presentation the 'big questions' which lie at the science-faith interface. As the promotional material says: "The claim is that science has pushed God into the margins. But is the truth more complex? Talking to leading scientist-believers, we probe the issues at the heart of this debate. Has science really murdered God? Or is the God question being redefined in new ways by science?" The materials were launched at the Royal Society on 13th July last.

The project is an initiative of the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, based at St Edmund's College, Cambridge, and founded in 2006.

EVIDENCE FOR GOD

At the launch the first part of the DVD, "Beyond Belief", was shown. This well makes quite a number of points that harmonise with the approach of *Faith* movement. The Rev Dr John Polkinghorne points out that the explanations from the point of view of intelligent decision and from physical secondary causation are not incompatible concerning a boiling kettle, nor need they be concerning the universe. The thought of Deism and Intelligent Design is rejected as is the related "God-of-the-gaps" approach, which is rightly described as dangerous because it makes itself very vulnerable to further scientific discovery closing those gaps. Moreover God as the deistic "lighter of the blue touch paper"

has already been seriously challenged by speculations about how the Big Bang might have begun, by thinkers such as Hawkin. Rather we are well reminded that the Judaeo-Christian God is the immediate sustainer of all, and that to give a scientific explanation is more evidence *for* the Creator than against him.

The Anthropic Principle is engagingly presented. This takes the widely accepted fact that the strength of basic forces of the universe, as measured by fundamental physical constants, are exactly right, and "fine-tuned", for a development upon the Big Bang which produced planets like ours, fit for the evolution of life. Fred Hoyle is quoted: "the universe is a put up job".

NOT TOTALLY CONVINCED

At this point Alistair McGrath proffers a point of divergence from the position presented by this magazine, Catholic Tradition, the First Vatican Council and St Paul to the Romans concerning the "provability" of the Creator from observation of nature. He affirms that whilst the universe is "as one would expect" an "intelligent creator to make it" we don't have the evidence for an incontrovertible proof – as per the title of the latest book of another prominent contributor to the documentary: *There Almost Certainly Is A God*.

In Fr Tim Finigan's positive presentation of the evening and the film on his blog he makes the following observation:

"One evangelical questioner quoted Romans 1.20 to which Professor Polkinghorne replied candidly that he disagreed with St Paul since he did not think his atheist friends to be stupid. However, minds can be 'darkened' in various ways, not only through stupidity. Professor Polkinghorne would also consider the 'Intelligent Design' school to be mistaken but would presumably not regard them as stupid. It is possible for intelligent men to be mistaken about the force of evidence. I certainly do not regard

Richard Dawkins as a stupid man and greatly admire his presentation of the evidence for natural selection; but I think he is wrong about the existence of God and I would argue that the evidence shows him to be wrong."

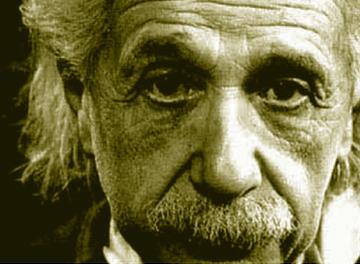
Polkinghorne even suggested that both atheists and theists have an assumed metaphysical "brute fact" behind their basic interpretation of the cosmos: either the material world comes from an absolute intelligence or it is just there, absolute in itself. He preferred the former "worldview" as making more sense of human experience.

Simon Conway-Morris describes the metaphysical realm as uniquely containing beliefs that one must simply take on trust, and cannot be proved. In the second programme he describes the "metaphysical context" of physical science simply as that which adds a dimension of "excitement" to our beliefs.

Polkinghorne explained that "Science tells us how the world works, but religion tells us there is a meaning and purpose, something being fulfilled in the unfolding of the history of the world. So I need both those perspectives if I am truly to understand the really rich and remarkable world in which we live."

As ever we would think that this metaphysical "worldview" as that which gives a helpful context to physics but is *not* inherently complementary to and flowing from it is not quite right, nor is it the traditional Christian one. The idea that the sources of scientific and metaphysical knowledge are almost separate is we think too influenced by that pre-scientific ontology which was rightly holistic but only through being quasi-dualistic. When combined with the non-dualistic physical ontology of modern discovery, the holism has been put under threat and the *reductionist* reaction of much atheism has been fostered (see our May issue). We would argue that the phenomenon of human minds self-consciously observing the physical is the source of science, and with and through this the source of

“Polkinghorne even suggested that both atheists and theists have an assumed metaphysical ‘brute fact’ behind their basic interpretation of the cosmos.”



metaphysics. The physical always immediately points to the spiritual as its meaningful context (see our editorial).

ON THE BACK FOOT

It is interesting that the film goes straight on to consider atheistic attempts to hypothesise a “multi-verse” in order to undermine the theistic use of the Anthropic Principle. The idea is that each universe has different fundamental constants, and ours is just the “lucky” one. This directly challenges the idea that, given that life would not have emerged if the physical constants had been a little bit different, they must (very likely) have been set by an intelligence.

The film surely rightly points out that this very speculative idea that our universe is just one of a very large number just makes the cosmos bigger, without thereby removing the apparent need for the sustenance of God. But the DVD doesn’t really explain why this is so, moving quickly on to affirm that such atheistic use of the multi-verse still leaves unanswered the question “Why something rather than nothing?” This response to the multi-verse challenge seems actually to move a little away from the documentary’s earlier stated position that the universe is as you would expect a designed cosmos to be.

We think it more fruitful to emphasise, from the “anthropic” angle indeed, but also from the very nature of matter-energy, the overall physical unity of the cosmos. This affirmation is certainly not affected at all by the proposal that our universe is, somewhat mysteriously, *inter-connected* with other ones, and argues, *a posteriori*, for an immediately complimentary, creative mind which founds and sustains its order across space and time. The traditional, intimate development of metaphysics upon physics is the template to which to return. In light of modern science it can revindicate St Paul’s insight and Catholic teaching, and help set the foundations anew of a Christian civilization.

THE SOUL: A MISSING KEY TO COHERENCE

When asked about the body-soul distinction, Polkinghorne, argued engagingly for a distance from dualism, while maintaining a certain complementarity of the physical and the spiritual. The third programme in the series “Is There Anybody There?” argues for a significant distinction of humans from animals, when looking at our creativity, moral reasoning and experience of being free. It proposes that this “spiritual” dimension is an emergent phenomenon from the complexity of the brain, just as nature is shot through with unities having holistic properties. It admits to this leaving a remaining mystery concerning just how low-level mechanism coheres with freedom.

This position, we think, treats the determinism of physical things and the freedom of humans as just one of a list of properties. We would argue for them being defining characteristics respectively of matter and mind. Physical matter is intrinsically determined, and spiritual mind, whether of man or of the Transcendent God in whose image he is made, is intrinsically a free determiner. They are distinct but complementary. Thus we would argue for the classical Christian doctrine of the non-physical human soul, inter-defined with the human body.

We think this is the missing link in the noble and engaging vision of the Test of Faith project.

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Notes From Across the Atlantic

by Joseph Bottum



ECCLESIOLOGY FOUNDS MUSICOLOGY

Jeffrey Tucker notes that watching *Angels and Demons* wasn't an altogether unpleasant experience. The movie had a better sense of liturgical music than most Catholic parishes.

Actually, the real reason I like to see any film in which the Catholic Church is featured prominently concerns the music. Let's just say that "On Eagles' Wings" is never featured at a Catholic funeral on film. And it pleases me to see confirmed that even the most secular parts of the industrial media sector understand what sacred music probably sounds like.

Sure enough, this movie opens with the Introit of the Requiem Mass playing at the funeral. Indeed, whenever there is a need to call forth some sense of solemn liturgy, a modal piece comes on featuring vague outlines of Kyrie Eleison and Agnus Dei. There were several people's chants featured here and there – probably more than most parishes hear in the course of one liturgical year, sad to say.

Sad to say indeed, but it all comes down to how you view the Church. If the Catholic Church is a large institution full of tradition, majesty and mystery, the music one associates with it will reflect that. Whether that mystery is redolent with Illuminati conspiracy or the source of grace and truth, it nonetheless exists and will be reflected in the art associated with the deep traditions of Christianity. But if mystery and tradition are thrown away, there is no reason to have majesty in art. Gather us in on eagles' wings because the whole thing is just about us and our experiences, not anything deeper.

Of course Ron Howard knows that's not true. But it would be nice if more Catholics did, too.

CALL FOR A CULTURE WITH VISION

We've had bad experiences in modern times with the immanent eschatologies of the people who wanted to build heaven

on earth or re-establish Eden – with Marxists and all the rest, who demanded, in one way or another, that the ultimate purposes of humankind be achieved. Mass murder is the regular result of the political attempt to reach a cosmic horizon.

But that's not, in itself, an argument against all horizons – against every strong cultural goal. In fact, vibrant cultures always want something, and exhausted cultures don't. So it's reasonable to ask what it is we actually want these days. What is it that we imagine? Western societies aim at so little now. They have such small interests in mind.

What we need, says the astronaut Buzz Aldrin, is to go to Mars. And he's right. What besides space today can re-inspire the temporal imagination? The author of a new book, *Magnificent Desolation*, Aldrin argues, "More than just exploring a hostile new world, Apollo 11 was about bold vision and great risk, about the obstacles a great nation could overcome with dedication, courage and teamwork. It was about choosing a goal that exceeded our grasp – and then reaching across history to make it happen."

Indeed, he notes, "For me, the most difficult part of the mission wasn't what happened during the flight but what happened after we came home." America has done some interesting things in space, over the decades since the moon walk. "But what America hasn't done is inspire the world – and itself – with a bold vision for our future in space." What we need is "a destination in space that offers great rewards for the risks to achieve it. I believe that that destination must be homesteading Mars, the first human colony on another world. By refocusing our space programme on Mars for America's future, we can restore the sense of wonder and adventure in space exploration that we knew in the summer of 1969. We won the moon race; now it's time for us to live and work on Mars, first on its moons and then on its surface."

To be a religious believer is to know that the hungers of the human heart will not find fulfilment without God, but even religious believers benefit from goals short of the ecstatic vision of the divine. People without any temporal horizons – without any historical purpose or vision of the future – grow enervated and decadent, and they begin to follow strange gods, who promise them meaning.

In times of advance, and times of goals, and times of purpose, people have little need for that kind of acedia. Want to inspire the world with a temporal purpose? Want to reveal many of our arguments as the pettinesses that they are? Ever since last summer's news about possible water on the planet, I've been telling people that we should build a rocket and fly it to Mars. As Buzz Aldrin says, the Red Planet must be conquered.

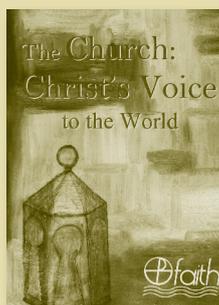
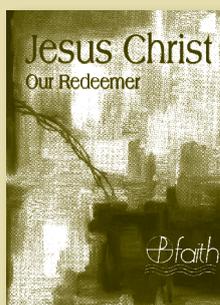
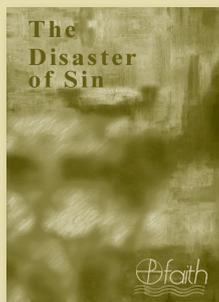
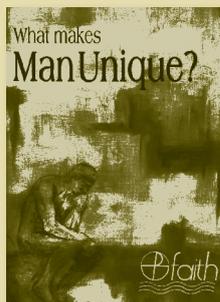
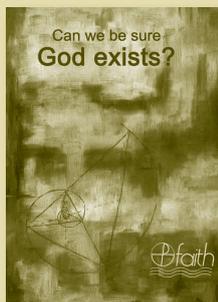
FUTURE LIES IN ADULT STEM CELLS

Those who follow Oprah are often captivated by her resident medical expert, Dr. Mehmet Oz. He was featured last April in a segment that included Michael J. Fox – who suffers from Parkinson's disease and is an avid supporter of foetal stem-cell research through his charitable foundation.

Dr. Oz, who rarely disagrees with the queen of talk shows, told both Oprah and Fox to brace themselves, as he had something provocative to say on stem cells: adult stem cells are the way of the future. "The stem-cell debate is dead.... In the time of all this fighting we've had [over embryonic stem-cell research] – which did slow down this [adult stem-cell] research – in the last year we've advanced ten years." Adult stem cells are likely to be more effective, less risky and, of course, less controversial than their foetal counterparts. Oz's comments, of course, fly in the face of Fox's strident advocacy for the use of embryos and Oprah's coincident political beliefs. Oprah looked a bit stunned.

Dr. Oz is moving to his own show. Soon.

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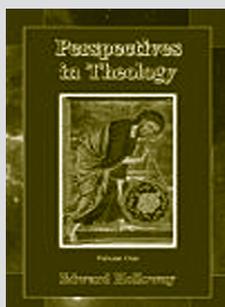
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