

# faith

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PROMOTING A NEW SYNTHESIS  
OF FAITH AND REASON

## Special Edition: Faith Summer Session 2014

### **Marriage: Sacrament of Christ**

Kevin Douglas

### **Rebuilding the Family: A Mother's Story**

Katie Wotherspoon

### **The Scottish Referendum: A Catholic Perspective**

John Deighan

### **Liturgy: Recovering the Sung Mass**

Tim Finigan

### **Ancient and Modern: The Gospel and Cultures**

Michael Nazir-Ali

### **Interview**

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Philadelphia

Ray Blake on Pope Francis and the poor

Antonia Robinson on a new threat to Catholic schools

Andrea Gagliarducci on Vatican reform

Joanna Bogle reviews a new Theology of the Body book



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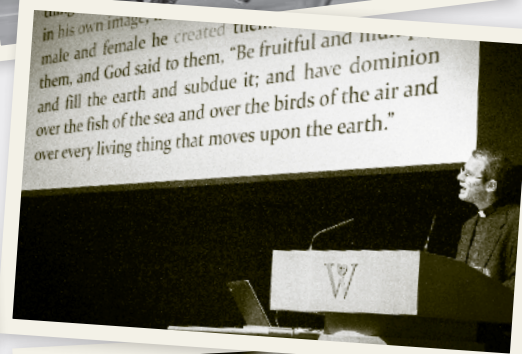
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September and October 2014  
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# Faith Summer Session 2014: A Review

## Editorial

**“Thank God that He has permitted us to live among the present problems. It is no longer permitted to anyone to be mediocre,” *Dorothy Day, Servant of God***

In early August 2014, several hundred young Catholics from across the British Isles gathered for five days at The Woldingham School in Surrey. They came together to attend the Faith Movement’s 42nd Annual Summer Session. From modest beginnings, this event has now grown into a major annual conference for young adults. Their number includes an ever burgeoning cohort of seminarians, priests and religious. The overwhelming majority, however, are young lay Catholics.

The week provides them with a balance of social, spiritual and even sporting activities. What primarily seems to attract young people in ever greater numbers, however, is a contemporary presentation of the orthodox Catholic faith compatible with reason and modern science. “Faith is unbelievably good at giving you the bigger picture – starting with why belief in God is reasonable in a scientific age – so that both your mind and then your heart ends up falling in love with Jesus Christ,” said one young seminarian who attributes the discernment of his priestly vocation to the movement.

If it is true that Jesus Christ is the culmination, the crowning point of God’s plan for the universe, then it follows that the universe is incomplete without Him; “God had set forth in Christ a plan to recapitulate all things in Christ, a plan for the fullness of time,” proposed Saint Paul to the Ephesians (1:9-10). This means that no branch of knowledge and no person can be complete without Jesus Christ, “All things were created through and for Him... and in Him all things hold together,” (Colossians 1:16-17). Christ then is the master key that unlocks the meaning of the universe and of every human life. It is in Him that “we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28). It is within this divine economy, this supernatural eco-system that we humans find our greatest reason to be and our most abundant source of grace, permitting us to grow and flourish.

This loving plan of God includes marriage and the family. That was the theme of the 2014 Faith Summer Session; “For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name,” (Ephesians 3:14-17).

For those of us in the West, the breakdown of the family is nothing new. We are now several generations into a grand pan-societal experiment that seeks to eviscerate a traditional understanding of marriage and family from our law and culture. So far, the biggest losers have been the young.

Over the past forty years, voluminous sociological studies have repeatedly reached the same stark conclusion: children overwhelmingly do best in life when they grow up with a mum and a dad who are married. The married family is, indeed, society’s first, best and cheapest department of health, welfare and education.

For numerous reasons, this ideal is not always possible to

achieve in reality. Life doesn’t always conform to our plans. Bad things can happen. Tragic things *do* happen. In such cases we should be quick as a society to offer both sympathy and support in equal measure to those affected. We should also applaud the many parents and families who achieve remarkable things in the most difficult of circumstances.

There is no tension, however, between a compassionate recognition of reality and a measured propagation of an ideal. This is exactly what we do as a society in many other areas of public policy, from smoking cessation to healthy eating. As regards marriage and the family, however, the dogma of our cultural elites is that the traditional ideal is no longer, well, ideal. That it is – at best – merely one lifestyle choice amongst many of equal worth to society or – at worst – a poisonous patriarchal relic of a less socially enlightened age. This is the intellectual milieu within which our young people are growing up.

**“The married family is, indeed, society’s first, best and cheapest department of health, welfare and education.”**

Next month will see bishops from around the globe gather in Rome to discuss these very issues. Next year will likely see His Holiness Pope Francis make his first visit to the United States in support of the World Meeting of Families, hosted by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The future of humanity passes by way of the family.

This edition of Faith Magazine hopes to contribute in a constructive, compassionate and intelligent way to those forthcoming discussions. We firmly reject any temptation to be reactionary. Reactionism will only ever attract the old and the angry. As Pope Francis reminds us in his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, “with Christ joy is constantly born anew.” The Catholic vision of marriage and the family is, indeed, a joyful one. It is also very beautiful, entirely liveable and increasingly necessary.

In the following pages we therefore present some of the talks that seemed to most engage and enthrall those young people who gathered in Woldingham last month. Our hope is that each article can contribute, by whatever measure, towards a New Evangelisation and, in turn, a Civilisation of Love. In the words of the founder of the Faith Movement, Father Edward Holloway:

**“The only reward of life is that men and women think they have reason to love you, that through all your faults, the seed of God’s image yet lives in you, and you are, God help you, lovable, worthy to be loved. Life has no other reward, you take nothing else beyond the grave. For this is the reward of faithful love, a love which shares with Christ all the burden of creation, from conception to salvation, from the cradle to the grave. This then is Christian married love, and so we should teach it.”** ☉

# Marriage: Sacrament of Christ and His Church

By Father Kevin Douglas



Talk #1

Father Kevin Douglas

What exactly is marriage? And what role does marriage play in God's plan of salvation? In this Tuesday morning talk to the Faith Summer Session, Father Kevin Douglas attempted to answer both those questions.

"In the beginning was the Word" is the first verse of St. John's

Gospel. The evangelist uses the Greek term "*Logos*" for "word", which as many of you may know, is much richer in meaning than the English term "word." Take a simple word. Why is it that C A T corresponds to the idea of a particular type of animal rather than T C A which doesn't mean anything? Because there is an ordering thought behind the organisation of those three black squiggles on a white surface that arranges them C A T and establishes that the sound "cat" corresponds to our concept of a furry four-legged feline. This is what *Logos* really means: thought, concept, or better yet, the organising intelligence responsible for the thought that is expressed as a word.

St. John continues, "All things came into being through [the Word], and without him not one thing came into being." Looking at our universe, we observe the stable laws of physics, the scientifically measurable and predictable qualities of matter, the ordered relationships of organisms to their environment and the process we call "evolution" by which living things develop. In all this we discern a principle of intelligence, giving order and meaning to our universe. We witness the effects of the *Logos* in creation. We, as intelligent beings, are only able to think and understand the world around us because it is ordered by the *Logos*. Among the things we notice is the division of the sexes. Human beings are distinguished into two sexes. We are either male or female. We'll come back to this because it is at the foundation of everything that is shared in this talk.

St. John continues, "And the Word became flesh and lived among us." This event is called the Incarnation, when human nature is united to the divine second person of the Trinity. Now, because this *Logos* is the principle of meaning behind the entire universe, in the Incarnation everything that exists finds its meaning and purpose. It is no exaggeration to say that every time you ask why; why is the sky blue? Why do birds sing? Whatever the question, the real and most profound answer is: because "the Word became flesh." Consequently when we ask "why are men and women different?" the fullest answer to this mystery is: because "the Word became flesh."

This is the most basic insight at the heart of this talk: everything revolves around the Word becoming flesh. In the rest of this talk, therefore, I'll develop three points from this fundamental insight:

i) Marriage is *for* Christ. At the heart of the relationship of marriage is the division of the human species into two sexes. This sexual-differentiation enables God to become man in a way that is coherent or in harmony with what He established in creation.

ii) Marriage serves Christ. Marriage establishes family life and tends towards children. By establishing the family, marriage, in the order of creation, then serves Christ's purpose.

iii) Marriage *reflects* Christ. Marriage between baptised Christians is a sacrament. Christ gives special helps, called graces, to those who have a vocation to marriage and their married relationship reflects Christ's love for His Church.

## Human Sexuality is *for* Christ

The first point is the division of the human species into male and female actually leaves a space in which God can take the initiative and unite human nature to Himself.

"When we ask 'why are men and women different?' the fullest answer to this mystery is because 'the Word became flesh'."

God has one plan that stretches from the first moment of creation to the final realisation of this plan. The final realisation of God's plan is His glorification in creation and particularly in us human beings. In the unfolding of this plan, there are moments of transition from one level to another. An example of these moments of transition would be when God infused the spiritual soul in the first human being. Let's trace the plan up to this point so you can see what I mean. The process of material evolution develops from the Big Bang onwards through to the emergence of life (I suppose that would also be a transitional moment). Then increasingly complex forms of life evolve until this process arrives at an upper limit of complexity: The process produces a physical organ, the human brain that is becoming too complex to draw its life-pattern from a purely material environment. At that juncture, God infuses the spiritual soul into the being that possesses this highly complex material brain. This constitutes a qualitative leap in his plan: God has established the laws of matter to guide the process of evolution, but now this process is assumed into God's wider spiritual providence. There is also, however, an overarching continuity and harmony. For example, God couldn't infuse a spiritual soul into a bluebottle fly and remain coherent with His intention as expressed in creation. The material organ of the bluebottle's brain is not sophisticated enough to support the operations of the spiritual soul. In God's single coherent plan the foundation that has been laid by the process of material evolution is not swept away or disregarded; rather, it is built upon, and in this way the lower process serves God's single overarching design. Father Edward Holloway, the founder of the FAITH movement would call this one overarching design God's "Unity Law of Control and Direction".

# Marriage: Sacrament of Christ and His Church

## continued

Because God's design is a unity we can ask questions like "How does this feature of the universe serve God's plan?" And so it is meaningful to ask: what is the purpose of the division of the sexes? Why couldn't we, for example, reproduce asexually? (This is called parthenogenesis and it does happen in certain species of snakes and fish). Some scientists speculate that the division of the sexes speeds up the efficiency of the processes of evolution; it allows for greater genetic diversity among individuals within a species. No doubt that is true but I'm not sure that, on its own, it is a full explanation. If God is the Creator and He is almighty, is it logically impossible for him to have introduced some sort of mechanism that would generate genetic mutation even in asexual reproduction? Or if two sexes are good, why not three or four or even five? Wouldn't that generate even more efficient mutations? At this stage I should confess I am not a scientist, but I'm sure I remember seeing an episode of *Star Trek* in which the aliens had more than two sexes. If a second-rate science fiction script editor can dream up something like that, then I think we have to suppose that Almighty God could have made a better job of it, had it suited His purposes.

So why the division of the sexes? Because "the Word became flesh." Human sexual differentiation is the foundation within creation that God builds upon in order to bring about the Incarnation. In the normal process of sexual reproduction, the male and female, father and mother, cooperate with God in the creation of a new human person. Neither male nor female is more important. But they do, even at a purely biological level, fulfill *different* roles: both are required in different but *complementary* ways. Certainly the female is not passive or inert. I don't want to turn this talk into an anatomy lecture, but you all know from biology class at school that the various facets of a human female's fertility are internal to her body: the ovaries and womb are internal to a woman's body. Not so with a male, his genitals are external and he ejaculates outside of himself. Moreover, sperm cells are mobile in a way that the ovum isn't. At a purely biological level, then, the role of the male is to introduce something new into the context of female fertility which enables that fertility to come to fruition. In this sense, the male adds something to the female's potential for fertility. This something that the male adds completes, or in the language of Father Holloway, "determines" the fertility of the female. And the result is a baby: a new human person.

### The Case of the Incarnation is Slightly Different

Parenthetically, you understand there is a difference between person and nature. The response to the question "what is Peter?" is different to the response you would expect to the question "who is Peter?" One question looks to the nature: Peter is a human being; the other to the personal identity: Peter is one of the Twelve, a fisherman and a friend of Jesus. However, Peter's nature does not exist separately from his personal identity. There is no abstract, general human nature with an independent existence. Human nature exists in human persons. Our human nature is personified, or in technical theological language "enhypostatised", in individual persons. Close parenthesis.

Turning back to the Incarnation, in the case of Jesus Christ, He is true God and true man. Those are his two natures. But if we ask who He is, then He is the second Divine person of the Blessed Trinity. So when Jesus is conceived in the womb of Mary there is a human nature but not a human person. The full human nature, his body, his soul and his human will exists in the divine person of the *Logos*. So how is it that the *Logos* takes to Himself a human nature?

"The division of the sexes and the process of human sexual reproduction, therefore, find their deepest explanation in the event of the Incarnation."

This is the reason for the Virgin Birth. In the normal process of human conception, the human father completes or determines the fertility of the human mother and a human person is conceived. In the virginal conception of Jesus, there is no human father. The absence of the human father leaves space for God to intervene directly. Jesus takes his full human nature from his real human mother, Mary. But Mary's fertility is not determined by a human father. Important to note here that we are not saying as they do in Greek mythology, for example, that the god Zeus seduced such and such a maiden and through an act of intercourse a half-divine, half-human child was conceived. Rather, Mary's fertility is determined by the creative will of God. That is the meaning of the Holy Spirit overshadowing Mary at the Annunciation, just as the Holy Spirit hovered over the waters in the creation account in the book of Genesis. From this creative will comes a human nature taken from Jesus' human mother that is personified by, exists in, is "enhypostatised" by the divine person of the *Logos*.

It is very interesting that when St. Thomas Aquinas asks if God could have united the nature of an angel to himself, although in the end and on – I think – pretty weak grounds he rejects this argument, he speculates: "There are some who say an angelic nature could not have been assumed because angels not being generated or corrupted are from the moment of their creation perfect in their personality," (ST III, q.4, a.2). Angels are not conceived sexually and are persons from the moment of their creation. Hence God cannot unite an angelic nature to Himself. This certainly was the opinion of St. Albert the Great and many of the great scholastic theologians. Only with the division of the sexes, and only in the case of the Virgin Birth, when there is not a human father, is there space for God to directly determine Mary's fertility and unite this un-personified human nature immediately to the second person of the Trinity, the *Logos*.

The division of the sexes and the process of human sexual reproduction, therefore, find their deepest explanation in the event of the Incarnation. It is the condition of possibility that enables God to unite human nature to himself in a personal way without first obliterating a human person, and in a way that is coherent with his original creative design.



**“Marriage is not just a private agreement into which two parties enter and which they can redefine as they wish; rather the shape and structure of marriage flow from its purpose.”**

Returning to John’s Gospel, it wonderful to see how in his prologue the account of creation found in Genesis is appropriated. Genesis opens with “*In the beginning* when God created the heavens and the earth” and John, whose Gospel recounts the history of the *Logos* that “became flesh”, echoes this at the start of his prologue “In the beginning was the Word...” With that phrase “*In the beginning*” John ties together the two events the Creation and the Incarnation. The evangelist thus underlines the unity of God’s plan. As we have seen, the division of the sexes that is part of the created order finds its deepest fulfillment in the Incarnation.

### **The Division of the Sexes Serves Christ**

Moving on, the division of the sexes not only allows God to unite humanity to Himself in the Incarnation, it also serves the final purpose of the Incarnation. Jesus himself states the purpose of the Incarnation. He says “I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (Jn10:10). If that is the purpose of the Incarnation, it follows there must be a “they” who receive life abundantly from Christ. So who is this “they” to whom Christ wishes to give His life? Where does this “they” come from? Obviously, Christ means we human beings, and the increase in the human race requires sexual reproduction.

Sex is, therefore, not simply something enjoyable that two consenting adults agree to do to one another after a few drinks in a nightclub on a Saturday night, nor is it just one among many expressions of love, nor is sex in itself necessarily even the highest expression of love. We know what that is as Jesus told us “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends” (Jn15:13) Sex is part of God’s plan to share His life and love with us in Jesus Christ. Sex is a vocation, a call to share in a ministry that centres on serving the plan of God by cooperating in the creation of new life. This ministry is given a stable form and supported by the institution of marriage. Marriage is not just a private agreement into which two parties enter and which they can redefine as they wish; rather the shape and structure of marriage flow from its purpose. Father Holloway would say “the office of marriage is a co-sharing with God and with Christ in the work of creation.”

Reflecting on the “office” of marriage and its purpose of cooperate in God’s life-giving designs, the Church’s tradition has specified three essential characteristics of marriage. St. Augustine calls these the goods of marriage (*de Bono Coniugali*, 401AD against the Manichees *proles, fides sacramentum*). They are, first children: marriage tends towards family life. The raising of children is neither an easy nor a quick process. From a purely biological perspective, babies are absolutely helpless for a long time, and children are vulnerable, depending on what criteria of judgement you want to use, until at least their teenage years. This is not even considering the psychological, emotional, cultural and spiritual dimensions of raising a child. Thus, the importance of a good mother and a good father in protecting and forming the character of their children is paramount. In short, to raise children requires stability and trust, generosity and a unity of purpose. From

## FAITH SUMMER SESSION I 2014



“It’s been a magical week. Eye-opening. Just being surrounded by people who have the same beliefs and give such a good example. It’s helped to revitalise my faith. I’m sure it will also help me throughout the rest of my life”.

**James Farrell, 21**  
West Calder, Student.

these requirements flow the other two goods of marriage. Marriage is exclusively faithful, and marriage is a lifelong commitment.

These essential properties of marriage, therefore, flow from the meaning and purpose of marriage. Marriage is a God-given vocation by which a man and a woman unite their lives in order to cooperate in God’s design to share his life with us in the Incarnation. In this way marriage serves Christ.

“Christ is present at the wedding feast of Cana where, at his mother’s request, he performs his first miracle.”

### **Marriage reflects Christ**

Marriage is a sacrament. The Church has always understood that Christ takes this natural bond between a man and a woman that exists in the created order and is ordered towards family life, and He raises it to a new dignity. Christ is present at the wedding feast of Cana where, at his mother’s request, he performs his first miracle. The Church has always understood Christ’s presence there as a sign of his approval of the goodness of marriage. In addition, marriage in the context in which he performs his first miracle is a sign that Christ blesses the reality of marriage. More than this, however, Christ talks of himself as the bridegroom. When asked by the Pharisees why his disciples do not fast he replies: “Surely the bridegroom’s attendants cannot fast while the bridegroom is still with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the time will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then, on that day, they will fast” (Mk 2:18-20). Christ identifies himself as the bridegroom, the husband. He associates himself with marriage imagery. Then in his letter to the Ephesians when St. Paul is talking about marriage he writes “This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the Church” (Ep 5:32). This means that there is something similar between the love a husband has for his wife and the love Jesus has for his Church. So the reality of marriage is blessed by Christ and reflects Christ. Based on these premises, the Church has always taught that marriage is a sacrament. St. Thomas Aquinas defines a sacrament as: “The sign of a sacred thing in so far as it sanctifies people” – “*Signum rei sacrae in quantum*

# Marriage: Sacrament of Christ and His Church

## continued

*est sanctificans homines*” (ST.III, q.60, a.2). It means that Jesus elevates the relationship between a man and a woman in the order of creation, making it into a flesh and blood living symbol of His love for His Church, “a sign of a sacred thing.” Because marriage is such an important symbol, Jesus gives special help to people who get married. He makes marriage a special reality through which He pours his love, that is, his grace, into the world, and so marriage “sanctifies people.”

We'll first touch upon the graces that God communicates through marriage but only very briefly because this will be developed in a more personal way in some of the other talks. Essentially the graces boil down to the bond of marriage. One of the bishops who collaborated a great deal with Pope St. John Paul II helping him to develop his theology of marriage, Cardinal Carlo Caffarra of Bologna, put it this way. Marriage is “a gift from God who never reneges on his gifts. It is not by accident that Jesus founds his revolutionary response to the Pharisees on a divine act: ‘That which God has united,’ he says. It is God who unites, otherwise the definitively binding nature of the act would rest upon a desire that is yes, natural, but also impossible to achieve. God himself gives the completion of the act. [...] Marriage, the sacramental sign of marriage, brings about immediately between the spouses a bond that no longer depends upon *their* wills because now it is a gift God has given to them.”

And the Catechism adds the “grace proper to [...] Matrimony is intended to perfect the couple's love and to strengthen their indissoluble unity. By this grace they ‘help one another to attain holiness in their married life and in welcoming and educating their children’” (CCC 1639).

If that is the grace of marriage, what about the symbolism of marriage? Before we start this point there are three things to bear in mind talking about the symbolism of marriage and specifically human sexuality. First, throughout Her history, the Church has always been a little diffident about this analogy, because it can be pressed too far and abused. Second, like any analogy, there are differences in the similarities. If you push it too far, it breaks down. Third, it is an analogy: So while it works in one direction – human sexuality is patterned upon and reflects God its creator – you have to be very cautious about using it in the opposite direction because, while there is a certain similarity, nonetheless God is who He is in a divine, and not human, way: God is *not* patterned on human sexuality, and neither does God copulate with anyone. Bearing that in mind, there remains, nevertheless, a certain analogical similarity between marriage and Christ. Let's look at this analogy through the lens of the three goods of marriage.

First, children. There is an analogy between the physical relationship between a man and a woman and the relationship between Christ and the Church. At a biological level the male, the father, introduces something new into the context of female fertility. This new element from outside the mother prompts in her new life and, with her cooperation, this new element then brings her fertility to fruitful completion. In an analogous way,

Christ as true God is a new reality introduced into creation, introduced into our lives even. He is something neither the world nor we ourselves by our own effort could make. God the Father has to take the initiative of sending his only Son into the world. This new reality brings new life to us. It means that holy mother Church is fruitful and bears new life in her children.

The second good of marriage is that of a life-long, permanent commitment. This is an image of God's love. God doesn't take back his love. That is one of the levels of meaning of Christ's death on the cross. If you make a promise in life, you might later break that promise. If you give a gift, it is conceivable that you might take back that gift at a later stage. Dying is different. You do it once and then it cannot be undone. Dying is definitive. Christ's death on the cross is an act of love. He himself describes it “And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.” (Jn 12: 32-33). It is a definitive act of love that can never, and will never, be taken back. The permanence of the sacrament of marriage is a sign of the permanence of Christ's love for his Church.

The third good of marriage is exclusive fidelity. Sometimes we can misunderstand that as a purely negative prohibition: “No, you can't look at other men or women!” In truth the exclusivity of marriage is about the quality of self-giving. Any vocation is a vocation to love, and real love involves total self-gift. In marriage, however, that self-gift takes on a particular hue. One must give one's self so totally in a married way that there is nothing else left to give in that married way to another. Therefore, exclusive sexual fidelity is, it seems to me anyway, simply the outward expression of that total self-gift spouses make to each other. This again is modeled on and reflective of Christ's love. On the Cross when our Lord's heart is pierced by the soldier's spear the Gospel tells us “there flowed forth blood and water” (Jn 19:34). These traditionally have been interpreted as symbols of the Eucharist and Baptism. But in terms of the historical, if you like forensic, reality of the Crucifixion blood and water have a further significance. There is a medical condition called *hypovolemic shock*. When somebody loses a great deal of blood, as our Lord would have done in his scourging, one of the symptoms of this traumatic blood loss is a build-up of watery fluid around the heart. So when our Lord's heart is pierced and blood and water flow from his side, from a medical point of view, this occurs because our Lord has been bleeding out for hours. This diagnosis of chronic blood loss is also consistent with our Jesus' falls as he is led to Calvary. Water flows from our Lord's pierced side because the Good Lord simply has no more blood left to shed for us. Our Lord's love for us on the Cross is a total self-gift, and married love is patterned upon that total self-giving. When spouses give themselves totally in marriage to each other it follows there is nothing left to give in a married way to another. The exclusive fidelity of marriage, at its deepest, is an image of Christ's total self-gift in love.

This, therefore, is the sacrament of marriage a flesh and blood image of Christ's love, enabled and supported by the grace of Christ because it is for Christ and it serves Christ.



**“exclusive sexual fidelity is, it seems to me anyway, simply the outward expression of that total self-gift spouses make to each other. This again is modeled on and reflective of Christ’s love.”**

## Conclusion

That’s me covered everything that I am supposed to cover in this talk, but if you will indulge me I’d like to finish by talking about marriage at a less theoretical and a more practical level. So this is my rousing conclusion. Whenever you give a talk at one of these conferences you want to give a rousing conclusion and this, I think, is one of the best and most beautiful rousing conclusions ever. I’ve edited it slightly but I didn’t write a word of it. It is pure Father Holloway:

“When a young couple come to the foot of the altar, often there comes to the mind of this priest the words spoken long ago by the bishop, in the former service for the ordination of Sub-deacons: ‘*dearly beloved son, again and yet again I do adjure you, consider how great a burden of responsibility you take upon yourself this day*’. Because, before him he sees fifty years of life ahead, and all the drama and achievement, and all the sorrow and pain of human life, from springtime to the grave. He sees the hot and bothered years of young married life, and the forming of the mind and heart of children in the love of God, through the atmosphere of their parents’ personality. In the next age of marriage, he sees the young teenager, brimful of life, jealous of independence, responsive alike to high ideals and fierce squalls of temptation.[...] He reminds the couple in his sermon that their greatest achievement will be the nurturing of children like themselves; their greatest reward will be that which their own parents have here and now, when they stand in the benches behind their own children at their weddings; children who will thank God above all other things for the gift of a good and truly Christian mother and father. He will tell them too, that the love that knows not divorce, knows no end to its vocation down the years of life. Faithful to each other, forgiving in love, reverential of each other in body and in soul, they will know how to teach their children as young wives or husbands, the laws of Christian goodness, prudence, tolerance, and chastity in holy wedlock. They will not be rich when they die, for their hands, even in middle-age, will be going again and again deep in their pockets for money, mortgages, and many a help. As their summer lengthens into autumn, they will still be teaching both children and grandchildren the ways of God, for those ways shine in their faces and their works. Even in old age the priest will tell them that their work continues, their vocation undimmed. They will still be wanted by children’s children as babysitters and sitters. And so, when frail and more than a little tired, and wracked with rheumatic pain, they will be forming the minds of their children’s children in their first prayers, and in the simple love of God. They will rejoice with Jesus that, when others are out in the company of the wise, brilliant, socially delightful, to them is given the better part: to stay in the company of the Master, and to reveal Him to these little ones. And in that sunset of life they will know that all achievement is in persons only, not in houses, lawns, and investments; only in the love that is undying: the gift of the mind and heart of those who love. The only reward of life is that men and women think they have reason to love you, that through all your faults, the seed of God’s image yet lives in you, and you are, God help you, lovable, worthy to be loved. Life has no other reward, you take nothing

else beyond the grave. For this is the reward of faithful love, a love which shares with Christ all the burden of creation, from conception to salvation, from the cradle to the grave. This then is Christian married love, and so we should teach it.” ☩

*Father Kevin Douglas is a priest of the Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh.*



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# Rebuilding the Family: A Mother's Story

By *Katie Wotherspoon*

So how do we rebuild the family today? In a Friday morning presentation, young married mother Katie Wotherspoon (along with husband Chris and baby Fraser) shared her experience of living a Catholic family life.



Talk #2

Katie Wotherspoon

Hi I'm Katie. Chris and I have been together for 10 years and have just celebrated our fourth wedding anniversary. In that four years we have started to build our own family and, as Chris said, we now have two small children – Amelia who is three and Fraser who is nine months. We try our best to live according to the Church's teaching on marriage and family life and we are here today to talk about some of the joys and challenges of doing this in today's world.

## Conversion

When Chris and I met at university I wasn't a Catholic and, in fact, both of my parents are atheists. My brother became a Catholic aged 12, but I took slightly longer and was baptised at the age of 24. I took a long time to decide whether to become a Catholic as I did not see the point if I was not going to try and follow all of the Church's teachings. I was quite sure that I believed in God, and I accepted that Jesus was the Son of God, but I was not so sure about why we need the Church. Until I was satisfied with the answer to this question I could see no point in becoming a Catholic. After all, I didn't need to be a member of the Catholic Church to believe in God and Jesus. After much thought and prayer – and quite a lot of perseverance from my brother and Chris – I was finally baptised, confirmed and received my first communion on the Feast of St. Peter and Paul in June 2005. In the end the person who ultimately persuaded me to convert, without even saying a word, was Pope John Paul II. Let me explain.

After a fairly disastrous trip to Rome for Easter 2005 where I'd had food poisoning, been locked in a toilet and managed to flood my hotel bedroom, we ended up in St. Peter's Square for the Easter Sunday Mass, which turned out to be the

Pope's last public appearance. We had good seats near the altar, but from where we were sitting we couldn't see either the big screens or the window where the Pope appeared after the Mass. In fact our only encounter with the Pope was hearing him breathe over the loudspeakers because he was too sick to speak. I was so overwhelmed that this dying man would come to his window, clearly to the detriment of his own health, because of his love and dedication to the Church and the people, that I decided there and then, on the steps of St. Peter's Basilica, that I would be baptised.

“In the years before we got married Chris and I grew as a couple precisely because we chose to conduct our relationship in the way Christ taught us.”

## Living Together

It was not for another four years that Chris and I got married and for those four years we chose to conduct our relationship in the way the Church teaches us and we did not to live together. It is very common these days for couples to move in together, often as a sort of “trial marriage” to figure out whether the other person is marriage material. Recent statistics show that over six million people now live with their non-married partners. This figure has doubled since 1996. Not living together didn't mean that our relationship was less serious or less special than anyone else's, far from it, it made our relationship stronger. We had the space to discern what was best for our relationship and to grow as individuals as well as together. Getting married and living together is great, but it's also hard. There is always someone else to consider, it is not so easy to find time for yourself and there is a lot of compromising to be done as you bring two people's habits, eccentricities and family traditions into one household, so what is the hurry to move in together? In the years before we got married Chris and I grew as a couple precisely because we chose to conduct our relationship in the way Christ taught us. The day we got married was the day we moved in together and this was a wonderful thing. We weren't waking up the next day after a fun party to continue life as usual; we were actually waking up to a whole new life together, ready to build the family God intends for us, whatever that may be. By making Christ a significant part of our relationship prior to our marriage, we had built a good foundation.

## FAITH SUMMER SESSION | 2014



“This week has taught me so much more about the Catholic faith. It's opened my mind to Catholic ways. I've really enjoyed it because I've learned loads of new things plus I've met lots of new Catholic friends”.

Nicole Okot, 16  
Dartford, Student.



**“We have always tried to make sure prayer is at the centre of our children’s day with grace and prayers before bed. A personal favourite of mine is when my daughter chooses to sing her bedtime prayers.”**

### **In the Minority**

I have found that in trying to live family life in the way Christ taught us we are often in the minority, even among Catholics. At our marriage preparation classes, out of the eight or nine couples there, we were the only couple who did not already live together. The other couples consisted of people who had lived together for years, people who already had children together, and people who were already civilly married but were now having a church wedding. We’ve been to a couple of weddings now in Catholic churches where the couple have chosen not to have a nuptial Mass, basically not inviting Christ to their wedding. And we’ve been to a few baptisms when the child is six months or older so there was time to organise the party. You get a real sense that for many people what is important is the party and not the sacrament. We are in quite a busy parish in London but it is really sad to see that the day after the school application forms are due in, the congregation significantly shrinks. We live in a society that, in large part, thinks the way the Church teaches us to live our lives is archaic and that generally you can take or leave the teachings as you like. In light of this it becomes so important to bear witness to the beauty of the Church’s teaching on marriage and family by trying our best to live by those teachings. I know we really draw strength and encouragement from our friends who are living their family lives according to the Church’s vision.

We are by no means experts on how to do this and often feel like we fall short, but I will share with you some of the ways we try to incorporate the Church’s teachings into our daily lives.

### **Prayer**

We have always tried to make sure prayer is at the centre of our children’s day with grace and prayers before bed. A personal favourite of mine is when my daughter chooses to sing her bedtime prayers. I think she understands the power of prayer as, when I asked her what she was mumbling in the back of the car a few weeks after Fraser was born, she said she was “asking God for a baby sister.”

### **Mass**

We always try to make sure Sunday is a special family day. All the chores out of the way on Saturday, our Sunday always starts with Mass. Mass brings its own unique challenges. At first we just hoped our daughter wouldn’t need a feed during Mass. Then, as she got a bit older, we were terrified that she would escape and run up onto the altar. Now she’s older, we have finally got her to whisper rather than shout in church. We are next faced with the challenge of getting her to pay attention to the Mass rather than her dolly or sticker book. We’ve also got to start all over again with child number two. I have a friend with two little boys who are a few years older than my kids. I am truly in awe as to what she achieves at Mass. Her boys take full part in the Mass, kneel, stand, sing the Mass parts and are immaculately behaved. She’s

one of my heroes for this. It’s been a very long time since, I think, either of us felt like we have fully been involved in the Mass. I’ve come to realise that there is nothing we can do about it unless we simply don’t take the children to Mass and go separately while the other looked after the kids. But this would be so sad. While it is a challenge going to Mass every week with the kids it is also a wonderful thing to do and important to ensuring that Christ remains firmly at the centre of our family life. It is lovely to see that our daughter is genuinely excited when it’s time for Mass and not just because she gets a biscuit afterwards if she’s been a good girl. There are even times when she asks to go to church so she can say her prayers.

### **Confession**

Confession was one of the things I was most nervous about once I was baptised. In fact, my first confession was here at the Summer Session. I was terrified. So Chris told me to go and see Fr Mike Dolan of Birmingham Archdiocese as he had a reputation for being “a nice priest”. Although the kids are too young for confession we do encourage Amelia to think about what she wants to thank God for at the end of each day and what she wants to say sorry for. Myself and Chris also both try to go regularly to confession and find it helpful for our own relationship; among other things it makes you reflect on how you have treated each other. I’m a particular fan of Chris going to confession because, if we’ve had a fight, he quite often comes home with flowers.

### **Our Lady**

Like most of us I’m sure, I have always drawn strength from Our Lady but especially since I have been married and become a mother. She is the example by which I try to live my life as a mother. If I am finding things difficult I always turn to our lady for guidance and every night I say a Hail Mary before I go to bed to watch over my children, to make me a better mother and in thanks for her intercessions. I cannot emphasise enough the strength that can be drawn from Our Lady in everyday family life. From the life changing to the mundane, put your trust in Our Lady and you will find comfort and strength.

*“Family life is a truly a wonderful thing and brings you great joy but it’s not always easy. You need Christ’s help and the intercession of Our Lady.”*

Family life is a truly a wonderful thing and brings you great joy but it’s not always easy. You need Christ’s help and the intercession of Our Lady. Welcome Christ in to your home, your marriage and your family, and it seems you can’t go far wrong. 🙏

*Katie Wotherspoon is a wife, mother of two small children, and a civil servant. She lives in London.*

# The Big Questions: Challenges to the Family Today

By Father Nicky Welsh

There are many good and happy marriages, thanks be to God, but what are we supposed to do when things go badly wrong? It is important to notice that what Jesus forbids is divorce *and* remarriage. There may be circumstances in which separation is the only option, in order to protect oneself or one's children. The Church does not condemn those victims of violence or abuse to a life of misery in such a household. Separation in these circumstances is often necessary and sensible. If separation becomes permanent, seeking a legal divorce might be necessary in order to sort out things like property, financial issues, access to children etc. The Church does not forbid civil divorce and this doesn't mean that someone who has undergone a civil divorce may not receive Holy Communion.

However, obtaining a civil divorce does not mean that someone is free to marry again. Divorce does not dissolve a valid marriage between baptised Christians. Only the death of one of the partners breaks that bond. So where does that leave Catholics who are divorced and remarried? Are they excommunicated? The answer to that is, "no". Excommunication is a very solemn, dramatic and, fortunately, rare event that publicly cuts someone off from the Church completely. It is not the same thing as not being able to receive Holy Communion. Anyone who is aware that they have committed a grave sin should not receive Holy Communion until they have confessed that sin, done penance and made a sincere effort to change their life. But if the situation that holds someone back from Holy Communion is not a one-off event that we can repent of and change, but an ongoing reality or semi-permanent situation, then it may prevent them from receiving Holy Communion for a long time. Being divorced and remarried is one such situation.

But this does not mean that someone in such a situation should stop coming to Mass. Even if we cannot receive Holy Communion for whatever reason, we should always go to Mass on Sunday. We don't have to go to Holy Communion every time we go to Mass. God does not turn his back on us even if we turn away from him, and we should never give up trying to put things right if we have got something wrong. We all know that life can be complicated, especially when it comes to marriage and families; certain situations may not be simple to sort out. In many cases it may not be realistic or desirable to walk away from a second marriage, even those which are not valid sacramentally. There are often obligations to new children, for



Talk #3

Father Nicky Welsh

So what are the big challenges to family life in contemporary society? In a wide-ranging Thursday morning presentation, Father Nicky Welsh highlighted many areas for concern and hope. In this excerpt, he deals with the delicate issue of pastoral care for divorced and remarried Catholics.

example. However, the Church still encourages us in this state to pray and to take part in the life of the Church and the other sacraments as far as possible.

There are, however, some positive steps we can take to put things right, even though these may not be easy. Jesus said plainly that remarriage after divorce is the same as adultery. He says: "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another is guilty of adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another she is guilty of adultery too."<sup>1</sup> And also, "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another is guilty of adultery, and the man who marries a woman divorced by her husband commits adultery."<sup>2</sup> The solution for a couple who are in a stable non-sacramental marriage is to live without sexual intercourse, whilst loving and caring for each other in every other way. Living this way is naturally a private decision and something to be made known to a priest in confession. If a couple are sincere in trying to keep to such a decision – even if they fail on occasion and go to confession when they do – then the way is open for them to receive Holy Communion. This calls in to play the virtue of chastity – to which everyone in all states of life is called to. Christ teaches that chastity is possible,

even in difficult cases because God's grace is more powerful than sin.<sup>3</sup> Chastity, remember, is a fruit of grace, not a penance or a deprivation. To claim that those who have entered into a second, non-sacramental marriage cannot live chastely is to despair at the virtue of chastity and at God's grace.

There are other ways that it may be possible to put things right too. Marriages break down for many reasons, but it could be that there was something wrong from the outset. If this were the case, it may be that the vows made at the wedding were never valid in the first place. We should remember that, in marriage, the ministers of the sacrament are the spouses, not the priest. In, for example, confession, the priest is the minister of the sacrament: it is the priest who ministers God's forgiveness. In marriage, the priest doesn't marry the couple but, rather, they marry *each other*. They are the ministers of the sacrament. The priest is merely the Church's witness to the sacrament taking place. If it is later discovered that the spouses were never in a position to be the minister because of some impediment, because they were unable to give consent, then they would have been unable to confer the sacrament, and the sacrament would be invalid. There are a few impediments, like age and relation, which are obvious. But, if it can be proved that one of



**“An annulment is not a Catholic divorce but is, rather, a declaration that no marriage ever existed in the first place.”**

## FAITH SUMMER SESSION | 2014



“The Faith Summer Session is probably the most important thing to my Catholic faith. The week helps me to pray, to love the Mass more, to meet other Catholics and to see my vocation more fully”.

**Celeste Treloar, 16**  
Sidcup, Student.

the spouses was psychologically immature or mentally incapable to make the vows, the vows could be deemed invalid. Also, if it can be proved that one of the parties never intended to have children, which is one of the ends of marriage, this could also nullify the vows. If the vows are null and void, if consent could not be given, the marriage never existed.

If a marriage is not valid from the start, it cannot bind people to stay together for life, because it is not a sacrament. Couples can ask the Church to look at their situation to judge whether the original marriage was actually valid. If, after careful investigation, the “marriage” is judged not to have been valid, the the first “marriage” is officially “annulled” by a decree of the Church courts. An annulment is not a Catholic divorce but is, rather, a declaration that no marriage ever existed in the first place.

The Church has the authority to do this because Jesus said to his apostles, “Whatever you bind on earth will be considered bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be considered loosed in heaven.”<sup>4</sup> Even so, the Church cannot go against the explicit and solemn teaching of Our Lord that, “what God has joined together, no man can separate.”<sup>5</sup> However, we noted at the start of the talk, in the same passage from Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus does make an exception in the case of *porneia*, which is the word used in the Greek of the New Testament. What is this exception? What does *porneia* mean?

Many versions of the Bible translate the word into English as “fornication”, “unchastity”, or “adultery”, making it seem as though Jesus is allowing divorce whenever there is unfaithfulness by one or another partner. But the Gospel does not use the ordinary Greek word for adultery, *moicheia*, but rather it uses this *porneia*. *Porneia* is often translated as “prostitution”, but it refers to prostitution in a very wide sense, i.e. every kind of illegitimate sexual union. Its use in this Gospel passage shows that if a man and a woman are in fact married, the bond is inseparable, but if they entered into marriage illegitimately, i.e. not that they entered an illegitimate union with a third party, but that if their own sexual union was illegitimate because of impediments (such as age, relation or bigamy etc.), then their marriage was never lawful, never a valid marriage, and that they are, therefore, free to enter into a new valid marriage. What Our Lord in this Gospel is telling us in the language and categories of the time, and what the Church has developed and

applied in practice, is that the only exception to the life-long bond of marriage is where there is in fact no legally binding covenant to begin with.

There is currently a lot of pressure from the secular world – media and politicians – as well of from those quite high up in the Church, such as bishops and cardinals, for the Synod on Marriage and the Family, which will take place in Rome in October, to change the basic teaching of Christ by allowing Holy Communion for the divorced and remarried. Even if a synod of bishops voted for it, it cannot and will not happen. Why? Well, we have seen quite clearly what Jesus teaches about divorce and remarriage: He forbids it. That teaching of Jesus has been preserved by the Church for these past 2000 years. This teaching of Jesus Christ, and all Christ’s teachings, difficult though they may be, are true not for certain times in history but are true for all time. This teaching cannot change because the truth does not change. The truth is often difficult, but its difficulty doesn’t make it any less true. Because it is true, we have to try our best to live it. Those who divorce and remarry enter into a state of sin – not an occasion of sin which can be confessed and forgiven – but a state of life which is at odds with the Church’s teaching. The Eucharist is the sacrament of unity, the sacrament in which the Body of Christ, the Church, partakes as an expression of our unity in faith. Those who are divorced and remarried live outside of this expression of faith and, as such, painful though it is, are unable to receive Holy Communion.

“The truth is often difficult, but its difficulty doesn’t make it any less true. Because it is true, we have to try our best to live it.”

What we have to always remember is that those who find themselves in “irregular situations”, as they are called, those who have entered into a second, non-sacramental marriage, should be treated with the care, respect and compassion that Our Lord showed to those in similar situations. We remember that when Our Lord met the woman at the well in Samaria he knew that she had been married five times and that the man she was living with was not her husband.<sup>6</sup> Still, he welcomed her kindly and spent time with her, explaining the Good News whilst never compromising on the truth about marriage and about her life, leading her gently but firmly to a deeper understanding and eventually to conversion. This should be our pastoral model for dealing with those who are divorced and remarried, and their understanding and conversion should be our hope. ☪

*Father Nicky Welsh is a newly ordained priest of the Archdiocese of St. Andrews & Edinburgh.*

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Mk 10:11-12.

<sup>2</sup>Lk 16:18.

<sup>3</sup>Cfr. Rom. 5:20, ‘However much sin increased, grace was always greater’.

<sup>4</sup>Mt 18:18.

<sup>5</sup>Mt 19:6.

<sup>6</sup>Jn 4:4-26.

# The Family: Damaged by Sin and Restored in Jesus

By Sister Andrea Fraile

Why can the family so often be a place of conflict and suffering?

In her Tuesday evening talk, Sister Andrea Fraile suggested that we cannot understand the difficulties of family life unless we grasp the reality of original sin.



It has been revealed to us that God is love. God Himself, in His very person, is a communion of love, a trinity of love. The Father is the lover; the Son, His beloved; and the Holy Spirit, the love that binds them as one. That's great but, and we're often challenged on this, if there is a God, and if He is so loving, then how come there is so

much suffering and evil in this world? And no one can deny it. We're all too aware of war and starvation all over the world, of the weak and defenceless being attacked because they are weak and defenceless. If we consider marriage and family specifically, we don't have to look far to find a complete lack of respect between the sexes. Many people find themselves in abusive relationships – whether that be psychological, physical, sexual – and that abuse is suffered by young, innocent children as well. Women suffer degradation and humiliation, all over the globe. Polygamy still exists; divorce is on the rise. In our own selves too, we cannot deny at various stages of our lives, a sense of guilt, uneasiness, overwhelming sadness, a feeling of hopelessness and, at times, a sense that our lives are without purpose.

Yet at the same time, we can't be entirely pessimistic because, the fact remains, Man has the capacity for *real greatness*. Think of the saints who suffer for Christ; think of powerful and courageous religious and political leaders who refuse to be swayed by the prevailing evil ideologies of their day; think of any amount of achievements in the fields of music, art or architecture. There are plenty of examples, even among our families and friends, of startling goodness and brilliance. And, if we're honest, the thing that's "wrong" is not just out there – it lies within. Man is a real conundrum. There is a contradiction that lies, somehow, at the very core of his existence. St Paul expresses it well when he writes to the Corinthians and says: "I do not understand my own behaviour ... the good thing I want to do, I never do; the evil thing which I do not want – that is what I do." (Rom. 7:15, 19).

There is a *reason* for this contradiction and the Church has explained it in a way that makes sense. It's called the doctrine of Original Sin. It explains what sin really is; where it came from; and why we have a tendency to sin. Marriage and family are under attack today; we know that. But *nothing* threatens

marriage and the family half as much as sin and unless we understand the origins of sin and the mechanics of it, then we'll never really get to the heart of the problem. Sometimes people say, "You Catholics, you're obsessed with sin. What about the Resurrection?" and it *is* bad to focus too much on it but, the fact remains, Christianity is a religion of salvation and redemption. The very name of Jesus means "the one who saves us from our sins." We simply won't understand Jesus or what He has done for us, or what makes us tick, unless we take an honest look at the sinfulness of fallen humanity. Samuel Coleridge, one of the great Romantic poets of the early 19th century, pondered on the state we're in and thought there *had* to be some kind of Fall: "without this hypothesis", he said, "man is unintelligible; with it, every phenomenon is explicable."

"Sin is the most disastrous thing to have befallen humanity but we are not without hope. Sin is a disaster, but we are not a disaster. Sin damaged human nature, but it never destroyed it."

However, let's be clear about this from the outset: sin is the most disastrous thing to have befallen humanity, but *we* are not without hope. Sin is a disaster, but we are not a disaster. Sin damaged human nature, but it never *destroyed* it. The doctrine of Original Sin, which is full of hope, shows us that sin is not simply a part of our make-up. We'll come to realise, in fact, that those gifts we were given in the very beginning – gifts of freedom and responsibility – have not been annihilated in us. There is a way out of the mess. In fact, that's why I *like* talking about this subject – because, through the grace of Jesus Christ – about whom, more later – our sordid sinfulness has become the platform for something unimaginably wonderful: our new life in Christ, a place in the very heart of the Trinity.

## How is Sin Even Possible?

We know that we are different and superior to the whole of material creation. Matter is programmed and determined: the saints, Saint Francis, for example, often speak of the various elements of material creation praising God, and so they do. The sun, in its rising and setting, praises God; the plants praise God in their beauty, and the mountains in their greatness. They praise God by being truly what God created them to be and by serving the function they were called to have for us. By their very nature, they reflect the beauty and harmony of God's cosmos. But you can hardly congratulate them for it, because they really have no option of doing anything else. Their lives are governed by deterministic laws. It's different for us. Our lives are characterised by knowing and loving, by relationships that are both personal and free. And that freedom we have, within our



**“We read Genesis with scientific eyes, but the book was never intended to tell us how God created, but rather what and why He created.”**

spiritual environment, is terribly important because it means that we can truly love and be loved; it also means we are capable of making real choices, both as regards our material environment and our spiritual environment, who, as we know, is God. So the moment Man appears on the stage of cosmic history, sin is possible for the very first time because, in essence, sin is the misuse of our freedom.

### Genesis

For a profound, mature, reflective expression of what sin is, you can do no better than go to the Bible and, specifically, to the Book of Genesis. Here you'll find a text that explains us as we are and deepens our understanding of human freedom. It's often dismissed as unscientific, unsophisticated, but it contains truths about God and Man which, because of that, remain relevant forever. We read Genesis with scientific eyes, but the book was never intended to tell us *how* God created, but rather *what* and *why* He created.

The Church has always maintained that there are truths in this book that are essential for our salvation. What truths? That God transcends creation – He is a thing apart; He wanted His creation and made it a gradual process, and He made it good; we're made in His image and likeness and we're very good; on the seventh day, God rests and creation basks in His delight. Notice that there is no mention of any original element of evil. *Everything* was good.

### In the Beginning...

So Genesis tells us how we began and also how we went so badly wrong. Adam and Eve lived in harmony with God, with each other and all of creation. They had respect for each other and felt no shame, even though they were naked. Genesis puts it very well: “God walked with them in the cool of the evening”. I think it's worth mentioning here the distinction the Church makes between what is *natural* in Man and what is *supernatural*. It is natural for us as human beings to breathe, sleep, eat, walk, talk – it is part of the nature of the human being to do that kind of thing. Likewise, it's natural for fish to swim, birds to fly, rabbits to hop. Okay, what is *natural* to Man is contrasted with that which is *supernatural*, i.e. something that goes beyond the claims of our nature. That supernatural gift which God gave Adam and Eve was the destiny of seeing God face to face in eternal happiness. So, after creating Adam and Eve and giving them all that their spiritual nature required (that was the first gift), God added a second and totally gratuitous gift – the capacity and desire to know and love Him, and be united with Him forever. Both natural and supernatural gifts are gifts, but very different in their magnitude and significance. It's like the difference between giving your girlfriend an iPhone and giving her a diamond ring. The iPhone is good and useful; the diamond ring says, I give you my life. Adam and Eve had it all.

Then along comes the serpent, the figure that introduces temptation, that figure who is Satan. Satan is an angel and one of God's creatures and, like all creatures, he was created good. The angels are spiritual beings and so they have free will, just

like us. However, unlike us, they don't have material bodies and don't live in the material world – this effectively means that, whatever choice they make, whether for good or for evil, their decision is final. I do something really nasty to my friend ... I regret it, I say I'm sorry and we can start all over again. The angels cannot repent 10 minutes, 10 days or 10 years later so their hatred for God is eternal. It's not that God refuses His mercy; it's just that because the angels are pure intellect and will, the choice they make is totally irreversible. Satan chose to reject God as his God and so he is, and remains, an eternal enemy. So anyway, all is good in the Garden of Eden. What happened?

Satan seduces them into eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. What does that mean? Adam and Eve had everything they needed – all they knew was good and that was all they needed. The temptation they fell into, which is the original sin we're talking about here, was to disregard, reject, their proper place within God's perfectly balanced and harmonious creation: they didn't want to be dependent on God, they wanted to be self-sufficient. No creature can be self-sufficient – it makes no sense. A creature of its very nature demands a creator to exist at all. Satan said, “You will be like gods”, and if there's one thing worse than a lie, it's a half-lie. They were *already* like gods, made in His image and likeness, already sharing many of His traits of intellect, free will, creativity, immortality, albeit to a lesser degree. They were like gods! But they *were* not God.

**“The problem is that Adam was not only the physical head of the human race, but the moral head too. He had a position to maintain and he failed.”**

That sin of theirs is the essence of all sin: in disobedience and pride, we *prefer* ourselves to God. We want to worship ourselves rather than God. It's not enough for us to be made in His image: we want to be God. Why? When we have everything we need and more besides? We don't know. Sin is profoundly irrational. But do you see the point here? Sin is a far deeper thing than simply “making a mistake” or infringing some arbitrary rule: sin is a path of self-destructive behaviour where

### FAITH SUMMER SESSION I 2014



“I'm very happy I've been to this Summer Session as I've learned a lot from the talks including, this week, all about Natural Family Planning which I didn't know about before”.

**Richard Tully, 18**  
Croydon, Student.

# The Family: Damaged by Sin and Restored in Jesus

## continued

we deliberately turn away from God's plan and reject the very fabric and purpose of the cosmos. It's as unnatural and ludicrous as turkeys voting for Christmas, or birds tying stones to their feathers and walking into the sea. The effect of that first sin of Adam was catastrophic.

### How Did Adam's Sin Affect us?

The impact of that first sin has been described in various ways: sometimes like a tiny stone that cracks the windscreen and then slowly spreads till the whole window is shattered. Or, like Japanese knot weed. Or, like a nuclear explosion in which we all, until the end of time, experience the fall-out. The problem is that Adam was not only the physical head of the human race, but the moral head too. He had a position to maintain and he failed. Imagine David Cameron declared war on France, we would all be at war too (even without an explicit declaration on our part). It's the same with Adam. He declared war on God and so, inevitably, have we. How do we experience Original Sin?

**Separation from God:** Fundamentally, we are separated from God. After sin, Adam & Eve were driven out of the garden where beauty, harmony and order reigned, and were compelled to live in the jungle, where chaos and survival were the order of the day. There was no more walking with God in the cool of the evening for them – they had rejected God as their true environment. And so with us. He has not withdrawn from us but His presence can be a cause of fear, it's a threat, because to accept the gift of His presence is to admit that our self-sufficiency is a lie. We have to allow ourselves to be vulnerable and dependent, and we don't like that. And remember what we said about the supernatural gift God gave Adam and Eve in giving them an eternal destiny with Him? Well, they lost that too. They, and therefore we, were forever excluded from the possibility of reaching heaven and beholding God face to face – something our whole nature longs for. Thwarted.

“We know that Man is a perfect meshing together of spirit and matter so it is inevitable that sin will affect our bodies, too.”

**Damage to mind and body:** Likewise, our minds and bodies have been affected. Our minds have been darkened by the effects of sin so that God's existence is no longer obvious to us: St Paul wrote to the Romans (1:16-25) – “Ever since God created the world, his everlasting power and deity – however invisible – have been there for the mind to see in the things he has made.” But we know that many minds don't, or won't, see God's hand at work. What we witness, in fact, is what Paul also said, “The more they called themselves philosophers, the more stupid they grew.” Prayer is also difficult for us, we get easily distracted. Our conscience is not the guide it was meant to be. Doing right does not always feel good; doing wrong doesn't always feel bad. Take abortion and euthanasia as classic examples. Many people genuinely think these are good and loving (and responsible) paths to take. Secularism, hedonism,

relativism, materialism – these giants of our time are the fruit of minds darkened and distorted by sin.

We know that Man is a perfect meshing together of spirit and matter so it is inevitable that sin will affect our bodies, too. The soul has separated itself from its life-source and the body, which is driven by the soul, is now drawn to act in a way that is totally contrary to God's law. The body no longer seeks the true and good – it craves pleasure and comfort. You hear it said so often – “You just have to do what your body tells you.” No you don't! Your body, thanks to Original Sin, is some maverick organism that seldom listens to reason. There are very few people who could ever have done what their bodies told them to do: Adam and Eve *before* the Fall, Jesus Christ and Our Blessed Lady. Unless you find yourself to be any of the above mentioned people, do not, I repeat, *do not* always do what your body tells you to do.

“Since we no longer see God as our Sovereign Creator and Lord, we no longer see others as fellow creatures, brothers and sisters. The Church has said it before: when we lose the sense of God, we lose the sense of Man.”

**Death:** Of course, the ultimate effect is death. Because there's no longer any harmony between Man and God, no harmony between body and soul, we experience decay: disease and sickness are part of our human fabric now. We age and we die. It's so much a part of our daily experience that it can be quite startling to think that it was never meant to be like that. There's a beautiful passage in the book of Wisdom that expresses it well: “Death was not God's doing, he takes no pleasure in the extinction of the living. To be – for this he created all” (Wis. 1:13). We know that we are made to be with God forever; before sin, Christ would have come at some appointed time to lead us to the Father and bring us to fulfilment – we don't know how (though Our Lady's life gives us a clue) but we do know that death as that tragedy we experience was never the plan. (And it's amazing, when someone you love dies, how incredibly unnatural it feels.) In death, the body separates from the soul, and experiences disintegration and decay; the soul, as we saw earlier, is no longer fit to be with God forever, and all those loving relationships we have enjoyed in this life, and all the good that has come from them – these too collapse into nothingness. We're talking here about spiritual death or eternal damnation.

**Effects in society:** Society is affected too. In the garden, Adam blamed Eve. Adam effectively wants to be at the centre of his own universe – God challenges and threatens that delusion of self-sufficiency by His very presence, and not only God, but everyone else too. God intended us to be gifts to each other, reflecting Him in His mutual self-giving, while we set up a society made up of atomised individuals, striving to be first, always on the lookout for “number one”. The social disorder



**“We are wounded but our nature is still fundamentally good and we’re still capable of real goodness when we cooperate with God.”**

spread and worsened with alarming speed: only one generation later, the presence of others was so intolerable that we started to kill each other. Adam’s son, Cain, murdered his own brother. So throughout history: we treat each other with suspicion; we are no longer persons for each other but objects to each other. Since we no longer see God as our Sovereign Creator and Lord, we no longer see others as fellow creatures, brothers and sisters. The Church has said it before: when we lose the sense of God, we lose the sense of Man.

**And the family:** Naturally enough, that experience of evil around and within us makes itself felt in our relationships, specifically within marriage and the family. How many times have you looked at a couple and thought, “I don’t think they actually like each other – in fact, they probably hate each other”? Is that a sign that male and female are not compatible after all? No. Is it possible that some people are genetically disposed to infidelity or have some psychological make-up that makes them unable to sustain life-long commitments? No. It’s a sign that the couple has sadly given up. It could be that there are economic and societal pressures – external pressures – putting a burden on their relationship, but the fundamental problem lies in the fact of sin, which has been given free reign. It’s not to do with human nature *per se*; it’s to do with sin: envy, jealousy, possessiveness, quarrelling, a lack of willingness to forgive and forget, infidelity, manipulation, the desire to control and dominate, lack of consideration in matters to do with running a home as well as in the bedroom (sex can be one of the highest expressions of love between a man and a woman; it can also be incredibly selfish); hearts that are consistently closed to new life.

All of these speak very eloquently of ME, of *my* rights, *my* needs, *my* wants, which are far more important, frankly, than you. The whole thing is made worse by an ever-increasing breakdown in communication between the couple so that, before you know it, you have two very separate, discreet individuals who happen to live under the same roof, both trying to find lives for themselves beyond home. Separation and divorce frequently follow. And if there are children involved, they suffer. Inevitably. They often don’t have a clue what’s going on, but they don’t like it. They know that much. And the whole thing is the effect of Original Sin.

It started with Adam and Eve. That original, beautiful communion between man and woman was ruptured very early on. First of all, there were early recriminations (“it was her”); then the natural attraction they felt for each other, of mind, soul and body, changed quickly into a relationship of domination and lust; and their glorious vocation to be fruitful and multiply, and subdue the earth, was marred by the pain of childbirth and the toil of work.

*The first sin was a historical event.* We don’t know exactly when, but it must have happened very early on in our history because we have all been affected. That’s why it’s called Original Sin – it was the first sin; and it is the origin and source of all sin.

## FAITH SUMMER SESSION | 2014



“This was my first Faith Summer Session. It’s really opened my mind and my eyes to stuff I didn’t know before. I’ll take a lot home including my view of marriage which I didn’t think was important before. Now I do!”

**Anu Oduwale, 16**  
Dartford, Student.

### ... and it Has Been Passed on

People often object to the idea that a sweet, innocent, newborn baby should need Baptism to remove the stain of Original Sin. ‘What has she done?’ they say. The answer is, she hasn’t done anything. She hasn’t committed any personal sin (she doesn’t know the difference between right and wrong!) but she has inherited a fallen human nature. Adam’s was a personal sin and, because he was the moral and physical head of our race, it was he who introduced disharmony into our human nature. It’s deeper than simply picking up sinfulness along the way, learning it through social observation. It is true that we learn to sin through others (we learn virtue from others too) but this is a sinful state that has become part and parcel of our human condition. Since Man is spiritual and material, so the damage is found in the spiritual and material. We receive a flawed material nature from our parents and a good soul from God. These unite to form a human identity. But what happens? A soul united to fallen flesh, we inevitably have a damaged orientation towards God. That’s why we need Baptism! But, as I said earlier, just because we’re born in a sinful state, doesn’t mean sin is part of what it is to be human. Sin is not inherent to us, it’s not originally natural to us. When someone does something terrible, we say “well, they’re only human”. I understand why they say that but it’s not very accurate. To be human is a really great thing – sin is an aberration that lessens our humanity. If you want to know what a true human being looks like, turn to Jesus and Our Lady. They were without sin.

### Personal Sin and Concupiscence

Original Sin, then, is a tragedy but we are not without hope. We are flawed in our nature, without a doubt, but sin has not completely destroyed us and, thanks to Jesus Christ and all He has done for us, the grace we have lost can be restored again through faith in Him and through Baptism. We are wounded but our nature is still fundamentally good and we’re still capable of real goodness when we cooperate with God.

“We needed a new head for the human race, one who would do things right. But of ourselves we are too weak. The One who saved us would have to be both God and Man.”

# The Family: Damaged by Sin and Restored in Jesus

## continued

The wound in us, however, means that we have to turn to Jesus every day. The stain of Original Sin is removed in Baptism, and our personal sins are washed away in repentance, through going to Confession, for instance, but we still have an inclination to sin, and that's what we call *concupiscence*. Imagine a boy is told by his parents that he's not allowed to drive the car while they're on holiday. The boy decides to do it anyway. He drives too fast, he's in a car crash and he nearly dies. The sin there is the boy's disobedience. His parents are angry and upset – but he's sorry and it's not long before they forgive him. The sin is finished with, but the effects of that sin are not, because he's left for the rest of his life with damage to his back. Concupiscence is like that: sin is forgiven but we're left with the consequences of it. And that is why we find being good so difficult. It's why sin is so easy! We know our true happiness lies in God, but we look for it almost anywhere else – in money, power, sex, reputation. Our relationships should be characterised by truth and love, but instead they're riddled with jealousy and the desire to possess.

### Jesus Saves

In our state of sinfulness, the gulf between us and God was simply too great. How could we ever make amends? We got ourselves into this mess; it had to be one of us who got us out of it. We needed a new head for the human race, one who would do things right. But of ourselves we are too weak. The One who saved us would have to be both God and Man. Archbishop Fulton Sheen, whose cause for canonisation is currently underway, gave us a brilliant analogy to describe what Jesus has done. He said the whole thing can be compared to a musician in an orchestra striking a bum note. He played the wrong note of his own free will – he was perfectly competent, the orchestra was competent, but he just decided to do it. The conductor can then do one of two things: he can start the whole movement of the symphony all over again or he can ignore it completely. Either way, the note's out there. The deed is done: that point of disharmony stands for ever in the midst of an otherwise harmonious whole. There's only one way to restore harmony – by making that discordant note the first note in a brand new melody, maybe now in a minor key rather than a major, but beautiful nevertheless. God could have ignored Adam's sin, but that would have been untrue to His justice. So He asked a woman, a woman representing humanity in its original, beautiful state, free from the stain of original sin, to cooperate with Him in giving Him a human nature – and, with

that, He would start a new humanity. Jesus is often referred to as the New Adam.

He makes all things new by laying down His life for us. We had decided we didn't need God anymore. When He actually came and lived among us, it seemed inevitable that we would try and do away with Him completely. And there's the rub. We thought we were taking His life by crucifying Him; and all the while, He was *giving it away*. He was treating our wound at the very root: reconfiguring human nature to His own Person, Christ restored us again to our true environment, who is God. As St Paul said to the Corinthians, "When anyone is joined to Christ he is a new creation; the old is gone, the new has come. All this is done by God who, through Christ, changed us from enemies into his friends, and gave us the task of making others his friends also" (2 Cor. 5:17–18).

*"So, with Jesus everything is made new. God's original vision of marriage is restored and made even greater."*

So with Jesus, everything is made new. God's original vision of marriage is restored and made even greater. In Matthew's Gospel (19:1-12), the Pharisees want to test Jesus and they ask Him if it's lawful to divorce your wife for any cause and He tells them, "For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so". By saying this Jesus calls all those with the vocation to marriage and family to something much deeper: not only to personal holiness, but now also the Christian family is called to be the very sign and expression of Christ's love for His Bride, the Church.

### Complementarity Restored

Now, too, the complementarity which exists between male and female is restored – the differences in the way men and women think, feel, see reality, are no longer a cause of tension but a cause of rejoicing, one more element of the mystery of the other which only makes us love them all the more. It's a further insight into the Mystery of the nature of God Himself. Likewise, the reality of their being 'one flesh' is understood more fully because they see that only by giving themselves to the other do they achieve wholeness. This is no longer the sin of trying to *be* God, but the incredible, God-given grace of reflecting Him more perfectly. We come closer to each other, and understand each other better, the closer we are to God. But *how* do we get close to Him? Through the sacraments.

This is the call to holiness, of "being holy as He Himself is holy" (1 Pet. 1:15) and it's not easy. Of ourselves, of course, we cannot do it but by coming close to Him, by drawing constantly from the sacraments which He has left us, we can. Everything is possible.

### Christ's Life Given Through the Sacraments

Remember, the sacraments are, in essence, a direct encounter with the living God here on earth. We are never so close to God

## FAITH SUMMER SESSION I 2014



"Faith Summer Sessions have been unbelievably important in my life. If it wasn't for them I wouldn't be the Catholic I am today. They've allowed me to see God in everyday life. I thoroughly enjoy them. In fact, I love them!"

**Anthony Boon, 21**  
Coatbridge, Student.

**“Sin and death have no power over us whatsoever, so long as we stay close to Jesus through His sacraments and let His life be our life.”**

as when we receive the sacraments – they’re *more* than an encounter: it’s the infusion of one life into another.

We desperately need Christ. We still have a tendency to sin – the fallout of Original Sin – and so we need Him every minute of every day to sustain and strengthen us in our vocations. We can rely on Christ and His power, because He *is* God, not us. That’s the whole brilliant point, when St Paul says, “I am proud to boast of my weaknesses, for when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Cor. 12:9). I often think of the words to Adele’s song at this point: “Next time I’ll be braver, I’ll be my own saviour when the thunder calls for me...” Don’t do that, Adele! We need Him in Holy Communion and we need Him in Confession.

Just as the cross is at the heart of our family relationships, so must the fruit of that cross be at the heart of our relationships too: the Body of Christ broken for us; the Blood of Christ poured out for us. In Holy Communion, we find the source of sacrificial love itself. In marriage, a couple who receive Holy Communion regularly drink deeply from that source of sacrificial love: they renew once again their desire to give themselves to God through each other and the spiritual food they eat gives them the strength and the will to die to themselves every day and give themselves utterly and irrevocably to their spouse. The family they have created in co-operation with God is also strengthened in love. And so, day by day, the travesty of Original Sin is reversed.

Peter asked Jesus, “Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother?” (Mt. 18:21). If you have to forgive your spouse every single day of your married life, then that’s what you have to do. It’s not easy, and you can’t do it without Christ. You need to know the power of His forgiveness and mercy in your own life before you can forgive others – but if you *do* forgive, then you are truly a sign and expression of Christ’s love for His Church and you are truly Christ to your spouse, which is what He intended when He called you to the great Sacrament and mission of marriage.

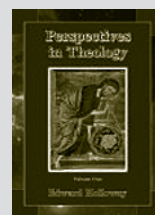
So take heart! Sin is everywhere apparently and can cause us a great deal of strife but it does not have the last word. Sin and death have no power over us whatsoever, so long as we stay close to Jesus through His Sacraments and let his life be our life.

As the author Christopher Derrick put it in his book *This Strange Divine Sea*: “Here, we are still alienated and in exile but are on our way home; we cannot yet see the satisfaction of our deepest longings, but we do know where to look; we are still sinners, but we can get our innocence back; we are still going to suffer, but not pointlessly or absurdly; we are still going to “die”, but not in the old sense, not permanently. The meaning and point and purpose of life has come upon us and taken us over: we are free!”

And remember, at the end of the day, this is not our home. We’re on a journey, and heading to a better place. Christ spoke to us

at Mass today. He said: “He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past is gone.” Then the One sitting on the throne spoke: “Now I am making the whole of creation new.” (Rev. 21:4-5). ☩

*Andrea Fraile is a Sister of the Gospel of Life, a UK-based religious community who describe their main apostolate as “the promotion of the dignity of the human being, particularly as regards the role of the family, the sanctity of motherhood, a renewed understanding of the complementarity of the sexes and catechesis”.*



## PERSPECTIVES IN THEOLOGY

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# Interview: Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Philadelphia

In September 2015, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia plays host to the World Gathering of Families, the Church's international celebration of family life.

The previous gathering in 2012 saw over a million pilgrims from nearly 150 countries gather together with Pope Benedict in the Italian city of Milan. Media rumours suggest that Pope Francis will make his first trip to the United States as pontiff in order to visit the international event. Amid the speculation, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput OFM of Philadelphia gave the following exclusive interview to Faith Magazine.

**Editor:** So will Pope Francis visit the United States in September 2015?

**Archbishop Chaput:** Until the Holy See officially announces it, a visit is never certain. Typically that happens six months or so before an event. But we're confident that Pope Francis will make every effort to attend.

**Editor:** If he does visit, what is his itinerary likely to be beyond his visit to Philadelphia?

**Archbishop Chaput:** Those issues are decided by the Holy See and the national bishops' conference. The Church in Philadelphia would not automatically be involved in the discussion. But New York and Washington, D.C., are both quite close to Philadelphia geographically, so they could easily be considered.

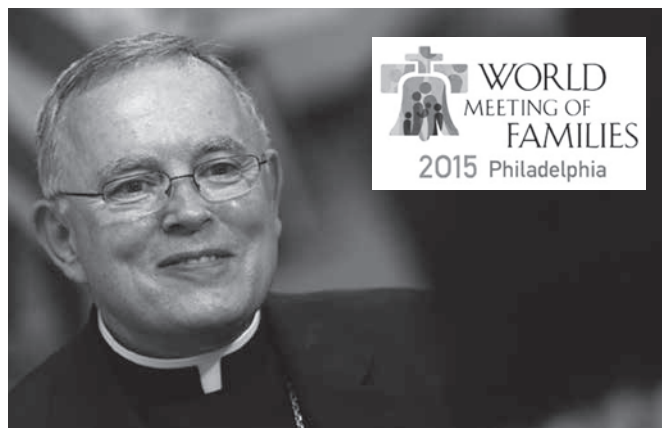
**Editor:** As regards the World Meeting of Families, what message do you hope The Holy Father will deliver to those gathered in Philadelphia?

**Archbishop Chaput:** This Pope has an extraordinary ability to wake people up to the joy of the Gospel. The Christian way of love, marriage and family is beautiful and true, but too often persons become distracted by the burdens of daily life. They need to be reminded to look up to the light. Pope Francis has a genius for that.

*"This Pope has an extraordinary ability to wake people up to the joy of the Gospel."*

**Editor:** What else will that week of events in Philadelphia consist of?

**Archbishop Chaput:** We'll have talks and break-out sessions on



every aspect of marriage and family life, ecumenical and interfaith encounters, rallies, lots of good food and entertainment and a huge festival of families. We want people to learn about their faith – but also to have a lot of joy, fun and fellowship in doing it. Philadelphia is a wonderful city for all those things.

**Editor:** To what extent is the issue of same-sex marriage likely to loom large over those events at the World Meeting of Families?

**Archbishop Chaput:** It's a part of public debate in every country of the developed world. As I've said many times, all persons of good will are welcome at the World Meeting of Families. But obviously we believe that Catholic teaching about marriage, family, sexuality and human dignity, is true; and not only true, but liberating and fulfilling. So we're enthusiastic about making that the heart of the 2015 event.

*"Catholic teaching about marriage, family, sexuality and human dignity, is true; and not only true, but liberating and fulfilling."*

**Editor:** The case for a traditional understanding of marriage has faced several reversals in the courts and parliaments of the West in recent years. Is the battle lost?

**Archbishop Chaput:** Not at all. Tacitus thought Christianity was washed up in the First Century. We're still here. The challenges we face today about the nature of marriage and family are serious. Many good people are confused by arguments for "marriage equality" that sound persuasive but lead in unintended and hurtful directions. But the hardest challenges always produce better Christians; people with the courage to actually live what they claim to believe. So in the long run, despite the cost, pressure on the Church only serves the mission of the Church.

**Editor:** So much for doom and gloom, where do you see signs of hope for family life as you survey our Western culture?

**“Millions of young people, alone and in the new ecclesial movements, believe in Jesus Christ and live their lives with a Christian zeal that I find astonishing.”**

**Archbishop Chaput:** Millions of young people, alone and in the new ecclesial movements, believe in Jesus Christ and live their lives with a Christian zeal that I find astonishing. I’ve seen them. I’ve met many of them. You wouldn’t know it from the mass media, because a living, positive faith doesn’t fit into the media narrative. But we have plenty of reason for hope.

**Editor:** The first great Church gathering to discuss the family is, of course, the Synod of Bishops at the Vatican this October. What issues do you think will most exercise the minds of those gathered in Rome?

**Archbishop Chaput:** The overriding issue is pretty obvious: How can we do a better job teaching, enriching and defending Catholic married and family life?

**Editor:** One issue that’s particularly grabbed the headlines ahead of the Synod is whether Catholics who have re-married following a divorce should be permitted to receive Holy Communion. What’s your view?

**Archbishop Chaput:** I’m a strong believer in the wisdom of what the Church already teaches, and the prudence of the disciplines she already has in place. At the same time, we can always improve our preaching and teaching, and the marriage and family support systems we have in our parishes.

**Editor:** And what line of thinking do you think will emerge amongst the bishops?

**Archbishop Chaput:** We’ll have to wait and see. We need to trust the Holy Spirit’s role in all of these discussions.

**Editor:** The Synod will conclude with the canonisation of Pope Paul VI. If every canonisation carries a particular lesson for a particular age, what is the significance of this event?

**Archbishop Chaput:** Paul VI bore the confusion in the aftermath of Vatican II with heroic patience and grace. He’s too easily overlooked because his service fell between two giants: John XXIII and John Paul II. But it was Paul VI who guided the Church in her years of turmoil. It was Paul VI who issued the wonderful encyclicals *Populorum Progressio* and *Humanae Vitae*, and the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. He was a great and holy man, obedient to his duties without complaint under very difficult circumstances. So I think his canonisation teaches two virtues: fidelity and courage. These are the necessary pillars of Catholic discipleship in our age.

**Editor:** Interestingly the logo for the World Meeting of Families depicts not only the immediate nuclear family but also the extended family and, in particular, grandparents. With people living longer than ever before, what role should Catholic grandparents attempt to play in their families?

**Archbishop Chaput:** Every grandparent I know loves the job. The work of a grandparent – except it’s not really work but a

joy – is to listen, counsel, referee, encourage, console, play, share secrets, wisdom and praise, and pass along the memory of the family line. We need to remember that the “nuclear” family is a modern aberration. The extended family is the norm. We impoverish children if we separate them from the grandparents.

**Editor:** The World Meeting of Families is obviously a global event. What would you say to Catholic families from the British Isles in order to encourage them to attend?

**“We American Catholics need your fellowship, zeal and strength, and you need ours.”**

**Archbishop Chaput:** We very much need each other, especially now. We American Catholics need your fellowship, zeal and strength, and you need ours. The Church is more fruitful, more filled with light and joy, when her children come together to give glory to God. Philadelphia is too beautiful a city not to share with the world – so please come to be with us, and let us prove to you that the friendship you’ll find is worth the journey. ☪

For more information on the World Meeting of Families 2015 go to [www.worldmeeting2015.org](http://www.worldmeeting2015.org)



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Bishop Tom Wright, DD, Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, University of St Andrews

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# The Scottish Referendum: A Catholic Perspective

Stands Scotland where it did? The forthcoming independence referendum is a hot topic north of the border with strong views frequently encountered. It surprises me that people can be so certain of their position given the complexity of factors that could influence their choice of vote. In the project of organising a society, a shared vision of what that project should be is a fundamental ingredient. However Scotland, like the rest of Europe, seems to lack such a shared vision. The Christian foundations of our civilisation have been jettisoned as outdated and unnecessary by a large portion of our society but most especially by the political classes. Therefore trying to envisage a state in present-day Scotland seems more of a pragmatic balance of factors rather than an organic development from a unified and coherent community. As modernity has developed, the context of communal living has become more focussed on the satisfaction of individual rights. These have obscured objective natural reason. Thus there has been created an environment for the imposition of values by those socially powerful rather than the genuine pursuit of the common good. At this time, therefore, I believe a pragmatic consideration of what could make that situation better is the task to be undertaken by those about to cast their vote.

A Catholic social teaching perspective naturally gives rise to considerations of subsidiarity and solidarity. The supporters of independence emphasise the importance of making decisions at the lowest level, whilst those in favour of the Union emphasise solidarity. A fuller consideration than balancing these two principles is necessary. This must involve a consideration of the constituent elements of any society; namely the family, civil society and political society.

The structure of society arises from the nature of the human person. The Church has endorsed the view that the family and political society are the two forms of social cooperation which arise from human nature, and that civil society consists of a myriad of intermediate societies that are more freely chosen. We need a family and an ordered society requires a political society – but we don't need to be a member of a golf club or trade union or to read a particular newspaper.

The complex of organisations and relationships that form civil society provide the environment in which we typically experience our everyday lives. A healthy civil society is marked by a flourishing of such groups and relationships freely cooperating in a spirit of solidarity.

The state is at the service of civil society and arises from it since, inevitably, there are clashes of interests at a civil level which need an authority to provide binding policies and laws to fairly resolve competing interests.

A free society of civilised people could generally expect to see that the intervention of political society is a light one given the priority of society over the element dedicated to its governance. Issues around work and the economy are so

fundamental to the wellbeing of society that a robust system of protection is required to ensure the powerful do not crush the weak in the drive for consumption and profit. Likewise, protecting people from those who are criminally motivated or dangerously reckless is an important aspect of government work. All too often, however, we think that political society can provide the solution to all sorts of problems for which they are poorly equipped. We have even witnessed the rise of the state as parent in the form of its determination in Scotland to give every child a state guardian.

The condition of civil society is an indicator of how well the state will perform in its task of coordinating and facilitating a free society. A society which gives too much power to political society undermines its own vitality. The modern state is ubiquitous in almost every facet of life. Many of the groups operating in civil society are in fact extensions of the state. The budget of many lobby groups can be found to consist largely of state funding. If not always directly funded then funded by being commissioned to provide 'services'. Also, statutory bodies take on lobbying roles using government money to identify specific elements of civil society and give the artificial prominence.

*“The supporters of independence emphasise the importance of making decisions at the lowest level whilst those in favour of the Union emphasise solidarity.”*

That's not how it should be and whether an independent Scotland will affect this should be a factor for consideration ahead of a vote.

In Scotland during the time of devolution we have seen a considerable effort to reshape the values of our society. This has included much effort from within the apparatus of government, both devolved and guided by Westminster, but it has also largely been done through the entertainment industry. The family as a life-giving cell has been crucially undermined and devalued such that children are frequently denied the presence and support of their parents. Abortion has been eagerly supported by services which should be dedicated to preserving health. The population continues to face a crisis sometime in the future due to the ageing of society. Perhaps continually increasing the pension age can keep ahead of the pension crises but there will inevitably be a health crisis when demand outstrips resources. How equipped is civil and political society in Scotland for influencing these issues and will it be for the better? These are problems facing many countries that have unwittingly embraced the culture of death. European politics has undoubtedly been an important part of that and our relationship with Europe needs to be assessed, as does the relationship with the current UK countries. How will it affect these issues? In addition, a new constitution will be created.



**“The questions to be considered ahead of a Yes or No vote do not have easy answers. The myriad of issues involved each require prudential judgements to be made.”**

Who is likely to have the influence in creating it and forging the institutions that will deliver democracy?

The questions to be considered ahead of a Yes or No vote do not have easy answers. The myriad of issues involved each require prudential judgements to be made. The political society presently guiding laws and policies in Scotland has done much damage to family and community life with efforts to reengineer our understanding of family life. Also the competencies of different areas of society have not been fully respected such that the state increasingly takes over the responsibilities that could be done at civil level or within the family. This is also a feature of European politics and evident within the United Kingdom. An important issue to consider is whether or not an independent Scotland will exacerbate such detrimental aspects of governance. There are, of course, good things being done by politicians at Holyrood and Westminster so it is not just about mitigating the bad but about making a choice which may allow more good to flourish.

An important aspect is also that of providing positive leadership. Society has a whole can lose its sense of right and wrong. It can become overly materialistic and at times the state has a duty to offer a corrective rather than just follow the flow of particular values in decline. This however depends on the state having a true understanding of the common good. Politicians in Scotland, for example, have pursued a ‘hearts and minds’ campaign to re-educate society on its understanding of sexuality; will a Scottish state rather than a United Kingdom state make that more or less likely to continue. The United Kingdom of course has played a pivotal role in enforcing unjust laws on equality such that religious freedom has been undermined.

The genuine concerns about economics, our relationship with our fellow UK countries and the wider world are all in need of assessment and have been the most common subject of contested claims.

This makes it a real test for those who take the responsibility of voting seriously. That no position has been given by the Church is in keeping with its respect for temporal authority and freedom of persons. Yet the Church does give much guidance on the values that must prevail in a society and on these we must ponder ahead of any political vote. ☩

*John Deighan is the Parliamentary Officer for the Bishops Conference of Scotland.*

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# The Poor and Pope Francis

“The poor” are very much at the heart of Pope Francis’ papacy. I am glad he spoke of the tragedy of the homeless dying on Rome’s streets; in Brighton one of our rough sleepers was crushed to death because he was sleeping in a large community rubbish bin and was dropped into a crusher.

In my Brighton parish there are a lot of poor people. We feed up to 75 hungry, often homeless people on the seafront every night and although we have problems paying for the maintenance of our Victorian buildings we have no problem finding money to feed the hungry. Parishioners are generous. Getting volunteers to help is a bit more difficult.

Working on the principle that it is better to teach a man to fish than give him a fish or a sandwich, people, like the local council, can criticise us for encouraging the poor rather than helping them to escape poverty. The problem is that this kind of extreme poverty is often part of a whole complex of problems that might include addiction, mental health issues, childhood abuse and family break-up.

Poverty forms a trap that it is almost impossible to escape from. It eats away at hope and tends to place someone in a community of those who are on the peripheries of society, in a state of permanent fear. Some of our foreign workers can end up living in squalor, five or six men and women sharing a room, exploited by their landlords, exploited by employers. If they are illegal then there is the constant fear of living as an ‘outlaw’ afraid to report abuses, even rape or other crimes, to the authorities, but then the same fears arise for drug users or alcoholics; the authorities are not perceived as being sympathetic to someone who needs to ‘shoot-up’ or drink regularly, whose only source of income is to sell drugs or their bodies.

As the mother of a multiple-handicapped child said to me, “it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of social services”. She is afraid to ask for too much, just in case both her children are taken into care because she can’t cope. Her daughter, who rarely sleeps at night, keeps both her mother and her brother up at night, so the boy often arrives late to school and sometimes falls asleep in class.

Another family who are from Eastern Europe live on what might have been described as a ‘sink estate’ and they are constantly harassed by some of their neighbours, filth put through the letter box, graffiti, that sort of thing. The mother and father are depressed, the bullying continues into the primary school for the child, so much so that their daughter is withdrawn and rather than look further the school suspected child abuse, in part because the history of it on the estate. There are reports of child prostitution and paedophile rings every so often in the papers. It is an environment of broken families, with a succession of stepfathers, and the early sexualisation of children.

Poverty brings fear and hopelessness unless, like the monk or nun, it has been voluntarily embraced. It is poverty that lies behind the other issue Pope Francis has been addressing from his first visit outside Rome to the island of Lampedusa. The reason for all

those countless deaths in the Mediterranean is an attempt to escape poverty. For a century the Popes have spoken about the wickedness of the vast gulf between rich and poor. Francis, like his immediate predecessors, seems willing to address the evils within our economic systems and the gulf between rich and poor nations. It is also one of the contributory factors to that other issue he seems to want to address, the alienation of the young unemployed. Some parts of Southern Europe have almost 50% youth unemployment, whereas in parts of Africa and South America it is almost total.

“Francis, like his immediate predecessors, seems willing to address the evils within our economic systems and the gulf between rich and poor nations.”

Although Christians might become social workers, that is not the vocation of most of us and the Church is not a Non-Governmental Organisation or NGO pushing through drastic social change, though again Christians have introduced radical social change, everything from the abolition of slavery to the promotion of education. The Catholic Church, besides being the biggest source of healthcare in the world, is also the largest non-governmental supplier of education. Yes, we believe in making the world a better place, but that is not our main purpose.

Jesus tells us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned. He doesn’t give rights to the hungry, naked, sick and imprisoned but he does impose obligations on his followers; he expects us to be generous, in the words of the Blessed Theresa of Calcutta, “to love until it hurts”. It is meanness and self-absorption that Jesus wants to cure in us by getting us to move beyond ourselves to the peripheries, to his Father and to others, this is the ultimate *metanoia*, or conversion, which is worshipping God ‘in Spirit and Truth’. The alternative to worshipping God is the worship of ourselves or, as Pope Francis puts it, ‘worshipping the devil’. We are called to move beyond ourselves, the Great Commandment is to love God, the second is ‘like unto it, to love one’s neighbour as oneself’. In the lives of the saints we see that love of God and neighbour brings a new quality to love of self, it is placed into an eternal dimension and removed from a neurotic self-obsession. It is this love, ‘Perfect love which casts out fear’ and sets us free.

St Thomas Aquinas, speaking of the *via media*, suggests that excessive poverty is the same as excessive wealth, it distorts and enslaves us. Being set free, liberated, through oneness with Jesus Christ, so that through him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, we might worship the Father is our ultimate end. It is not achieved through some clever scheme but begins with our own personal acceptance of the Gospel. To feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned is the beginning of this acceptance of the Gospel. ☩

*Father Ray Blake is the parish priest of St. Magdalen’s Church in Brighton. You can read his blog at [marymagdalen.blogspot.co.uk](http://marymagdalen.blogspot.co.uk)*

# Beware the Real Trojan Horse

While civil libertarians and family campaigners have been exercised by the proposed “Cinderella Law” in England and the “Named Person” legislation in Scotland, you’d be forgiven for having missed an insidious consultation being rushed through on the hush-hush in just six quiet weeks this summer.

The *Consultation for Promoting British Values in School* is a hastily thrown together set of amendments to the *Independent School Standards* (2013) which ensured all independent schools’ activities and teaching be informed by the 2010 *Equalities Act*. The consultation proposes strengthening the *Independent School Standards* regulations and extending these to all schools (state and independent), emphasising that a school’s “written policy, plans and schemes of work [...] must] not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.” Proposed changes would “provide a stronger basis for swift intervention in schools which are not actively promoting British values.” All of which sounds reasonable on the surface.

In the context of the consultation “British Values” are largely defined by the 2010 *Equalities Act*, already used as a big stick to beat Christians. The disingenuous use of “British Values” (or “values” at all) in this context exudes the whiff of Orwellian Newspeak. The “values” a school must actively support and promote include a positive view of transgender and gender reassignment, “marriage” in all state approved forms, and a plethora of sexual variants.

A Catholic secondary school teaching that marriage is between a man and a woman would be in direct contravention: FAIL. A Religious Education class teaching that *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus* would be in contravention: FAIL. Catholic teaching on abortion, transsexuality and gender also contravenes the Equalities Act agenda. A school that taught the faith with any degree of rigour would automatically fall foul. If you thought British Values might include fair play and cricket, think again.

The *Consultation for promoting British Values in School* was cobbled together in the wake of an investigation into the alleged commandeering by Islamists of some secular state schools in Birmingham. The most disturbing thing about the so-called “Trojan Horse” affair wasn’t that Muslims are teaching their children to be Muslims (we should be used to that) but rather the reports that followed on the back of the story of The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) inspections of Muslim independent schools in other areas.

Inspectors failed schools on “diversity” criteria based on young children declining to talk about their “attitudes to homosexuality”. One school asked the inspectors to leave, saying that it upset and unsettled the children to have a stranger enter the (primary) classroom and demand that the children talk about something they were uncomfortable with. A spokesman said “It was a kind of sex education lesson but by

untrained inspectors without the consent of parents or the school.” In a sane world this would be an entirely reasonable response: in what other situation could a complete stranger approach a group of young children and ask them about same sex attraction? OFSTED’s reply to the schools was robust: “The Independent School Standards, published by the Department for Education, set out that schools have a duty to teach pupils tolerance of different groups within society.” Why then, the school asked, did inspectors focus on same-sex attraction to the exclusion of race and disability?

Clearly the inspectors went in with an agenda, and a more robust set of tools to forward this agenda in *all* British schools is heading our way.

An “emergency inspection” of an independent traditionalist Catholic school was made at the request of the Department of Education shortly after the Independent school guidelines came into force. The request was made by the DoE to “check the school’s compliance with the independent school regulations for ... ensuring that balanced views are presented in teaching”. The school was found to be lacking in “balance” of political views (in other words a laudable dearth of moral relativism). A follow-up inspection published in 2014 reported that “at the time of the emergency inspection, the head teacher was unaware of the regulations regarding the promotion of partisan political views in teaching... This issue has now been appropriately addressed... The regulation is now met.” One can only imagine that the school has found a Jesuitical solution to this problem. Whether larger and less rigorously Catholic state schools would be motivated to find a solution rather than capitulating is more of a worry.

Moral teachings have always been the front line of conflict between Catholic schools and state regulators: the difference now is that what is proposed would give the state powers that it didn’t have before.

Whilst the ostensible motivation for this is to stop radicalisation of young British Muslims, it is difficult to believe that OFSTED inspectors would not prefer to pick the lower-hanging, easier and less controversial fruit. Catholic schools will be a quick win.

In reality what this will mean more ground conceded to the government’s “Equalities” agenda: the guidelines state that schools will have to demonstrate not only that they do not contravene the 2010 Equalities Act but that they “actively promote” and support it. Although this may have been the de-facto reality until now, the proposed legislation will allow swift enforcement of any transgressions: the government’s bark will have a bite. The real Trojan horse in the Birmingham affair is the imposition on schoolchildren of a radical liberal agenda lurking behind a thin veneer of “British Values”. 🍷

*Antonia Robinson is a home-educating mother of four and lives in London.*



# Pope Francis and the Way of Reform

Reform is filling the autumn air here in Rome. The first modification to Pastor Bonus, the 1988 pastoral constitution that regulates the functions and tasks of the offices of the Roman Curia, came on July 9 with the transfer of the ordinary section of the Administration for the Patrimony of the Apostolic See (APSA) to the Secretariat for Economy. Other modifications are yet to come. At a first glance, such reforms will mostly be an internal and aimed at creating a better functioning Roman Curia. So the new draft of Pastor Bonus will change structures but not the fundamental purpose of the Curia.

When they met for their pre-conclave meetings back in 2013, the College of Cardinals focused much of their discussion on the dysfunctionality of the Roman Curia. Many of them asked for more participation on the part of cardinals living beyond Rome in the Curia's decision making processes. Others stressed the need to restore the battered image of the Church through better communications. So, to a large extent, Pope Francis is presently merely following the promptings of those pre-conclave meetings.

Hence his appointment of a Council of Cardinals to advise him on curial reform; hence, the establishment of two Pontifical Commissions of Reference for both the Institute for Religious Works (CRIOR) and the Vatican's economic administration (COSEA); hence, the first decisions of reform, which mostly dealt with economic issues; hence, finally, the establishment of a committee to study how best to re-organise Vatican communications. This will probably lead to the establishment of a new umbrella body which will, for the first time, gather together all the branches of Vatican communication and, finally, push the Holy See into the digital age.

Cardinal George Pell from Australia is the real star of the show since he has been taking on much of the burden of the initial reforms. He is the Prefect of the Secretariat for Economy which Pope Francis established together with a Council for the Economy (composed by eight cardinals and seven lay people) on February 24 when the Motu Proprio "Fidelis Dispensator et Prudens" was promulgated.

So here are the most significant changes: APSA has been divided in two sections, the "ordinary" and the "extraordinary". The first manages the real estate of the Vatican (in the end, trivial accounting) while the second takes care of the financial side of things.

The ordinary section has been transferred to the Secretariat for the Economy under the capable watch of Australian layman Danny Casey. He was the right-hand man to Cardinal Pell for many years at the Archdiocese of Sydney. In Rome, Casey will be in charge of project management.

The extraordinary section will be shaped so that it will eventually function as a real "Central Bank". Its assets will be

transferred to a new body entitled The Vatican Asset Management. This will also manage the assets of the Institute for Religious Works. Those IOR reforms will take three years and should make of the so-called "Vatican Bank" a financial services body rather than one with a portfolio of assets.

To carry out the IOR reforms, a new lay board, entitled the Council of Superintendence, has been established. The new president is a Frenchman by the name of Jean Baptiste de Franssu, an expert in mergers and acquisitions. The board is to be composed of five others. At the moment, the members of the new board include Mary-Ann Glendon from the USA, Clemens Boersig of Germany and Britain's Sir Michael Hitze. The two remaining vacancies will be filled in the coming months.

Proposals for the reform of the Vatican's media branch will be made within 12 months by a committee appointed for that very purpose. Their remit is to bring in more revenue from the Vatican's media and to bring it up to date in the way it communicates with the wider world. The two recent successes that could give a hint of things to come include the Holy Father's Twitter account and the popular "Pope App". The committee is to be chaired by Lord Chris Patten. The former Conservative MP is also Chancellor of Oxford University and, until this year, was chairman of the BBC. He will work alongside Monsignor Paul Tighe, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication, as well as with a panel of lay experts drawn from around the world.

Meanwhile, another committee will work on the reform of the Vatican pension fund under the coordination of Monsignor Brian Ferme, the Prelate Secretary of the Council for Economy.

The ultimate goal is to cut costs and streamline processes. In their five meetings, the cardinals have discussed several hypotheses for streamlining the Roman Curia. There is already a freeze on hiring at the Secretariat of State. There could follow a merging of several congregations and pontifical councils.

All these matters will be discussed by the Council of Cardinals when they next meeting September 15-17 in Rome. 📍

*Andrea Gagliarducci is an Italian journalist. He is the Catholic News Agency's Vatican analyst.*

# Recovering the Sung Mass

What hymns shall we choose for Mass? When preparing the Liturgy for a particular celebration, this is commonly the key question that is addressed. It may be the organist who chooses the hymns for a parish Mass, the class teacher for a school Mass, the family for a funeral. The priest might put his foot down and ban the use of hymns that contain doctrinal errors: the one where Jesus is reported as saying “I am with you in this bread and wine” for example. The organist might try to move the parish away from the ones that have six verses and only one word changes in each verse. At school, the repertoire might be limited to a dozen or so songs that became popular in the seventies and eighties. This is justified by the circular reasoning that “the children know them.” (How did they get to know them then?)

Much heat is generated by discussing which hymns are better: because they are popular, because they are theologically deeper, because they make people clap their hands and smile, because they evoke sentiments of devotion, or because someone like Blessed John Henry Newman, St Ambrose or St Thomas Aquinas wrote them. My purpose is not to contribute to this discussion but to call the whole process into question. When we ask “What hymns shall we choose for Mass?” there are two problematic words: “hymns” and “choose.”

Few people involved in preparing the Liturgy for Mass, whether in parishes or schools, or even, sadly, many Diocesan events, realise that the Church has already chosen the music for Mass, and it does not include hymns. The second Vatican Council urged that these texts be sung, as has every official document since the Council. Fatally, an exception was made to the effect that if it is impossible to sing the texts, another suitable chant or song (*alius cantus aptus*) may be sung in place of the texts. Well-meaning though it may have been, this get-out clause has effected the almost complete disappearance of sung Mass in parishes. We do not normally sing the Mass, we sing things at the Mass, hymns that have no relation to the liturgical prayers of the Mass. Liturgy commissions used to produce guides (perhaps they still do) with a selection of hymns that had some tangential relevance to the readings, but never to the texts of the introit, gradual, offertory or communion, for which they were meant to be apt replacements. It is also worth noting on the subject of the readings, that these are universally called “readings” and are virtually never sung. Yet in a sung Mass, they should be.

The first objection to actually singing the Mass is that it is impossible. Never mind that many parishes managed to sing Mass properly when all the texts had to be sung in Latin, it is now apparently an unattainable dream to sing them in English. In fact there is a structural problem in that even the official texts seem to assume that it is impossible. The Typical Edition of the Roman Missal and its vernacular translations do not include the texts of the offertory chants, and the lectionaries offer only the option of the Responsorial Psalm. This, of course, can be sung and is one of the parts of the Mass that is sung more often, but few people know that singing the Gradual is a legitimate alternative.

The second objection is that there is no setting for the texts of the Mass in English. Actually that is no longer true since various musicians have now made musical settings available free of charge on the internet. It may be difficult for many choirs to jump from singing hymns to singing introits, but a start can easily be made by singing the texts to a simple psalm tone. The advantage of doing so is immediately apparent: rather than choosing an opening hymn, and later arguing about whether it was too happy-clappy or too sombre, the choir simply sings what is set for the Mass of the day. Nobody is going to say “Hey, that was a great introit!” but equally, nobody coming into the Church off the street is going to think that anything else is going on but the worship of God.

“Few people involved in preparing the Liturgy for Mass, whether in parishes or schools, or even, sadly, many Diocesan events, realise that the Church has already chosen the music for Mass, and it does not include hymns”

Parish music directors may need our understanding in this matter. Quite often it is the priest who has determined which hymns are to be sung, at the same time ruling out the possibility of a properly sung Mass by himself refusing to sing the orations, the preface, or indeed the gospel. The Christian tradition of singing the sacred Liturgy, a hallmark of Christian worship from antiquity, has largely been replaced by saying the Liturgical prayers and singing something else. It is a painful irony that this has been accomplished in the name of liturgical reform.

The genuine reform of restoring the sung Mass is a challenge for parishes because there has been little official encouragement of it. A sprinkling of random hymns and perhaps the singing of the ordinary is a comfort zone from which it is going to be difficult to shift parish priests, or indeed many bishops. I am sure it would be a powerful motivation for many if they were to realise that singing the texts of the Mass would mean that there need be no further arguments about which hymns should be chosen. A deeper motivation is provided if we consider that it is integral to the Liturgy down the ages that it be sung, and that such sacred chant powerfully aids the genuine participation of the faithful in worshipping God in spirit and in truth. ☩

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# Ancient and Modern: The Gospel and Cultures

The last few weeks I have been closely engaged with the people and scholars of two ancient cultures – that of Egypt and of Mughal India. This has raised afresh for me the question about the relationship of the Gospel to culture.

In Egypt, I found among the students insistent issues being raised about the nature of Egyptian society and the direction which it is taking. There is noticeable interest in Egypt's Pharaonic and, to a lesser extent, its Christian past. There are musings about Egypt's contribution to the emergence of monotheism via henotheism (where only one god is worshipped, even if the existence of other gods is not denied) and its possible influence on the Israelites. I was told, again and again, that there was now a movement of atheism in Egypt.

How are Christians to bear witness in this context? Should they see the Gospel as fulfilling themes and motifs in ancient Egypt or as a break from them? Should the old Coptic heritage be emphasised as exemplifying the importance of Christianity for Egypt or should new approaches be developed which express the Gospel in Muslim categories of thought and the use of Islamic terminology, whether orthodox or Sufi? Different answers are given to these questions by clergy, scholars, field-workers and students. Are such approaches at least potentially complementary or are they in conflict and mutually exclusive?

After returning from Egypt, I went to speak at an academic conference on Islamic India. Apart from my own contribution, and a few others, the emphasis here was, very much on the form of the art, how it was produced, who the artists were and their social context, rather than its message. Much of the literature that was being discussed came from Sufism or Islamic Mysticism but, again, the focus was on how the writings of leading Sufis revealed the kind of society in which they lived and the relationships between Muslims and Hindus. There was a marked reluctance to refer to the spiritual message of these Sufis, the nature of their experiences and of mysticism itself. There was little desire to compare them with mystics of other traditions and times or even to discuss serious debate within Sufism itself.

This alerted me to an aspect of 'religious illiteracy' which is so ubiquitous in our society. It is not only politicians and civil servants who display such 'illiteracy'. It is found at the heart of academia itself and among the very people, historians, social scientists and literary experts, who might be expected to have a special interest in it. And yet, my own paper which overtly discussed theological themes and spiritual subjects was widely welcomed by the audience, if not always by the experts themselves!

The other issue is, of course, that if there is a steadfast refusal to discuss the theological and spiritual dimensions of a subject, how are we to bring the Christian faith to bear on it? An example of this might be the coming anniversary of Magna Carta. If this is seen simply as a struggle between a somewhat venal monarch and aggrieved barons, the Church's role in promoting basic

liberties is completely obscured, as is the significance of Magna Carta for religious freedom in this country.


In our relationship with cultures it seems that a number of factors need to be borne in mind: sometimes (often?) it might be right to follow the wise advice of Pope Gregory the Great to that timid and novice missionary, St Augustine of Canterbury. He should not destroy, says Gregory, but purify the culture through the influence of the Gospel and put it to Christian use (Pope Benedict said much the same regarding the Church's historic relationship with Hellenism and, in principle, with any culture). Christian missionaries in Mughal India were constantly trying to present the Christian faith not only by writing in Persian (the language of the Court) but also by telling the Christian story, for example, through the painting of miniatures, a notable art form at the time. On the other hand, there is St Boniface, the English apostle to the Germans, who based his missionary approach on challenging and destroying superstition and its hold over people, denying them their God-given freedom.

*"In such an engagement, the Church and its message is itself 'contextualised' but never in a way that diminishes or compromises the Word of God, of which the Church is custodian but not master."*

In fact, the two approaches are complementary and, in every culture, we have to discern what to affirm and what to oppose. Both attitudes are, however, for the sake of transforming the culture so that in Christ it finds its true centre and fulfilment. In such an engagement, the Church and its message is itself 'contextualised' but never in a way that diminishes or compromises the Word of God, of which the Church is custodian but not master. Such a properly contextualised church will be at home in a particular culture (although never completely identified with it) but it will also be recognisable as authentically evangelical and catholic by all the other churches and the world-wide Church as a whole.

In a secularised age, therefore, we have to begin one step further back. There is the need, first of all, for people to recognise the spiritual dimension of their study, profession or way of life. Only then can it connect with the Gospel which will both affirm what is godly in a particular culture but also critique and challenge what denies God's purpose for humanity or for the world which he has created.

Our prayer would be that such an encounter will lead both to the transformation of the culture but also of God's people within it.

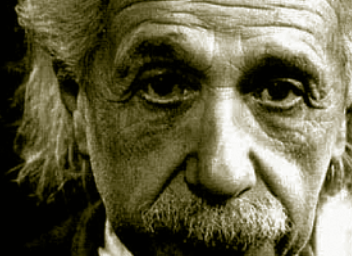
*Michael Nazir-Ali is the Emeritus Anglican Bishop of Rochester. He is currently the Director of the Oxford Centre for Training, Research, Advocacy and Dialogue. *





# Cutting Edge

## Science and Religion News



By Dr Gregory Farrelly

### Cosmological Blunders

As a physics teacher, my heart always sinks when I have to teach cosmology. The reason is that, unlike the rest of physics, we cannot do experiments on the whole universe; also, the observational data obtained comes from such a very small part of the universe's history, rendering it difficult to extrapolate backward or forward in time with any certainty. Imagine aliens with no experience of human lifeforms observing a boy aged 9. They take measurements every hour for a year, a huge amount of data. In that year the boy's height might increase from 134 to 138 cm, i.e. 4 cm per year. Much of cosmological theory is like the aliens extrapolating that in 50 years this 'boy' will become 200 cm (i.e. 50 times 4 cm) taller, a height of 338 cm, or about 11 feet! I always caution my students to be careful, therefore, about the conclusions of cosmology. Another real problem for cosmology is that our present knowledge of matter-energy only accounts for about 4% of what we find from observation in the universe; about 21% is very weakly interacting 'dark matter' and the remaining 75% 'dark energy', 'dark' here meaning undetectable.

In the June edition of *Nature*, Paul Steinhardt highlights the dangers when scientists attract media attention without having first satisfied the necessary rigorous scientific analysis. A group of cosmologists announced at a press conference in March that they had detected gravitational waves, arising from the immediate aftermath of the Big Bang. This news became a sensation in the media,<sup>1</sup> the results being hailed as proof of the Big Bang inflationary theory and of the existence of the 'multiverse'.

A team of astrophysicists had used the BICEP2 South Pole telescope to identify a pattern in the polarisation maps of the cosmic microwave background radiation (rather like an echo of the Big Bang). They concluded that there was evidence of primordial gravitational waves. However, serious problems regarding the data

analysis have put their findings into question. Other effects, such as light scattering from cosmic dust and the synchrotron radiation generated by electrons moving around galactic magnetic fields within our own galaxy, can also produce these polarisation twists. The BICEP2 instrument cannot distinguish the cosmic contribution from other sources directly, so, measurements of galactic dust collected by other sources, such as the Planck satellites were used. When the BICEP2 team did its analysis, the Planck dust map had not yet been published, so the team extracted data from a preliminary map that had been presented several months earlier. However, a reanalysis at Princeton has concluded that the BICEP2 pattern could be the result of effects that are non-gravitational.<sup>2</sup> The fiasco resulting from the press conference is a reminder that announcements should be made after submission to peer-reviewed journals with enough detail to allow independent verification.

The 'multiverse' hypothesis arises from a particular view of quantum mechanics, in which the outcomes of an event have a certain probability. Here, a correct set of results can be obtained by positing that each possible outcome occurs in a separate universe or 'multiverse'. The observer is 'stuck' in a particular multiverse, unable to detect the existence of other multiverses. The multiverse theory is particularly appealing to atheist scientists as it contradicts the 'anthropic principle', the idea that our universe is 'fine-tuned' for humanity, a view espoused by *Faith*. In the multiverse explanation, our universe is merely one that has the parameters that are, by definition, necessary for human observation, but billions of other multiverses exist in which the parameters are different and in which human life would be impossible. In this view, our multiverse is not 'special', it is merely the one in which we happen to be.

Gravitational waves result from "inflation" of the early universe, an exponential expansion of space in the first fraction of a second of the Big Bang, 14 billion years ago. Inflation and dark energy cannot be accounted for easily using known physics,

but if our 'universe' is merely one of millions of multiverses, this could account for the fact that particular values of the dark energy are weaker than one might otherwise have supposed. In many cosmological models, if there is inflation, there is a multiverse.

Steinhardt points out that inflationary theory in cosmology is supposed to be highly predictive, yet in this set of observations the realisation that gravitational waves have not actually been detected seems not to have caused any doubt about the theory. Some advocates of the theory state that it is so flexible that it is immune to experimental/observational tests for two reasons:

1. Inflation is driven by a hypothetical scalar field with properties that can be adjusted to effectively produce any outcome.
2. Inflation does not result in a universe with uniform properties, but a multiverse with an infinite number of 'bubbles' in which the cosmic and physical properties vary from bubble to bubble. Scanning over all possible bubbles in the multiverse, everything that can physically happen does happen.

This means that no experiment can falsify a theory since it allows for all possible outcomes. The fundamental problem here is that an unfalsifiable theory is unscientific. Indeed Steinhardt concludes that "it is clear that the inflationary paradigm is fundamentally untestable, and hence scientifically meaningless".<sup>4</sup>

Once again, the importance of philosophy, and particularly of metaphysics, is evident. When physicists arrogate to themselves a philosophical knowledge that they do not possess, problems will arise, doing damage to the reputation of science. ☸

*Dr Gregory Farrelly is a physics teacher at Cambridge Tutors College, Croydon.*

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>*Nature* 507, 281–283; 2014.

<sup>2</sup>R. Flauger, J. C. Hill and D. N. Spergel, preprint at <http://arxiv.org/abs/1405.7351>; 2014.

<sup>3</sup><http://bicepkeck.org/visuals.html>

<sup>4</sup>*Nature* 507, 281–283; 2014.



# Book Reviews

## The Universe Wakes Up

*Mind and Cosmos – Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature is Almost Certainly False* by Thomas Nagel, Oxford University Press, 130pp., £14.91.

"The aim of this book is to argue that the mind-body problem is not just a local problem, having to do with the relation between mind brain and behaviour in living organisms, but that it invades our understanding of the entire cosmos and its history." This opening sentence in Nagel's introduction promises much. Do these brilliant words flatter to deceive? Does Nagel convince the reader that the question of the distinction between matter and mind is the key question of the day for scientists, philosophers and theologians with regards to the meaning of life?

To this reviewer's delight he fulfils this mandate in the most excellent way. The book, and especially the introduction, should be required reading for those interested in this topic. Its shortness is an asset – 126 pages – and the views expressed are easy to understand, with the value of logical conclusions from first principles. It is also not too ambitious in its aims.

The context of the subtitle is Nagel's view that we are in an environment where scientific naturalism rules. In such a climate he does not understand the faith in such an explanation of the universe. He allows many speculative possibilities, some of which he admits to being far-fetched, but with regard to Neo-Darwinism he is categorical. The system is "a heroic triumph of

ideological theory over common sense," incapable of providing an adequate account of our universe. He is an atheist but is totally convinced that the answer will not be found in a view where the world is seen as only material. Through science Nagel acknowledges that he has come to the biggest questions in philosophy and theology and sees it as a given that that world is mental as well as physical. He asks in what way is man matter and mind, and what is the process that leads to the creation of such a creature?

The book centres around his treatment of consciousness, thought and reasoning, and value, that is, the control and assessment of conduct. Each of these is looked at from two points of view. The historical account explains how phenomena arise in the universe from its beginnings. The constitutive deals with how certain complex physical systems are also mental. Each of these then is looked at to see if one can hold a reductive and/or emergent account of its creation. A reductive account explains the mental character of complex organisms in terms of their elementary constituents. The emergent account explains the mental character of the same complex organisms in a way that does not totally ground the mind in the elements that constitute the organism.

Nagel reasons from principles which are more in line with common sense and empirical evidence than deep philosophical theory. His view can be summarised beautifully in the best phrase in the book: "The universe gradually wakes up and becomes aware of itself." Science presumes an intelligible underlying order; and also, given that the human mind is directly related to the natural order and thus to the whole of the cosmos, this relatedness means that the world cannot be accidental. We know that we know, that we are truly in contact with the real. This is due to reason. It is reason that takes man outside of his subjective world and into the cosmos. Also man recognises value in its own

right and acts in accord with it, not just from a subjective viewpoint or as a result of social conditioning.

Nagel has one principle that inhibits a view of God being the answer to the meaning of the cosmos. Nagel is not interested in an answer coming from outside the created world. We see this clearly in his "ungrounded intellectual preference" to the question in hand, the teleological hypothesis. This view is that there is a cosmic disposition to the formation of life, consciousness and value. If he allows for the existence of God, it is one who creates a self-contained natural order which is then left undisturbed. Reason, while of the mind, is also inseparable from the physical life of the organisms that have it. He believes that the disadvantage of theism is that it does not give a comprehensive account of the natural world. Theists push the quest for intelligibility outside the world. For Nagel, this does not ground the intelligibility of the natural order.

What truly fulfils man's heart and makes him intelligible, and thus the whole universe? Is it possible that phrased this way Nagel, using his common sense, could see that nothing in the universe satisfies? It is with God that the mystery of man and of the whole universe is revealed. As St. Irenaeus puts it, "The glory of God is man fully alive". Also Nagel sees evil as part of the make up of the world. For Blessed John Henry Newman and G.K. Chesterton, the original goodness of creation and the doctrine of the fall is, once again, common sense.

"The existence of conscious minds and their access to valid values are among that data that a theory of the world and our place in it has yet to explain." Nagel does not have a verifiable solution to the mind-body. While Man is a mystery to the science of today, Nagel knows that for the intelligibility of the cosmos there needs to be an answer to this mystery. He is a witness to how science is looking for answers about the world and is having

**“The authors show how parental choice of school is not just the best way to improve education but is a parental right.”**

to deal with philosophical and religious questions. Fundamentally, the book is a vindication of the Faith Movement’s approach of offering a synthesis of science and religion. Nagel clearly is not conversant with the Faith Movement vision, as it was not included in his explanation of the various views on the subject in hand. Someone needs to fill him in.

**John Boyle**

### **What Our Schools Need**

*Catholic Education in the West: Roots, Reality and Revival* by Christiaan Alting von Geusau and Philip Booth. Foreword by the Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna. Acton Institute Christian Social Thought Series. 86 pp. Kindle Edition £1.91.

The distinguished Cardinal Schönborn is frank in the Foreword of this book: “the period following the Second Vatican Council was one of confusion in ... the Church, ... not least in the educational sphere ... teachers, professors, and administrators lacked an adequate understanding of their role as evangelists, charged with transmitting the faith to the next generation. Parents, who were accustomed to trusting the Church’s educational institutions, too often had their trust betrayed.” His Eminence’s apology is timely and important since, to make improvement, any institution has to admit its mistakes.

At the heart of this most important little book is what *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: “the right and duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable. As those responsible for the education of their children, parents have the right to choose a school for them which corresponds to their own convictions.” These rights are enshrined in Canon Law: “Parents have also the duty and the right to choose those means and institutes which...can best promote the Catholic education of their children ... Parents must have a real freedom in their choice of schools.”

The monograph lays down principles about Catholic education, as outlined by the Popes over the years: “It is vital for the Catholic school to have a great deal of independence from the state to pursue a mission that is truly Catholic in all aspects ...”

The authors show how fundamental to all the arguments is the principle of subsidiarity clearly stated by Pope Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno*. It ought to be well known, though Catholic leaders tend to give it mere lip service rather than an attentive observation: “it is an injustice and a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organisations can do.... The supreme authority of the State ought to let subordinate groups handle matters and concerns of lesser importance.”

The authors show how parental choice of school is not just the best way to improve education but is a parental right. They quote the Second Vatican Council: “Government must acknowledge the right of parents to make a genuinely free choice of school”. The authors also quote from *Gaudium et Spes* on the importance of the family: “The family is a kind of school of humanity ... The active presence of the father is highly beneficial to the formation of the children. These children, especially the younger among them, need the care of their mother at home”. Going back to Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum*, they quote that important encyclical’s statement that “The contention that the civil government should at its option intrude into and exercise intimate control over the family is a great and pernicious error.”

The authors have the general principle that there should be “less state and more parent with a supporting Church.” The conclusions follow logically from the argument and should not surprise anyone, though, with the state of Catholic education as it is in England, they will seem radical: First, money directed through parents, e.g. via, a

voucher, will be better than direct funding of institutions by the state; secondly, a legal right for parents to receive funding from the state that would be spent on their education would be even more robust; thirdly tax relief for private funding would not lead to the full cost of private schooling being met by the state but would at least make it easier for families to be able to afford an education of their choice; fourthly, Catholic dioceses should not regard it as their role to make “compacts” with the state; rather should they defend the autonomy of schools and parents; Catholic dioceses should be concerned to ensure freedom when it comes to the qualifications that schools can use, as well as in the development of curricula; homeschooling should not be discouraged.

So much has Catholic education declined in recent years, and so much has the state taken over, that these conclusions which would have seemed obvious to our grandparents now seem innovative.

**Eric Hester**

### **Joyful Incarnational Faith**

*These Beautiful Bones: An Everyday Theology of the Body* by Emily Stimpson. Emmaus Road Publishing USA, 2013 £7.99p. Available on Amazon and on Kindle.

Crisply written, with a zesty and refreshing style, this is a challenging look at John Paul II’s “Theology of the Body”. And for those who thought that the TOB was just another way of presenting the Church’s teaching on sexual morality a sort “Can-we-serve-it-with-ketchup?” way of making timeless teaching seem interesting, this book will be a wake-up call.

Essentially, the author makes the point that ours is an incarnational faith: our bodies matter. Respecting our human bodies, and all that goes with them – our ability to see things, enjoy them, to work, to cook, to make and mend and





## Book Reviews continued

sing and write and play – is central to our faith and to our attitude to God and to one another.

Thus she tackles things like sexual morality, how we dress, our attitude to human beauty, and our ideas about food and hospitality. Nothing twee here, nothing bleak or forbidding either – instead this book's message is a celebration of life and love, written with common sense, an attitude of reverence, and an evidently joyful faith in Christ and a love of his Church.

And while making the point about God's gifts to us, she sees the sacramental message that is written into creation itself: "Food is and always will be a sign built into the order of creation, physical nourishment that illuminates and spiritual nourishment we receive in Holy Communion ... the more we see food in that light – the more we see it as a perpetual sign of God's goodness and love – the more fully we can understand the Eucharist as a holy and tremendous sacrifice in which love and gift, grace and life are bound up together."

And this in turn leads on to a useful discussion about generosity, gratitude, hospitality, and also fasting, feasting, thanksgiving, and about gluttony.

Stimpson writes as a modern woman who sees things as they really are: hence, on the subject of clothing she makes the point that a priest in a clerical collar is saying "Hey, world, I'm a priest", and a policeman in uniform is saying "Hey, world, I'm a cop". So a middle-aged man in "baggy jeans and a grungy teeshirt" is saying something like "Hey world, I'm a slacker. I'm not ready to be grown-up yet", while a girl in a micro-miniskirt with stilletos and a plunging neckline is saying something like "I don't know my own dignity or how precious I am to God. I'm wounded. Please wound me some more."

And Stimpson goes on: "Maybe the guy isn't a slacker. Maybe the girl isn't a slut. They may think they're conveying

something entirely different by what they've chosen to wear. They may not think they're conveying much of anything. But like the policeman and the priest, they're wearing the uniform, so it's understandable why the people might get that impression".

Traditionalists who like to see morality as a series of rules with messages about bending one's will creakingly into line with stern teachings will not like this book very much – or, rather, they will like it, and they will know it makes sense, but they will try very hard to dislike it because it presents the Catholic and incarnational message in a John Paul II sort of way. Some have tried to downgrade the Theology of the Body and suggest that Saint John Paul's message of the glory of the nuptial messages in Scriptures and in the Eucharist is somehow all wrong and that anything to do with bodies in general and marital union in particular should be phrased in more coy ways and/ or presented with a stronger dose of reminders about Hell and the dangers of sexual sin. But this is to miss the point. God's plan for the human race "from the beginning" is a nuptial plan, a plan that is profoundly incarnational, and a plan that invites our co-operation, for our happiness here and in the hereafter.

Emily Stimpson's book has a joyful "Pollyanna" tone to it: in her descriptions of how a hectic and necessary time of housework helped to cure heartache, or how a true understanding of motherhood and fatherhood enriches all our lives, or why good friendships mean so much, one can sense the joyfulness of a life lived with Christ. This is a message our bleak lonely culture needs. I'd like to get her speaking to some of our Catholic events and conferences here, and I will certainly be using this book in my own work at Confirmation classes and similar gatherings ... and remembering its message when talking with friends (and foes!) about our Incarnate God.

**Joanna Bogle**

## Questions and Moments

*New Evangelisation – Passing on the Catholic Faith Today* by Cardinal Donald Wuerl, *Our Sunday Visitor Inc.*, 92pp, £3.40.

The fruits of the Year of Faith are already showing in parishes, and a growing contingent of the Catholic Church, seemingly across all generations, is waking to the universal call to evangelise. A Church increasingly well catechised on "Why evangelise?" seems now to look hungrily for an answer to the question "How to evangelise?", how to be part of the New Evangelisation.

In his recent publication, Cardinal David Wuerl sets out the main teaching points from the synod of Bishops called by Pope Benedict XVI on this subject. Cardinal Wuerl certainly covers the ground when it comes to forming a definition of the New Evangelisation, using a 'key-notes' approach, with user-friendly boxes of bite-size summaries. With a topic so central to the life of the Church and so necessary to our Faith, this book seems just to break the surface; each chapter feels but an introduction to its subject, giving us only little tasty bits of teaching. However, these inspire us to look for the depth of the original documents it so often quotes.

Interestingly, I feel the real value of this book lies in the small questions Cardinal Wuerl asks at the end of each chapter, laid out as points 'For Reflection'. Readers are gently led into considering their own spiritual life, challenged into being honest with their current efforts to evangelise, and invited to analyse the general culture of society. These could be the first steps into taking up an active life of evangelisation, and in this way the book itself is a work of evangelisation: tilling the hearts that read it and then planting little seeds that ultimately stand a greater chance of taking root. Excuse the metaphor.

This book is attractive as it sets itself out as an informative guide to understanding the recent synod on the New

**“Readers are gently led into considering their own spiritual life, challenged into being honest with their current efforts to evangelise and invited to analyse the general culture of society.”**

Evangelisation; however, it in fact achieves elements similar to spiritual direction and on the whole is rather more formative than informative.

One is taught as much by the phrasing and posing of these unassuming questions, as by the content of the main text. A good question really does teach as well as a good answer; and so it goes perhaps with evangelisation.

The preface opens with a couple of stories describing encounters between Cardinal Wuerl and strangers happened to be seated next to him on different aeroplane journeys. His openness to speaking and listening resulted in beautiful ‘chance’ conversations about the life of Christ and the Eucharist. Something we all hope to be ready for, and it is wonderful to see the example of the clergy in these moments of one-to-one evangelisation.

However, little did I think that when sitting on the plane, reading his book, the passenger next to me would lean over and say, “I hope you don’t mind me interrupting but I couldn’t help but notice what you were underlining in your book. Would you mind me asking: who is God for you?”

Two and a half hours later we had covered everything from his abrupt departure from the Catholic Church, his journey into Buddhism but his continuing lack of satisfaction. Asking me open questions such as “What is prayer?” he shared how inspiring it was to meet someone of Faith.

On leaving the plane I handed him a miraculous medal and he told me gleefully, “I shouldn’t even be here”. Showing me his ticket number, “They moved me to sit next to you. I’m not sure why, but I’m very glad they did”.

So, perhaps this book should come with a health warning: “Read at your own risk; may induce moments of evangelisation.”

**Lucy Mackain-Bremner**

# 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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# Emails to the Editor

Contact: [editor@faith.org.uk](mailto:editor@faith.org.uk)

## A RESPONSE TO FR HAYES

*Dear Editor,*

I thank Fr Simon Hayes for his constructive response (letters, June 2014) to my positing of “mind as a metaphysical first principle” such that “being-known-by-mind is a relationship constitutive of and causative of a creaturely thing”. Crucially however this is to say more than the affirmation of Pieper, Sartre and Aquinas that “things only have an essential nature only in so far as they are fashioned by thought.” For this does not imply existential causation of a thing, which dynamic is placed in the non-essential realm by these thinkers. Hence the failure of Sartre to apply the analogy of an artefact’s contingency upon a human mind to “natural things” contingency upon the divine Mind. I would agree with Fr Hayes that the resultant de-naturing of things has led to the “abolition of man”.

For Pieper, Sartre and Aquinas the primary metaphysical foundation of created things is not intelligent and free mind but an existentiality which transcends intelligible essentiality. In my understanding of the FAITH vision the transcendent principle of intelligible physical natures (and simultaneously their existentiality) is mind not an intrinsically supra-intelligible Act of Existence. Existentiality flows from spiritual mind, the metaphysical first principle. Even artefacts have an analogous “existence” as exhibited by the way we talk about them. Because such existence is intrinsically intelligible to man and dependent upon human intelligence, by analogy we are enabled to affirm the divine mind and Creator of the whole cosmos.

*Fr Hugh MacKenzie  
Bayswater*

## THE DEFAMING OF PIUS XII

*Dear Editor,*

William Oddie is correct in his well-balanced critical analysis of not only the writing of John Cornwell but also his liberal agenda especially when it comes to such easy targets for the secularist mindset like Pius XII. Cornwell’s hyperbole even in choosing to call his book ‘Hitler’s Pope’ not only beggars belief but is crass beyond words. Cornwell is not alone either for one is reminded of the exaggerated claim made by former editor of the Catholic Herald Gerard Noel, in his book ‘Pius XII the Hound of Hitler’ which also claims that Archbishop Pacelli, the then Apostolic Nuncio in Munich 1919, gave ‘a considerable sum of Church funds’ to a ‘young man (who) had grave need of funds for his fledgling political party.’

The young man in question according to Noel whose own source is “Hitler’s Pope. The Secret History of Pius XII” (not exactly an unbiased title) ‘was Adolf Hitler’. Assisting a beggar at the door of the Nunciature (even if it was Corporal Hitler) is hardly tantamount to bankrolling a political activist and in any case the post First World War charitable activities of Archbishop Pacelli in Berlin and throughout Germany were the precursor to the establishment of what would eventually become the Institute of Religious Works (aka ‘Vatican Bank’) under the direct supervision of the nun who ran Pacelli’s household before and after his election as pope.

A recent review in the Catholic Herald of Garry O’Connor’s *The Butcher of Poland* about Hans Frank rightly describes as “shameful” the slur against Pius XII of which O’Connor accuses “the future Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli ... (as being) smitten by Hitler in 1919” and that “he even went so far as to bankroll him.”

The reviewer describes O’Connor’s accusation as “an abiding and unpleasant feature of this biography.” Surely the same must be said of Noel’s and Cornwell’s books too? One thing is

indisputable and that is that Fr Peter Gumpel SJ who listened as a boy in church to the 1937 Encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge* (With Burning Sorrow) is not exaggerating when he states that it was that Encyclical (Pacelli revised the first draft by the archbishop of Munich, Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber) which so infuriated Hitler that it caused him to refuse to see or speak to anyone for three days. This much overlooked encyclical affirmed that the Nazi leader was perfidious, untrustworthy, dangerous and determined to take the place of God, not least by usurping parental rights. The international community reacted enthusiastically. The Jewish communities were elated since the encyclical presented the strongest condemnation of racism. All the Jewish newspapers in the world showed their enthusiasm for what the Holy See had done. Yet despite this, England, France and Italy came to an agreement with the Nazi regime at the Munich conference in 1938. Gumpel emphasises that “the harshest statements against Nazism were Pacelli’s, and Hitler knew it,” so much so that Hitler considered Pacelli his No. 1 enemy and feared his moral power. Now that there is more access to the Vatican Archives of the papacy of Pius XI, (yes Pius XI) the symbolic and prophetic nature of this encyclical will receive the attention of scientific historical analysis it rightfully deserves, rather than ignoring its existence to say nothing of the sweeping generalisations of authors intent on disparaging Pius XII because of their agenda. Pope Francis himself recently declared the need to celebrate the facts of his predecessor’s war-time achievements; such as the lesser known detail that many pregnant Jewish mothers actually gave birth to their children in safety on the bed of the pope at the summer residence of Castel Gandolfo.

*Edmund Adamus  
Director for Marriage and Family Life  
Archdiocese of Westminster*





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# faith

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

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