

# faith

Promoting A New Synthesis Of Faith And Reason

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness

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*Timothy Danaher*

The Human Person, Rational, Irreplaceable

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*by Robert Cardinal Sarah*

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# Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness

**A**mong some bleak translations and mistranslations of the Scriptures and the liturgy in the late 20th century, particularly poor was the use of “Happy are they . . .” in place of “Blessed . . .” for Christ’s glorious words in Matthew 5:3-11. “Happy” with its connotations of random good luck as in “perhaps” is no substitute for the beauty and beneficence of “Blessed”

In these last weeks of this Year of Mercy, the Church canonises one of the great figures of the modern era, a light in the Church in a confused time. She studied in Ireland, became a geography teacher in British India, and then answered a fresh call to work with the poorest of the poor. It was a BBC television feature presented by Malcolm Muggeridge that first brought Albanian-born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, to the attention of millions, although among Catholics she was already known. In September she will be given the formal title of Saint – but will probably always be known by the title through which she became famous: Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Saints are those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness”. We have heard much of the Beatitudes in this Year of Mercy. Too often they are presented in a rather sentimental way as a list of “positives” as against the “negatives” of the Ten Commandments. This is a popular theme for those who seek to emphasise that “the Church isn’t really so strict after all” and contrast the “Thou shalt not” of the Decalogue with a let’s-try-to-be-nice set of alternatives. But the Beatitudes do not really work that way. Rather, they are a portrayal of Christ, and a call to follow him. The God who spoke to us on Sinai with the Commandments then walked this earth: the Beatitudes describe him and are his call to us.

Righteousness has a rather dreary sound to modern ears, because it somehow makes us think of self-righteousness, the smug twitch of the mantilla, the faint air of moral superiority. But to hunger and thirst after righteousness is a great thing, a noble thing. The Jewish people erected a memorial in Israel to those “righteous among the nations” who, at risk of their own lives, helped Jewish people to escape the Holocaust. Such righteousness is not easy, nor, in the final analysis, optional: we are called on to do what good we can, or at least to strive to do so.

Often, in a standard biography of a saint, we read “after overcoming many difficulties and problems, he/she . . .”. The idea is so familiar that we tend to gloss over it, especially when we are young (middle age usually brings its own recognition of life’s hassles).

Fr Damien in Molokai had to struggle with bureaucratic difficulties, muddles, misunderstandings. It wasn't just the horrors of Hansen's Disease, it was the loneliness, the people at the missionary HQ who didn't fully understand, the tensions with the Hawaiian administration authorities...

Mother Mary McKillop founded schools for settler families in 19th century Australia and New Zealand . . . it wasn't just the heat and hardships in rural New South Wales, it was problems with the Bishop, muddles over funding, complications about the status of her Order . . .

The writer of this Editorial can now claim to have met two real-life saints: St Teresa of Calcutta and St John Paul the Great, and to have mementoes of each. From Mother Teresa, a small tin Miraculous Medal, thin when first given and now worn thinner. From St John Paul: a signature on a new Bible held forward to him by the Editor's spouse (against the finger-wagging of a Monsignor who, quite rightly, objected to a Pope suddenly being urged to sign something without prior knowledge), cherished and kept in the office where FAITH editorials are written,

Mother Teresa's work for the poor gained her acclaim, but it was actually living in personal poverty that made her convincing: the much-mended habit, the bleak living conditions, the absence of the small luxuries that make life in a stifling hot traffic-ridden city more endurable. Against fashionable opinion, she opposed contraception and abortion, and called for family prayers, and more reverence on receiving Communion, and when she spoke on these things it ensured that any praise for her work was matched by criticism and ridicule from those who opposed her.

St John Paul - whose feast we mark in October - was a much-televised figure and drew vast crowds on world pilgrimages. But his greatest achievements were against tough odds: the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* succeeded through the heroic work of then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger and against the advice of many Bishops; World Youth Day flourished in the face of opposition from official diocesan youth-work bureaucracies. When he went to Fatima to give thanks for surviving the attempt on his life by an assassin, he was met by cheering crowds, but also by a stabbing from a Lefebvrist priest. When he opposed contraception and abortion he was denounced as a Polish bigot by most of the Western media.

*Blessed are the meek* . . . John Paul bent his will to the need to be courteous in the face of Communist antagonism. There was a vicious official campaign against the Polish Bishops in the 1960s when they initiated a letter to the German episcopate offering a message of healing and mutual forgiveness. There were deliberate bureaucratic delays and difficulties from the Communist government over the building of a church at Nowa Huta. All this was met with calm courage and a refusal to be roused to public anger or ranting. *Blessed are the pure in heart* . . . St John Paul lived and taught the manly way of Christian love, presenting a whole fresh new approach to it in the

“theology of the body”, showing how our understanding of what it is to be male or female, makes sense in the fruitful love of matrimony.

It is the saints who live the Beatitudes. And saints can transform our world, or even just a small bit of it, so that a corner of Calcutta becomes a place where there is mercy, and purity of heart, and justice . . . or a Communist empire falls because of meekness and mercy and hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

We are often told – and FAITH magazine has played its own part in telling – about the problems of the modern Church. We have lived through confusing times, and they are not over yet: Mass attendance figures in Britain have been plunging for decades, along with figures for ordinations and for Catholic marriages. There has been no lack of comment on all of this – pamphlets and newsletters and then blogs and tweets and more – and no lack of meetings and protests and conferences and projects. And not all of this campaigning is without value. But during these decades, the Church was also producing saints, and they have been renewing the Church. That’s the way that God works.

It would be rather pompous to claim that the FAITH Movement is hungering and thirsting for righteousness but . . . well...that should at least be the aim. There will be plenty to ensure difficulties for us in the years ahead. We teach that marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman, establishing a new family – announcing that as a public official could bring formal penalties, and there may be members of FAITH who face that at some stage. We teach a synthesis of science and faith – and there will be plenty of opposition to that from militant atheists, possibly with attempts to prevent Catholics teaching it in schools and colleges. We announce, unequivocally, the fullness of truth as set out in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* – including the unfashionable words on sexual morality – that could make us unpopular with officialdom. Already there are concerns that materials promoting authentic marriage and its lifelong faithfulness may be banned from schools as they conflict with the somewhat oddly named “British values” announced by public bodies.

God sends us saints to show us how to live the Beatitudes with courage, examples for us to follow. The “Come, follow me” of Christ is echoed by the “Blessed are they . . .” to show us the way. Not always a particularly comfortable way, although often a surprisingly joyful one: Gonxha Bojaxhiu and Karol Wojtyla were both often seen smiling, laughing, and joyful. *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness . . .*



# Correspondence

FROM PROFESSOR KEITH WARD

*Dear Madam Editor,*

Thank you for the very kind review of my book; I appreciate that.

I was a little surprised that Fr MacKenzie thinks that I divide reality into the (physically) value-less and the (spiritual) valued. I did not mean to convey that impression, but I have clearly done so! My actual view, as an Idealist, is that material or physical things are the expressions of spiritual reality, so I do not want to make an absolute gap between the two. I do think that cognising and valuing are intertwined, but I suppose they are abstractly distinguishable.

In short, I think our views are closer than Fr MacKenzie suggests. But I have obviously stated some things in a confused way, and I will think about that for the future. Thank you so much for the helpful comments.

*Yours faithfully*

*Prof. Keith Ward*

*Regius Professor Emeritus of Divinity, Oxford*

*Research Fellow Heythrop College, University of London*

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FROM REV HUGH MACKENZIE

*Dear Madam Editor,*

I thank Professor Ward for his generous response. It is with respect, therefore, that I take the opportunity afforded by Professor Ward's correspondence to express my thoughts a little more at length. I stand corrected that we do share more concerning how to rebuild natural philosophy than I had acknowledged. We both accept, I think, these four related things about human knowing: (1) sentient experience of "physical things" is intrinsically infused with objective meaning, purposefulness and value; (2) flowing out, of this and intertwined with it is, at least for humans, "cognition" of the physical, and moral experience of such value; (3) this moral experience and engagement reveals the spiritual realm as something foundational to and "abstractly distinguishable" from the physical realm – values for Ward, mind for me; and (4) one piece of evidence for making such a distinction is the uniquely "publicly .... compelling" nature of cognisable physical things.

Where we still disagree, I think, is exactly how we characterise the spiritual-physical

distinction. Ward tends to see the spiritual as fundamentally the realm of objective value, whereas I see it as the realm of knowing and willing mind. For Ward, to be spiritual is to be sentient and moral. The physical “expresses” the value-laden spiritual in a value-free, and hence sensible, “objective” and publicly compelling, manner. For me, to be spiritual is the power to discern, choose and create value. The spiritual is mind. Value and purpose are intrinsic to the physical, as known and willed by mind.

Below I would take the opportunity to ground my point at more length, with Edward Holloway’s help.

Modern reflection upon Ward’s key concept of “the value of an object” can be split into “intrinsic” and “instrumental” accounts. Ward errs on the intrinsic side. He sees values as quasi-objective realities. By contrast, the instrumental account sees them as arising from perception of the usefulness of objects. The Pragmatist version of this tends to see no other intelligibility in such objects than their practical potentialities for us, famously collapsing the “fact-value” distinction. In this increasingly influential school of thought the various “factual” descriptions of an object, rather than describing its nature, simply redescribe its utility.

Holloway unifies these two emphases. This flows from his identifying as one the Kantian noumenon-phenomenon duality (see his *Perspectives in Philosophy Volume III: Noumenon and Phenomenon: Rethinking the Greeks in the Age of Modern Science*).

The phenomena we perceive concern individual things in their universal, environmental, constructive relationships. But such objects are also necessarily in an intelligibly impactful relationship with our perceiving minds. And this intelligibility enables us to interact with our environment creatively. On this basis Holloway argues that we can discern that the universe of such objects forms a unity and that these objects are in practical relationship with an ultimate, creative mind. This all means that the universe is noumenal. Something’s ultimate being is known and willed by absolute Mind.

This involves affirming the Pragmatist position that the experience and reality of the practical value and purposefulness of objects is fundamental to their intelligibility. This meaningfulness to the observer is at the root of all descriptions of an object, including adjectives such as objective, publicly compelling, predictable, etc. Physical facts, under their various relational descriptions (e.g. “caused”), always refer to their practical value. This is because they capture aspects of being known and engaged with by a human, and ultimately known and loved by God for his purposes. To be intelligible is to have a relevance to, a value for, the knower’s further choices and actions.

So there simply is not an absolutely “unemotional registering of a house” (Ward, p.109) – in the basic sense of emotional as an experience of “relative good for me”.

The objects of sensation have a valuable instrumentality for the perceiver that captures what they are, their natures. This means their value is intrinsic to their being as individuals in a hierarchical, environmental network. Their value is not a quasi-Platonic form, as it seems in Ward's idealism. Affirming a Platonic formal value does certainly undermine reductionist materialism, but it is not itself evidence of a realm in which exists the transcendent Creator.

So the only ontological transcendence of the physical is that of spiritual, creative, intentional mind. This realm, in our experience, is intrinsically complementary to objects of sensation, which are easily manipulable, predictable and publicly compelling – but they are far from “value-neutral”. It is in this realm of self-conscious recognition, not in the realm of value, that I place the absolute Creator.

*Yours faithfully  
Fr Hugh MacKenzie*

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# Diagnosing the Modern Mindset

TIMOTHY DANAHER

*Timothy Danahan gets to grips with how things get pondered and discussed today.*

“Lord, what fools these mortals be!” According to Robin Goodfellow – Shakespeare’s fairy narrator – human behavior appears foolish from the outside looking in. The lovers of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* chase after one another, each driven by their own desire, trying to have it align with another’s. As Shakespeare says elsewhere, “Love is blind.” Love of this sort seems self-absorbed, random and uncertain. And unlike our plays, our lives often don’t end “happily ever after.” But on the other hand, who of us can’t relate to this desire? We too are thirsty for connection, affirmation, and purpose.



It’s hard to step back and get a clear picture of life, especially today with the rapid changes in our secular culture. But let’s try! We can ask three questions that will help us diagnose modern man: what motivates man, what is our goal, and how can we get there?

## What motivates man?

Many Christians today, myself included, feel like the world has taken a bad turn. Not only are teenagers leaving the Church, but even whole families, who don’t find satisfactory answers in religion for the changes and challenges they face. What has happened to us? There are two answers: something old and something new.

The old disease that we humans have always laboured under is original sin. Thomas Aquinas tells us that this is a “quality” in our soul, having lost our gift of grace, which makes us both *selfish* and *sensual*. Without the presence of God in our soul that we were made to have, we are left deeply insecure, so that all of our desire is to first

*Our desire keeps us running in circles, like Shakespeare’s lovers, lost in the forest and in a midsummer dream.*

help ourselves, not our neighbour. We have also fallen away from spiritual things and have become addicted to the sensual, or worldly – to sex, music, travel, money, eating and drinking, sports, parties, politics, humour, emotional sympathy. All of these are good, but our addiction to them isn't.

There is also something new today, a "twist" to our age-old malady. In previous generations, we didn't have great control over the natural world, so we turned to God for help. Now, we have more control. What scientists call "Murphy's Law" doesn't apply only to physics or engineering, but also to society: "Anything that *can* go wrong, will go wrong." Why have abortions increased? With more advanced and safe medical technology, *now we can*. Why is marriage being re-defined by the state? Because with *in vitro* fertilization, we can make families in labs. *Now we can*. We humans will go to any length to make life just how *we* want it to be, and lately, we've gotten very good at this. But the results are disturbing.

Not only do we begin to trespass against the basic laws of ethics (not to mention Church teaching), but our need for God becomes much less obvious. Instead, we become obsessed with living "natural life" as happy as we can. Once again, we're making a nice, happy, *selfish* and *sensual* life for ourselves. Our desire keeps us running in circles, like Shakespeare's lovers, lost in the forest and in a midsummer dream.

## What is our goal?

What is the goal of life for the average modern person? Whatever they wish. Each person decides for themselves. We have become so fascinated by *what* we can do, that we have forgotten *where* we're going, or what anything is for. I've asked many non-religious people this question, and the answer is almost always "enjoyment." That doesn't mean the majority of people are atheists, or that they're incredibly selfish and cruel. It's just that God seems vague compared to this life, so they want to figure out *these* rules and get the most out of it. More specifically, what they want is "connection." Whether in romance, or a job, or a group of friends, everyone wants to feel like they're part of something. But that desire is often selfish underneath, because once the group challenges you or calls you to change your mind, you can leave. We are undergoing in our age an enormous crisis of commitment. This is seen in church attendance, job insecurity, divorce rates, etc. All commitment lasts as long as a person feels it's still "compatible" with their own life. Against this mentality, G.K. Chesterton once wrote, "I have known many happy marriages, but never a compatible one. The whole aim of marriage is to fight through and survive the instant when incompatibility becomes unquestionable. For a man and a woman, as such, are incompatible."

It is the glory of being human to learn sacrifice, to adapt to life's difficulties with

love and humility – not to come up with endless ways of avoiding them, which only makes the problem worse. Fairy tales have always taught us a certain truth, that life has a set of rules we didn't set up, and we will only be happy to follow them (another big point of Chesterton's). If we spend our time trying to change the rules, we miss out on the happiness God wrote into the rules of life, the hard-won joys of struggling together for the truth. Instead, we are left to enjoy our own brief thrills, all the while deadening our spirits to *the very thing we were made for* – joy in God.

Without God, progress is really re-arranging the furniture. We try to stay "right here" and make life better, but we end up making a mess of it. Humans were made to journey, and if we don't know our way forward, we grow confused. This is painfully obvious today, as our society has grown increasingly "bipolar." Without God, we are torn in two directions: universities praise diversity, but students still form cliques; politicians promise a bright future, but all our news programs are distressing; people are obsessed with scientific explanations of everything, and equally obsessed with sentimental love in every pop song; sexual abuse with a minor is the most shameful of all crimes, but everyone has a right to complete sexual liberation once they reach the age of consent; we relocate all over the world, preferring to live anywhere but home, yet we still agonize over our local sports team; we own many things, and still feel like we don't have enough; we believe in discipline at school or at work, but we all have a right to "let ourselves go" on the weekend; we tolerate everything, except people that don't agree with us. The reason why we are torn is that we are creatures of earth, made to share life with God. Though we abandoned God, our hearts are still pointed in his direction, but we try to keep them on earth. We are torn in two, not moving forward, but in circles.

### How can we get there?

If we cannot satisfy our desire by our own means, what is left to help us? "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb 13:8). There is only one thing to help us, and his name is Jesus. God could have sent us an instruction manual called "How to believe in God and Convince Others." He didn't. We are perplexed by the complex world, and we look for an easy answer. God's answer isn't easy, but it is simple. Jesus Christ is the answer to every human question. But every human must spend his life finding out just *how* Jesus answers his questions, his needs, his desires. God's answer isn't easy, but it's true. And its strength is its simplicity: believe, pray, worship, love, obey, seek the Lord.

*God's answer isn't easy, but it is simple. Jesus Christ is the answer to every human question. But every human must spend his life finding out just how Jesus answers his questions, his needs, his desires.*

The litmus test of every society (and of every person) is silence. It is in silence that we can “be with” ourselves and with God. And if we cannot do this, there is something wrong with us. The more we fill our schedules with tasks, fill our cities with music, fill our heads with headlines, then the more we betray our unhappiness. “Be still and know that I am God” (Ps 46:10). Those who cannot be still, then, cannot know God. Why can’t we be still, especially in this day and age? What then is our diagnosis of modern man, of how he thinks, of what he desires, of what he believes in?

First, man has always been insecure. What kind of insecurity? Of a perfect love, of that one thing that can satisfy and that can last! Those who have not known this (and this is only knowable by God’s grace, his free gift of revealing his love to us), have not known what is mostly deeply human about them. Second, modern man has grown better at deceiving himself, that he is finally becoming more secure *on his own efforts*. We humans are capable of faith, hope, and love in the God who created us. Instead, we have faith in our own abilities, hope in the future we can create, and love of humanity. Yet, again, we are bipolar in even these: we repeatedly lose faith in our attempts and reset to try something else, our hope ends up in clinical depression and growing disorder at large, and love is temporary and fragile. Many have not known a Love greater than their own, and our love is only as strong as we are – which is not very. The more capable we have become, the more lost we have become.

## The bright side


Yet the good news is that we don’t have very far to run away. Man may be more lost in our age, but God is never far – He who sustains all things at all times, who knows the secrets of every heart, and who will have the last, fair word at the judgement of each soul. In an age of false “naturalism,” where no one has time for God, our most effective approach is just the opposite – make time for God. *Mere Christian living* has become counter-cultural in our culture. And in an age of such insecurity, we must be ever more secure in God. In an age of deception, we must admit our faults openly and ask for help when needed. A little dose of Christian confidence can go a long way! Smiling at people, being selfless, being unashamed of where we stand – these work better than trying to explain ourselves to everyone, always playing defence, instead of pressing forward serenely.

The thing to be done is to get busy living Christian life! Not one of us can claim we love God enough, or we love our neighbour perfectly. We must keep going. We must of course stay aware of the cultural conversation (some must even take a real part), but we must not let it dictate every bit of *our* conversation. We must let God do that. We must pray. We must build each other up. The world may see us as holding an

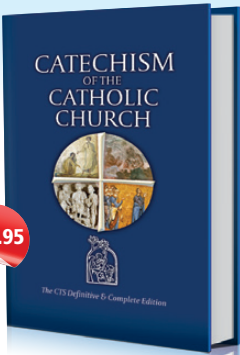
unbelievably high standard – to which we say, “Yes, it is a high standard. As high as God. But it is believable. Because God helps us live in the way he has invited us to!”

Secular people can be extremely aggressive. In my experience, however, many of them are very positive, and even polite. They seem as normal as anyone else. And this sincerity is an even a greater danger, that we humans can enjoy a “natural” lifestyle which doesn’t need God’s help. These people aren’t “out there in the world.” They are our neighbours. They are our families, our co-workers, and our classmates. As Christians in the world, if we open ourselves to God, we create an opening in the world. All of us are more sensitive to the people in our daily lives than we would let on. If we open ourselves to God, it will affect the world around us. Though we may see very little of it, in his own time, He will awaken many hearts to his love, calling them to true life! Christians desire the salvation of every person, and God knows that desire, and He’s working on it. Our role is stay the course. “Delight in the Lord, and He will grant you the desires of your heart” (Ps 37:4).

# Got Questions?

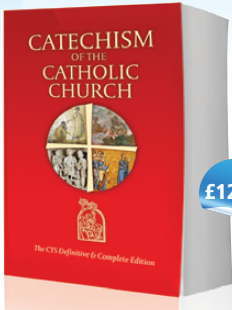


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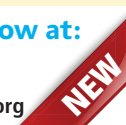
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# The Human Person, Rational, Irreplaceable

ROBERT MCNAMARA

*Robert McNamara continues his exploration of what it means to be human*

Achieving a deeper understanding the human person is becoming increasingly important in a culture that no longer recognises the inviolable dignity of every human being. Understanding the objective good that the human person is, through better understanding what the human person is—through his essential definition—we are better capacitated to act rightly in all our dealings with the human person, and so and so accord him his full and proper dignity.



The definition of the person can be for us a means by which to understand the reality, a lens through which to see the human individual more clearly and more completely. In this way, we can fix our gaze upon the human being, and have that gaze clarified, expanded and enriched. Such a transformation of our look is necessary if we are to have a transformation of action, and so come to a mature love of the human person.

## Defining what it means to be a person

St. Boëthius, in early medieval times, first settled on a definition for the person, arguing that there are three essential features of the person as such (whether human, angelic, or divine), that of substantiality, individuality, and rationality, and thus concludes that the person is an “individual substance of a rational nature.”<sup>1</sup>

This definition became classical for Christianity, and is the hinge around which all later Christian thought on the person rotates. This is especially so during the late medieval period and in the thinking of St. Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas’ most sustained treatment of the person appears in a theological treatise, the *Summa theologiae*, and here as elsewhere he treats of the person almost exclusively according to its divine signification, according to its use with regard to the Individuals of the Trinity.

Yet, despite this fundamentally *theological* mode of approach, there is much in the *Summa* that is likewise applicable to the person in its use regarding the human

individual, and also according to a purely philosophical understanding. And so, almost eight-hundred years after Boëthius, Aquinas also defines the person in the very same way: “an individual substance of a rational nature.”<sup>2</sup>

Yet, unlike Boëthius, he clarifies the meaning of each term in the definition with great precision, and thereby furnishes an enriched understanding of the definition. To reach a deeper understanding of the definition, it is best first to look at each of the component parts individually, that of: 1) substantiality; 2) rationality; and finally, 3) individuality.

## Independent existence

The human person is a substance. As a substance the person has existence in virtue of himself. This means that the person has independent existence – it is the kind of being which does not depend on any underlying being for its existence. This is best seen in comparison with the other categories of being, such as quantitative or qualitative being, both of which categories of being depend for their existence on the underlying being of a substance.

For example, a qualitative being like colour depends on some substance in which it can inhere, i.e. colour never ‘floats about’ by itself but is always found on the surface of some existing substance. In the very same way, all categories of being (excluding substance) depend for their being on the underlying existence of substances and are therefore secondary in character – Aquinas calls them *accidents* (because they happen in substances). Substances ‘sub-stand,’ stand under, all other kinds of being, thus providing for the possibility of their existence. The human person is such a being, a substantial being, not an accidental being.

Now, whereas the term substance highlights the *underlying* manner of personal, as the kind of being which *underlies* all other categories of being, Aquinas’ favoured term in the definition of the person is ‘*subsistence*.’ Subsistence focuses our attention not on the fact that the person underlies the other categories of being, like quantitative and qualitative being, but rather on the fact that the person is an *independent* kind of being.

Thus, in using the word subsistence instead of substance Aquinas puts the focus squarely on the kind of being of the person, on the fact that it “exists in and through itself and not in another.”<sup>4</sup> The person is a being that *stands in being in virtue of itself* without any anterior dependence (though obviously not disregarding the radical dependence of all being on God).

## Rational Life

Yet, the person is not merely a substance, but is a *living* substance, and as living manifests *rational* life, and so life in the highest mode. First, as a being animated with life (including self-nutrition, growth and reproduction, sensation and movement,

thinking and willing), the person has a natural superiority over all non-living substances; then also, as a being manifesting life of the highest kind, rational life, the person has superiority over all non-rational creatures.

Thus, the person has existence in the way that is most primary and most proper – he has *being* in the highest degree, and so is a perfection of being, a good in itself.

## Rational

The human person is a *rational* substance. The essence of the human person, that which specifies the human person amongst the entire animal kingdom (of which he is a part), and that which sets him apart as a species, is to be found in his *rational* nature. Here rationality should not be understood according to a rationalistic or scientific caricature of reason: as something clinical, cold and calculating, something which could be adequately measured by an IQ test. Rather, rationality is created life at its apex—it is *spiritual* life.

How so? Well, according to Aquinas, and the Christian philosophical tradition before and after him, rationality is the *ability of the soul to become all things*. Here he closely follows the teaching of Aristotle and explains that the rational principle “has an operation extending to universal being.”<sup>5</sup> The rational principle empowers the person to *read inwardly* (*intus legere* – from which we get the word, *intellect*) the nature of a thing, and thus to “penetrate into the very essence of a thing.”<sup>6</sup>

*Truth is the proper object of the mind – the object of thought is truth*

In the words of Aristotle, “everything is a possible object of thought,”<sup>7</sup> and “the soul is in a way all existing things.”<sup>8</sup> Everything

can be thought, and the person, through the rational principle, can think all things. As such, it reveals that the human soul has a principle of activity which is not determined by material reality, for if it were so determined it could not know all material things.<sup>9</sup>

## The human soul

The human ability to know all of material reality, precisely as manifest in rational activity, reveals the *immateriality* of the human soul. But something that has immaterial existence is by definition *spiritual*. *Immaterial* – *non-materiality* – is simply a negative way of saying spiritual; spiritual is the positive designation of immaterial being.

In this way, the rational principle enables the human person to reach an intimate and deep knowledge of all existing things. In this very way, the person is capacitated for a fundamental and profound relationship with all of created reality. It is precisely this intimate communion with reality that we call *truth*.

## Intellect and Reality

Aquinas defines truth as “*adaequatio rei et intellectus*,” the adequation of intellect



and reality, the conformity of mind and things.<sup>10</sup> Truth is the proper object of the mind – the object of thought is truth. Truth is had by the mind when its knowing is conformed to reality, when the mind, insofar as it is capable, knows reality as it is in itself. This occurs when the mind – in its judgements, concepts, and propositions – conceives adequately of reality.

Reality is the measure of the mind, and the mind achieves truth in coming to an ever clearer understanding of reality. In this accomplishment of truth, the mind is perfected. And so, for Aquinas, the human person has a necessary and fundamental relationship to truth – one could say *that truth defines the human person*.

## Freedom

In addition to this knowing power of the rational principle, a further constitutive dimension of rationality is the power we call the will—and with it, the property of freedom. Aquinas defines the will as the “rational appetite,”<sup>11</sup> or as we could otherwise translate: rational desire.<sup>12</sup> The good is that which is desirable precisely because it is perfective of the one desiring.<sup>13</sup> Simply put: all we perceive and know we can also desire – for all that is knowable is also in some respect good.

Rational desire is the greatest and highest of human desires for the good, since it can reach after the specifically human good: the *true* good, the only good commensurate to the dignity of the human person. In the consistent choice of the true good, the will is perfected. Thus, as with truth, the human person has a primary and foundational relationship to the good – *the good defines the human person*.

*Freedom, as expressed in thought and creative action, distinguishes the human person amongst the creatures of created reality, and so too it makes the human person eminently individual*

Importantly, this relationship of the person to the good is not determined, but is properly free. Freedom, as expressed in thought and creative action, distinguishes the human person amongst the creatures of created reality, and so too it makes the human person eminently individual.

## Individual

The human person is uniquely *individual*. To be individual a being must be one and whole, indivisible in itself, yet divided from all else. All substances are individual in this way, yet rational substances are individual in an unparalleled fashion, precisely because they “have dominion over their actions.”<sup>14</sup> Aquinas says that persons are individual “in a more special and perfect way”<sup>15</sup> because they are master of themselves through freedom of thought and freedom of action.

Unlike other creatures, which act only out of their nature, persons are the source of activity properly their own. Sub-personal creatures act according to a certain necessity of design and structuration, whereas persons act out of self and so are the origin of their own activity.

The will is the source of human action, action which is rationally determined and freely chosen. And it is precisely through the power of the will that the human person can act *from out of his very self* – out of his own freedom and power – and so can have action which is identified as his very own.

## Taking Responsibility

As a result of this freedom, the person has the possibility of taking responsibility for himself. It is only because the human person is rational and free that can he take responsibility for himself, and so too, can be held responsible, both for himself and for his attitudes and actions. In traditional terminology, it is said that the human person is *dominus sui*: master of himself. It is not surprising, then, that for Aquinas, this mastery of self makes the human person an individual in a preeminent way, in a way surpassing all non-rational substances.

Obviously then, this taking hold of oneself in responsibility is incredibly important for all of human life, both personally and socially. It is that which capacitates the human person for love, as well as that which conditions all human social, cultural and legal structures.

## Love

In focusing our attention more explicitly on this individuality, it is worth emphasising two separate yet related aspects: the person is a) *incommunicable*, and b) *irreplaceable*:

a) As a rational and free substance the human person is the bearer of his own existence and life, and his mastery of self simply cannot be assumed by another. The personal core – the interior freedom of the person as source of his own thought and action – cannot be *taken*, nor can it be given away. It is incommunicable.

*It is only because the human person is rational and free that can he take responsibility for himself, and so too, can be held responsible, both for himself and for his attitudes and actions.*

b) A human person is always *this* very person, this concrete, historical individual. The person is not merely a multiple of a specific kind of being, but is always a properly unique existing individual. This means that the human person does not admit of replacement, he or she is irreplaceable. These truths are intuitively available to all – and

we grasp them precisely in the experience of personal love: When we love a person, it arises from the very centre of our being and freedom, and it is never love of just any human individual, someone who can be swapped-out, so to speak, and replaced with another. No, it is always *MY* love of *THIS* very person. Love is the most personal of actions: it affirms and delights in the individual as such, simply for being who he or she is.

- 1 Boëthius, Liber *de persona et duabus naturis*, Chapter III, pos. 34-35.
- 2 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* (ST), Ia, q.29, a.1, co.
- 3 Whereas substance focuses our attention on the being of the person as underlying secondary properties, subsistence focuses our attention on the reality itself from the perspective of its independence in existence.
- 4 ST, Ia, q.29, a.2, co.
- 5 ST, Ia, q.79, a.2, co.
- 6 ST, IIa IIae, q.8, a.1, co.
- 7 Aristotle. *De Anima*, Bk. III, Ch. 4.
- 8 Aristotle. *De Anima*, Bk. III, Ch. 4.
- 9 See ST, Ia, q.75, a.2, co.
- 10 ST, Ia, q.16, a.1, co.
- 11 ST, Ia IIae, q.3, a.1, co.
- 12 For Aquinas, since reality is not only knowable but is also desirable, all of our sentient and cognitive powers by which we know things, have corresponding appetites by which we desire the things already known. And so too the rational power, whose appetite is called the will.
- 13 ST, Ia IIae, q.8, a.1, co.
- 14 ST, Ia, q.29, a.1, co.
- 15 ST, Ia, q.29, a.1, co.

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# Wisdom and Common Sense in Relationships

LOUISE KIRK

*Louise Kirk talks to young women about chastity, love and friendship.*

Recently a trio of Elders knocked on my door. They were very young Elders, but poised and smartly dressed. Remembering the warm hospitality that I received in Salt Lake City last October, I invited them in.

We often speak as though it is only marooned Catholics who fight the full defence of chastity in the modern world, but this is not the case. The Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS) is exemplary in promoting family values. Without them, the international fight for life and family would be a lot poorer. I entertained my guests to water and orange juice, since they don't drink anything



stronger, hot or cold, and we talked of many things. On leaving one young Elder slipped into my hand a pamphlet entitled "For the Strength of Youth". It was about chastity, and had tips that might be found in any Catholic leaflet: modesty in dress, the danger of pornography, the importance of friendship, even confession to their bishops.

In Salt Lake I had been impressed by the large and happy families I met and the enthusiasm which the young had for their faith. One girl spoke proudly of her brother, "out on mission", just like the Elders who had called at my door. Another told me without hesitation that the reason their church is so successful in passing on its faith is "because there is complete coherence in everything that we are taught, right across the curriculum."

## Hurt

Her reply reflects in reverse something of which another American speaks. When Professor Donna Freitas decided to research how American students connect their faith with their attitudes to sexuality, she found that Catholic students to be of one mind. They repeatedly say: "Our faith taught us nothing about sex, except not to have it." And finding that their Church has apparently let them down on a topic so important, the vast majority throw away their faith with the morals they don't understand. Some are apathetic, but others express hurt and deep bitterness.

So I think it is difficult to be a young Catholic today, with what Christopher West aptly names the “fast food” of sex all around us. Because sex is not like the other sensual temptations of modern life, such as drugs, smoking or binge drinking. Sex is not external; it is part of us, it comes from within. It is good, it is holy, it is very natural, and when some gorgeous boy appears who sweeps you off your feet it is only to be expected that you will be strongly attracted. The attraction is designed to be so powerful that it dares both boy and girl to leave their old lives behind and set off on the new adventure of marriage.

## The Catholic Church

What is saddest about Donna Freitas’s finding is that the Catholic Church actually leads the world in its rich and satisfying teaching on sexuality, far outstripping anything produced by others. The LDS pamphlet that I was given, for instance, basically explains how to live abstinence well and channel sexual energy into the eventual goal of finding a spouse. The approach is, if you like, puritanical – there is no vision about sexuality as such, no attempt to fathom why we are sexual beings, or what role sexuality may have for those who will never marry.

Are the unmarried supposed to bottle up their sexual urges, treat them as a cross? And after marriage, is everything always just marvellous?

This picture buys into the modern lie that sex is like a happy drug, available for instant pleasure. It isn’t. Sex can be uncomfortable, humiliating, even boring. There is a growing problem of middle-aged married couples losing their appetite for it. Like anything else, it needs to be worked at and treated correctly to yield its fruits of deep peace, trust and love. It is designed for *love-making*, but out of place can bring feelings of shame, anxiety and even loneliness.

## Vision

It was St John Paul who unfolded a completely different vision, one in which sexuality is shown to play an essential role in our knowing, loving and serving God, as well as our neighbour, in all states of life.

Before John Paul, theologians taught that man imaged God principally in the spiritual powers of the soul, that is in the intellect and will. John Paul pointed out that the Holy Trinity is a communion of persons, and that it is in the unity of male and female, revealed in the body and open to the gift of children, that this community is expressed in man:

*“The body, in fact, and only the body, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and the divine. It has been created to transfer into the visible reality of the world, the mystery hidden from eternity in God, and thus to be a sign of it” (TOB 19:4).*

Are you familiar with Pope St John Paul’s *Theology of the Body*? It bears study. I recommend the work of Christopher West, available on-line.

Whether or not we are married and have children, all of us belong to families. All of

us, too, are at one and the same time both complete, as social beings and as individuals before God, and incomplete. We are incomplete because our bodies are marked for communion with another. If I were to look at you with X-ray eyes, I could understand the role of your liver, or heart, or lungs, but I would have no explanation for your ovaries or uterus. It is the same with the man. You can see even more starkly that there is no explanation of the testes without understanding the organs of the woman, or the potential for a child. When God says man and woman become one flesh, He is very literal.

## Nature

The modern world treats sex as though it belongs to the secular world and that God tries to cheat us of it. I have never understood this, because I can't imagine any human being having the daring to invent such an extraordinary thing. God is evidently so pleased with His design that He has scattered it throughout nature. Have you noticed how nearly all living things are marked by sex, the birds, the flowers and the trees? Have you further noticed how some of the most beautiful things are connected with mating, everything from blossoms, birdsong and even the peacock's tail? This beauty reflects the still greater wonder of human sexuality, since the lower always symbolises the higher.

So it makes sense to try to understand sex as God does. Sex is bigger than marrying and having children. It does more than reveal something of the nature of God. It tells us also of God's passionate love for each one of us, which will be brought to fruition in the Marriage Feast of the Lamb at the consummation of the world.

## Mystery

We are talking mystery. To probe it, look at our other physical desires. Our hunger, for instance, speaks of much more than our need for nourishment. The very word "companion" derives from the Latin words *cum* "with" and *panis* "bread", and speaks of how eating in itself creates community. It is hard to imagine developing a friendship without at some point sharing a meal, or at least a cup of coffee. Our human food with its social dimension reflects the Holy Communion we receive at Mass. God didn't think to Himself: "I want to stay physically present on earth with my Church. Oh, I know, man eats. I'll make Myself into bread." It was the other way round.

And so it is with our other appetites. We thirst, to point us to Living Water and the Sacred Blood. We tire, and long for the Eternal Rest to which we are destined. We experience sexual attraction, and look to the Lamb.

Marriage is not an end in itself. It is a rich icon of the complete fulfilment of body and soul to which God has destined us. There is a gap inside us which God alone can fill. It is a great mistake to think that you will one day find the "perfect" man who will fill that hole. Realising this releases you to love your boyfriend or husband for *who* he is, and not for *what* he is and how he satisfies your needs. It turns you away from yourself and towards him. Learning to

love well is the struggle of a lifetime. There is ample room to grow in the virtue of holy purity.

## Lessons

What lessons might we draw from all of this for our everyday lives?

The first is that sexual yearning is a good. It has a part to play in the deepening of our personalities. Learning to control our sexual drive, rather than be controlled by it, helps self-discipline in all areas of life. It gives us the energy for self-gift which goes to the core of our being, whether or not our vocation is to marriage.

However, giving right importance to sexuality should also prompt us to action. Here again, I think young people and especially young women today are cheated of truth, are brought up to think first and foremost of careers, with the expectation that marriage and family will somehow just happen at the right time. When I was at school, the emphasis was the other way round. I remember my headmistress praising some dressmaking I had done with the words: "You will make a good wife." I was chuffed but also indignant. What about my brains, I thought. The school had little idea how to point us to a career, let alone a demanding profession.

In practice, all girls have a tension between two pulls: one towards making their own mark in the world, and the other towards spousal love and maternity. I think of these as the two roles of Our Lady, Virgin and Mother. Each girl will manage that tension differently. Some will veer more towards a career and may only ever experience maternity in a spiritual sense. Others will put more into marriage and family, and subordinate whatever else they do to that. Still others will have a religious vocation (notice that religious titles come from the family: Sister, Mother, Father, Brother).

## Marriage

If you think your vocation is to marry, make time for it. Put yourself in social situations where you may find the right man. You might, for instance, think of going on a pilgrimage to Lourdes, or to World Youth Day, or Youth 2000, or the Faith Movement. Make friends. This is the time to make many friends of both sexes.

Give good parties and revive dance. Dance has always played a part in courtship. It is fun, it teaches good social skills, and it gives a healthy outlet to our sexual physicality. By dance I don't mean jiggling together in the lit gloom, with music so loud you can't talk, the boys over here and the girls over there until they come together in embarrassing intimacy. There is nothing wrong with a good bop, but bopping shouldn't be allowed to squeeze out proper dancing, with learnt steps, where men and women really do interact with each other, dress for the occasion and create something that is beautiful to watch.

Never compromise your femininity. God created us male and female, inside as well as out.

## What the Church teaches

We should understand why the Church teaches against contraception. Because sexuality marks all the layers of our being, physical, psychological, spiritual, emotional, countering it with contraception has consequences at every level as well. This is a big subject in its own right, so I will only mention two statistics.

The first is that if a girl only has sex with the partner she marries, she has an 80% chance of a lasting marriage. If she introduces one extra partner, that statistic drops to 54%, and if she introduces a third, it drops to 44%. In other areas of life, experience leads to greater ability, but not so when it comes to sexual intimacy.

Another statistic. The Pill was introduced with the idea that it would remove anxiety from sexual relations and lead to happier marriages. In practice, the sweep of divorce has followed closely behind the Pill's uptake. By contrast, studies show that, among those who practice modern methods of natural family planning, the divorce rate is somewhere between 1 and 4%. It would be difficult to find any other mechanism which has proved better at stabilising marriages.

There are many arguments to show why contraception is destructive on the spiritual front. The most cited is that it creates a lie. The gift and surrender of the self is emptied of meaning because something vital is held back.

What tells most with me is a simple argument. God is Creator. God is Love. Contraception says that when God put together our powers to love and procreate in one act. He either got something wrong, which is human arrogance in the extreme, or He desired to give us a tainted gift. It is my belief that what hurts God most about contraception is our lack of trust in His sheer goodness.

The Catholic Church has much to teach about sex, and the emphasis is not on denial. In fact to describe purity as abstinence misses the point. We abstain for a time from something to which we are entitled. Purity is the living virtue which brings body and soul into alignment in all our relationships. It helps us to have self-dominion so that we are able to give more of ourselves in love to others. It brings alive the meaning of our sexuality at its greatest depth. Through it, we experience happiness and we see our way to God more clearly. Holy purity makes us ready for the banquet God has prepared for us, for which we await the life to come.

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*Louise Kirk is the author, with Jessie Gillick, of Sexuality Explained (Gracewing Books).*



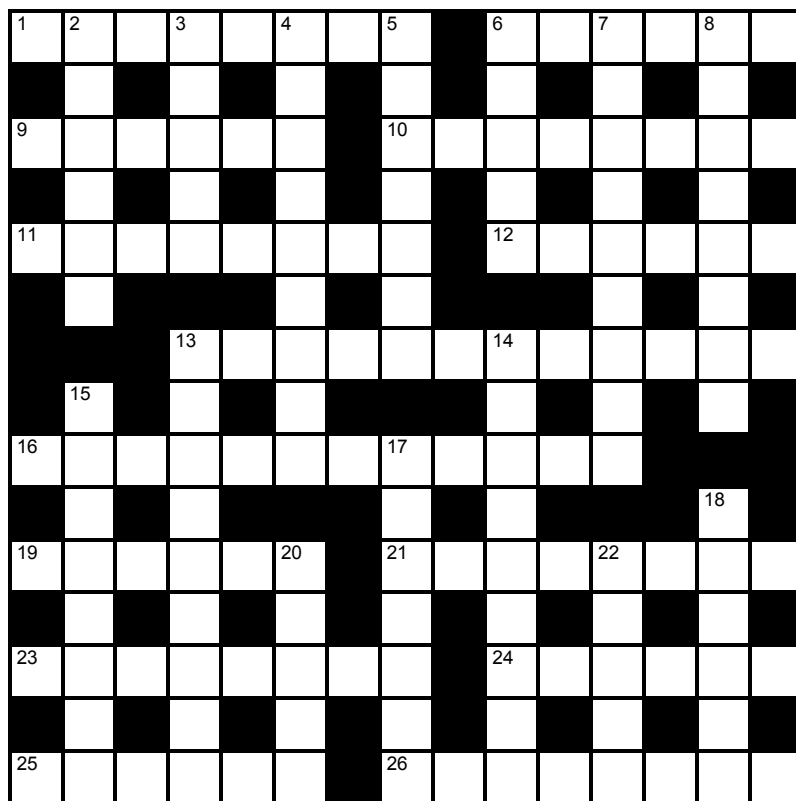
## CROSSWORD by Aurora Borealis

In a new feature for *Faith Magazine*, we invite you to complete this crossword: the clues in bold involve general religious knowledge; the others are cryptic clues with secular answers.

A copy of ***Morning and Evening Prayer Meditations and Catechesis on the Psalms and***

***Canticles*** by Pope St

John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI will be awarded to the sender of the first correct solution opened from all those received by 1st November 2016. Entries may be this original page or a photocopy and should be sent to Faith Crossword, 45 East St Helen Street, Abingdon, Oxon., OX14 5EE.



### Across

1. Nuisances get round Religious Studies, one perseveres. (8)
6. Angry words - commerce all around one. (6)
9. In favour of fifty-nine: too wordy. (6)
10. **From the northern part of Palestine, accented.** (8)
11. **"Who ..... from the Father and the Son".** (8)
12. Father, deity, a temple. (6)
13. **Room for improvement.** (12)
16. Confront reality by looking at the data. (4,3,5)
19. After the French, copper and sodium create empty space. (6)
21. Before the start of spring, fools go after soldiers to think again. (8)
23. **Lay helper of St Teresa of Calcutta.** (8)
24. **Nemesis of the prophets of Baal.** (6)
25. Put down a corrupt penny. (6)
26. Cannot a tally hide it? Don't mention it! (3,2,3)

### Down

2. **Syllabus of .....** (6)
3. Silly Aunt Lydia initially in charge of property law. (5)
4. **Benedict was the ..... of that name.** (9)
5. French wisdom - an order named after it. (7)
6. You French have cheek - produce a Dutch flower! (5)
7. **Not secular.** (9)
8. Darling, darling - tut tut! (4,4)
13. Dour clues deciphered make for uncritical answer. (9)
14. **For example, baptism.** (9)
15. **Burial passage for early Christians.** (8)
17. Castle organised computer language. (7)
18. **Another name for Jacob.** (6)
20. Disguised, topless, put question. (5)
22. Satirical bird. (5)

# Freedom for Christians

BENEDICT ROGERS

*Benedict Rogers tells of adventures and prayers with those persecuted for their faith*

It was at university that I was drawn to the work of Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), an ecumenical Christian charity working for religious freedom for all. The CSW motto is: “Pray, Protest, Provide”.

My first foray into all this was in 1994 when, as a student, I travelled with Baroness Cox to the Armenian enclave of Nagorno Karabakh. The war-torn enclave had been decimated by conflict



between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the early 1990s. Nagorno Karabakh had historically been part of ancient Armenia, but Stalin changed the boundaries in 1921, moving the territory into Azerbaijan. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, ethnic and territorial conflict erupted. Baroness Cox became a champion of the suffering Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh, travelling at the height of the war to bring humanitarian aid, and to document the atrocities and provide a voice in the outside world. She slept in bomb shelters and counted the grad rockets as they fell.

In 1994 a fragile ceasefire had been agreed, and she invited me to travel with her. Other companions included human rights campaigner and US Congressman Frank Wolf, along with plumbers, electricians and nurses for work on a rehabilitation centre for war victims. We flew to Yerevan, Armenia, on a cargo plane laden with aid, and then by military helicopter to Stepanakert, capital of Nagorno Karabakh. Although a ceasefire was in place, I lay awake at night listening to sporadic gunfire on the frontline, and prayed.

## East Timor

That visit opened up a lifetime's vocation and a whole new world. In 1997, after graduation, I moved to Hong Kong as a journalist, volunteering with in my spare time. I came to know East Timorese refugees in Macau, meeting Father Francisco Maria Fernandes, the first East Timorese to flee his country following Indonesia's invasion of the former Portuguese colony in 1975. This sparked a close friendship with the East Timorese people, taking me

the tiny half-island off the coast of northern Australia many times between 2000 and 2006.

In 2002 I was present at their independence celebration, standing next to Father Fernandes as the national anthem was sung and the flag was raised. I asked him "Father, did you ever believe you would live to see this day when your country would be free?" His reply has remained with me: "Yes, I did. Throughout our struggle, people all over the world said to me 'Why do you carry on? You are fighting a losing battle. Indonesia will never give you freedom. The world will never help you. Why don't you just give up?' But we had one thing those people did not know about. We trusted God. This was a victory of faith."

The other person in East Timor with whom I worked was Sister Lourdes and her Secular Institute of Brothers and Sisters in Christ. She could be described as East Timor's Mother Teresa.

Known affectionately as 'Mana Lou', she established her congregation in August 1989 with a small group of girls. The impact which Mana Lou has had on East Timor has been extraordinary. During the Indonesian occupation and the violence in 1999, she put her life on the line every day. After one massacre, the priest and village leaders fled, traumatised, but Mana Lou arrived, arranging distribution of food, and praying with the people. According to Dr Daniel Murphy, an American doctor who works with her, she had an extraordinary ability to soften the hearts of the pro-Indonesian militia. At roadblocks she would leave her car and speak to the armed men, who were often pointing their weapons directly at her. "Within minutes, she would have them laughing with her, then crying, and then on their knees praying with her," he recalls.

When violence escalated after the referendum result was announced, and the capital, Dili, was on fire, some 15,000 people fled into the forests around Mana Lou's Institute near Dare. When I met her later, she told me that she and the Institute fed and cared for them. "All 15,000?" I asked "How did you feed them?"

Mana Lou laughed as if I had asked a silly question. "God worked a miracle. Of course we did not have enough food for 15,000, but each morning I woke up, I prayed, and I started cooking rice. The barrel of rice was not enough to feed many, but as I cooked and prayed, the rice just kept coming out of the barrel. It never ran out. The day the rice finished was the day INTERFET came."

In the post-referendum carnage, Indonesian military and militia forced thousands of Timorese across the border into Indonesian-controlled territory. Many were still there years later, in desperate conditions in camps. In spring 2001, Mana Lou travelled there to provide humanitarian help and spiritual support, and encourage those who wanted to return to East Timor.

The camps were still controlled by the militia, who wanted to kill her. Each time she met with the refugees, bare-chested aggressive militia would ride motorbikes into the

room, revving their engines and looking menacing. She confronted them and asked “Will you come home? Will you come home to the Father’s house – to God?”

At that, witnesses recall, many of these militiamen – thugs guilty of horrific crimes – broke down in tears. Those who converted then joined her in her work encouraging the refugees to return to East Timor – the very refugees they had been holding hostage.

## Indonesia

Working in East Timor led to a wider interest in Indonesia, and for the past seven years I have been documenting rising religious intolerance in the world’s largest Muslim-majority nation. Indonesia has a good tradition of inter-religious harmony, but this is increasingly under threat as more and more Christian churches, and other religious minorities, are targeted by radical Islamists.

I have prayed with Protestant church congregations outside a locked church building, attempting to hold a Sunday service. In each case, the church had been locked and sealed by the authorities, even though it had existed for years and was legally approved. The congregations meet outside, partly to continue Sunday worship, and partly as a gesture of protest. On one occasion, as we sang hymns and prayed, we were surrounded by an angry mob of radical Islamists shouting “Christians get out. Kill the Christians”. Finally, after the pastor concluded the service, I asked him how close we had been to violence. “Very close,” he said, which was why he had brought the service to a premature end. “I knew the police would not be able to protect us.”

## Pakistan

In Pakistan, a close friend was Shahbaz Bhatti, the country’s Minister for Minorities Affairs who was assassinated in 2011. On one occasion, Shahbaz took me to meet seven year-old Sharee Komal, who had been brutally raped and tortured because she came from a Christian family. Shahbaz was helping her and her family, because no one else would. Another time, Shahbaz and I missed a bomb by five minutes in Islamabad.

In October 2009, Shahbaz came to London to address CSW’s annual conference. As usual, his first request was for prayer. He told us: “I live for religious freedom, and I am ready to die for this cause . . . We will bring a change in the life of those who are living in darkness, we will bring a change in the lives of those who don’t have hope, and we will bring a smile on the faces of those living under severe harassment and victimisation . . . This is the key objective of my life – to live for those who are voiceless, who are suffering.” He asked us to devote one minute a day to pray for him and Pakistan. “Let’s pledge that we will work together to promote harmony and tolerance. We will bridge the gaps among different faiths. We will strengthen this world with the message of peace and tolerance.”

Shahbaz knew he was in danger. Four months before his assassination, he recorded

an interview with the BBC, for broadcast in the event of his death. He said: “These Taliban threaten me. But I want to share that I believe in Jesus Christ, who has given his own life for us. I know what is the meaning of the cross and I am following the cross. I am ready to die for a cause. I am living for my community and suffering people and I will die to defend their rights.”

## Burma

Of all the countries I have come to know well, Burma is closest to my heart. There I have prayed in refugee camps, with former political prisoners, and with children displaced in the conflict-ridden jungles.

I was baptised, confirmed and received into the Catholic Church in Rangoon, Burma, by my friend and mentor, Burma’s first ever Cardinal, Charles Maung Bo, on Palm Sunday 2013, with Lord Alton of Liverpool as my sponsor and companion.

Cardinal Bo, whose motto is “Omnia Possum in Eo” – “I can do all things in Him”, from Philippians 4: 13 – is one of Burma’s most outspoken voices for human rights, justice, religious freedom and inter-faith harmony. On his appointment as Cardinal, he told the media: “I want to be a voice for the voiceless”. A profile in *La Stampa* headlined “the cardinal who brings poetry to the faith” described him as one who “speaks like a poet but his evangelical message covers the economy, society and politics”.

In his Easter message in 2014, Cardinal Bo said: “The task of Christians is to move fences, to tear down walls.” His country, he said, has been through “our way of the Cross for the last five decades”. A nation “was crucified and left to hang on the cross of humanity. We were a Good Friday people. Easter was a distant dream”. But today, he adds: “We are an Easter people. There are streaks of hope today.”

## Martyrdom and hope

On 14 February 2015, Archbishop Bo received the red biretta. I had the great privilege to be present at the ceremony in St Peter’s in Rome. But the previous night, I had an equally important time, remembering my other close friend and martyr, Shahbaz Bhatti. In the church of San Bartolomeo all’Isola, where the Community of St Egidio is based, Shahbaz’s personal Bible is on display, in a memorial to modern-day martyrs.

*Shabaz knew he was in danger...“I am ready to die for a cause”*

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*Benedict Rogers is CSW’s East Asia Team Leader*

# Interview

## A Sense of Vigour and Hope

FRANCIS CAMPBELL

*Joanna Bogle talks to Francis Campbell, vice-chancellor at St Mary's University in Twickenham.*

Wide green lawns, a large central chapel, hordes of young people hurrying down the corridors, a library with people silent at computers, a chattering refectory . . . and Francis Campbell walking with a greeting for everyone and an easy style as he collects a cup of coffee and settles for a chat.

Britain's former ambassador to the Holy See now seems very much in his element in his new role as vice chancellor of St Mary's University at Twickenham on the banks of the Thames. The University has recently opened a Benedict XVI Centre specialising in Catholic social teaching, and is proud of its particular links with Pope Emeritus Benedict, who addressed a vast crowd of children gathered there from schools across Britain on his State Visit in 2010.



Francis Campbell sees Benedict XVI's message – especially as delivered to a gathering of MPs and leaders of civic society in Westminster Hall, a highlight of the State Visit – as central for today's Catholics, striving to make a positive contribution to national and community life in the 21st century.

“He emphasised the real role of the Church – not seeking a protected status within an official structure, but operating in true freedom, offering an authentic message. There is a distinction between the State and society. At Westminster Hall you had Cabinet ministers, Members of Parliament, all the then-living Prime Ministers, and this great spread of people representing groups and organisations, and they were all there to listen to the Pope. And all this in a country which is less than ten per cent Catholic.”

What is needed, he believes, is a sense of vigour and hope within the Catholic community – Catholics who are well-formed in their faith and with a strong recognition of the contribution they can make to the wider society. The British constitutional position allows for healthy checks and balances which ensure true pluralism in which the Church can flourish.

St Mary's has a strong tradition behind it – founded in the 19th century by the

Vincentian Fathers as a Catholic teacher-training college, in the past decade it has become first a College offering courses in a range of subjects, and now a fully-fledged University. Top-quality sports facilities, two large libraries bristling with everything in the latest computer technology, and links with overseas projects and travel opportunities are all part of the scene.

There is a Catholic chaplaincy and daily Mass, and a house – named in honour of Benedict XVI – where students can live for a year in community sharing daily prayer and forming a core of faith commitment.

Most of the University's students, however, are not Catholic, and when studying theatre, sports, media, business, physics, English, psychology, or one of the other degree courses on offer, may or may not feel any sense of link to the Church.

“But the Church can still speak to everyone. The office of the Papacy – with its immense staying power – has a message for every generation. And there is a sense too of the sheer historical sense of it all – the links going back back, linking to the Greek and so on...a reminder to everyone of the central place of religion in society.

“And this in turn sends a message about optimal respect for the ‘other’, and for the search for truth.”

Francis Campbell makes his own commitment to the Church clear, whether it is in his presence at Mass or in his talks and lectures. He also emphasises a sense of continuity, and seeks to ensure that St Mary's offers a connection with the Church's great tradition of education and culture.

He is keen to emphasise that the Church must often be a “sign of contradiction”, challenging ideas and offering a rational debate that opens up fresh thinking in a secularised culture.

St Mary's, following the tradition established a century and a half ago, still trains large numbers of teachers for Catholic schools. Today's students looking ahead to their careers in the classroom are aware that the Church teaches much that seems baffling to non-believers.

The Editor of Faith led some of St Mary's young theology students on a Catholic History Walk around London and found them to be a lively, committed and enthusiastic group, many of whom were planning to be at World Youth Day in Poland and had already made pilgrimages to Lourdes working with the sick, or were active with various Catholic movements.

“What we have to affirm is an understanding of the relationship between faith and reason – that was one of the things that Benedict XVI came to teach us” Francis Campbell affirms “We need to understand about the importance of freedom, or being open to difference – and knowing what it means to offer the Faith in that context.

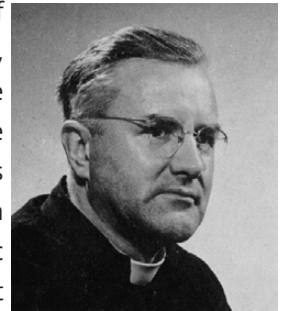
“The Catholic Church speaks to contemporary society in a very open way. We have a responsibility to engage, and great opportunities.”

# Holloway on:

## Messiah and Unity-Law

FR. EDWARD HOLLOWAY

It is said by some that the religion of the greatest sages of the East transcends, in its contemplative vision of God, the tradition of the Hebrews, at least until the writing of the 'Wisdom' literature some two hundred years or less before the birth of Christ. There seems no reason to concede this point. Communication by writing was never as developed in the Jewish milieu as it was in the more agrarian less nomadic Indo-Himalayan and Chinese civilisations, until at least about the time we find the Wisdom literature, the time that is of the full penetration into the near East of the Romano-Hellenic culture of the West. Yet, there are signs enough that among priest and prophet there did exist a 'wisdom spoken among the perfect' which was more than the naked 'Law' of the tribal masses.



It is implicit in the promulgation of the creation narrative to the masses themselves, in the relationship for instance between God and Man before the disobedience of sin - the 'walking with God in the afternoon air', a simple beautiful intimation of affection and mutual communion. The same expression is also used of Henoah, whose name means 'discipline' or 'teaching' and who was 'holy, and walked with God, and was seen no more because God took him . . .' etc. A very true understanding of mystical experience is contained in the vision of Moses, and his needing the protection of God lest he die, even in the vision of 'My hinder parts'. It is in the reality which so shone out from the face of Moses, transformed from converse with God, that he wears a veil over his face.

There is a contemplative awareness of God as a personality loved in the beauty of the Canticle of Moses, and even more in the balance of fairness and tenderness in the dying exhortation of the great leader to the people of Israel. A man who so spoke loved both God and his people with a love of experience - it is from the abundance of the heart that any mouth speaks.

Briefly, one may indicate the Psalms of David where there is the psychological



stamp of a man's experience of God. There is anguish and despair, but through it all hope and strength, and such is not born of agnosticism but of an inner experience of peace and power, in spite of the storm. We may indicate the majesty of the great prophets of Israel, especially Isaiah; there is a patience, a tenderness, a thrilling vision of God and the future, in spite of the loneliness and the rejection and sin of the people, that can only proceed from souls of great experience, whose pain is tempered by the experienced inner vision of God.

## Faith and Authority

There is a very good reason which a Faith of Israel should appear to be a faith of the Law and of Authority, rather than of contemplative possession. Israel was a religion of the *whole people*, not of an elite; it cared for the doings of daily life. It was not an optional Faith that withdrew apart, under the holy tree, on the banks of the sacred river, to contemplate the 'massa damnata', the 'great unleavened' with an infinite, a despairing compassion. The Faith of Israel was of a God who cared and intervened in the toils of material daily life. The Covenant was a call to the vocation of every individual, high and humble alike, and hence to the body social of society, and the quality of its works. Such a Tradition must be embroiled in the life, loves and sins of Everyman everywhere. It will be strongly organisational, perceptive, and liturgical in the true sense of that word – catering in its acts and life of prayer for the mass of the people to whom it addresses itself. It will be as full as Everyman's household with simple loves and noisy imprecations, obsessed with the waywardness of prodigal sons, and as intent upon their repentance.

It is a mistake to expect to see the development of the 'highest' aspect of Religion in the beginnings of that Tradition which contained the full potential of the Creative Law of the universe. The confusion and the problems wrought in human life and understanding by sin would mean, and in the religions of the East did mean, that gross philosophical error concerning the very nature of being would be intertwined with any attempt to make incarnational in religion the most profound perceptions of God. It was far better and far wiser in God to be content with a Faith that was quite amazingly right about the basic precepts of God, morals, and creation as good, and of its nature allowed for developmental growth in a straight line as time and culture called it forth. Thus, all aspects of the truth could develop in harmony in the womb of time. A premature birth of the highest concepts would have meant a synthesis marred by deformity.

## Messianism a 'Mark of the Church'

With the passing of the ages there grew a 'furor messianicus' within the Faith of

Israel, and the vision deepens continuously despite baffling contradictions in the characteristics of the King to come which troubled the interpreters. The King would rule over all the earth and all mankind, and while he would reign with the authority of a 'rod of iron' it would be also true that 'a sceptre of peace is the sceptre of thy Kingdom'. All mankind would be the Israel of God, as in the vision of Isaiah (ch.60) or as depicted in the census psalm 87 which declares that all men and all peoples are known by God as having their birthplace in Sion ... and there are countless other indicative passages.

At the same time there is the disturbing vision of Isaiah (ch.53) of the Servant of God oppressed, his life made a sin-offering, reigning over kings only because he has first gone down into the dust of death ... There is the anguish of Psalm 22 with once again its prophecy of a worldwide and religious dominion over all mankind after and because of the passion of the Witness of God. With all the difficulties of the interpretation of the vision before it was fulfilled in the event, the important fact for us is that Israel was at once a messianic Faith for the whole earth, and that secondly it is Messianism with an all-important difference from the accompaniment of the messianic religion.

For, let it be said, we must look for a *Messianic* Faith, if it is to be the principle of control and direction from God over human life and destiny. To say that a religion is 'messianic' and to say that it is 'evolutionary' or 'developmental' is one and the same thing. No other Faith the world has ever seen has been of its intrinsic nature developmental. However great and noble in principle, other religions derived of man. They were of human vision and human experience; they began from the subjective and worked towards the objective. The religion of Israel did the opposite, because it was conscious of its origin in God, conscious of its present insufficiency, constantly expressive of its yearning and its expectation for a greater fulfilment.

## Value of Messianism for Apologetics

It is almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of this developmental aspect of the religious tradition of Israel, and of its direct continuity in the Christian Church. The passage of time, psychologically speaking, lessens the credibility of written and verbal evidences, however holy. These evidences remain very important; but, whether we like it or deplore it, the older type of argument for Christianity based upon the documents and traditions and heroism of the age of the Apostolic Fathers has no longer the evidential power of former days. It would be just as disastrous to speak as if they did not matter, or as if they had in fact been falsified.

The passage of time, especially given the hard facts of human sin and coarseness, brings the constant casting of doubt or throwing up of shoddy criticisms. There is the

constant innuendo of 'the credulous outlook and the primitive beliefs of those days etc. etc.' The essence of the argument from motives of credibility is going to reduce more and more, so it seems to the writer, to the inevitable need to postulate a Divine Environing of human destiny, and to the manifest gradual unfolding of this potential, without contradiction of the previous essential doctrinal relationships of God to Man, and of Man to God. The line of the Unity-Law, or in older language the true Religion, must be able to prove itself by demonstration of the need for its existence, and of its own unique fulfilment of the type of Divine Environing that constitutes its life.

It is a long pull from the early chapters of Genesis to our day, and we cannot hope to answer every plausible misrepresentation from an intimate knowledge of the background of the times. What we can show is an amazing moral superiority and an amazing truth in the concepts of that early age of the true Faith, compared with the doctrines and traditions of men elsewhere. We can also show the developmental potential up to the time of Christ, up to the death of Christ, and beyond to this present time. We can show the fulfilment of prophecy in Jesus Christ in a manner which is quite breathtaking. We can, in a word, show Messianism in its full sweep, a direction by God not only of the teaching, and the looking forward of prophecy, but also a Messianism of type, and ritual, which is not reasonably explicable as an accident.

We can also show how the Unity-Law continues in the Christian Church in a manner which is a true continuum with Israel, lifted and elevated in the Christ of God among *all the nations*. We can show a Church, an International Synagogue, a Kingdom, which is and which must be Catholic, or Universal. If the Christ of Israel was in very fact the Word who is God in Person, then we must be able to show the continuity in this Church of the life, the action, the authority of *very God*, ever living to make intercession for us, ever operating with divine efficacy, ever teaching with divine infallibility: otherwise the Incarnation is an irrelevance of human history.

## Image of Christ

We must be able to show that, while human sinfulness, and the unconscious effects of the Fall of human nature, have mutilated the image of Christ in history and have detracted from it in countless ways, the unique and essential characteristics of the Divine Environing of mankind have never failed. If they have failed, then the Gates of Hell have prevailed against the King of kings. There may be woeful scandals in the Kingdom – 'it must needs be that scandals come'; there can be heresies and schisms; but there must remain intact at all times the Church which is the culmination of the Law of creation. She must ever live in full communion with Christ because she is the spouse of God, for her separation is unthinkable, let alone the divorce of apostasy; she is the body of which the Messiah is the head, and a living body may not be truncated and yet live.

We must be able to show one continuum of work, type and fulfilment from Abraham to the present time. As the ages pass, the lasting ability of the Church to declare her evidences afresh in every age to the men newly born will spring from her ability to show a continual and a God-given development in the theology of Christ. There will be found a power in the full, orthodox doctrine of Christ to evince for every era a new synthesis of divine and human knowledge. The power to evince new levels of synthesis will depend upon the orthodoxy, as a rising cathedral grows naturally, so to speak, out of the foundation laid to take it. It will not be possible to evoke the synthesis from heretical positions, no matter how ancient and traditionally loved.

The development called forth anew as history goes on will often be seen to depend on orthodox and Catholic doctrine which was unpopular at the time, perhaps which went clean contrary to the mood of the times, and the always ready concessions of well-meaning heresy. Creative development, like the evolution of life, can be based only upon soundly poised structure, otherwise the mutation will be a decadence. It is evoked uniquely within, and from, the constitution of the Church in perfect union and communion with Christ: and there is only one such. Only so can there be fulfilled without loss the words of Christ that 'I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now, but when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will teach you all truth, and will bring to your minds whatsoever I have said unto you.'

We are saying that the Divinity of God has always dwelt in the 'true church' which we have called the Line, or developing society, of the 'Unity-Law' from the beginning; that the mark of truth is *truth*, the superior true and good, and that the process has been and must be a continuum from the making of mankind. Therefore Israel herself should expect, and did expect, a continuum of development; and the development was to include not merely the extension of the Kingdom of the Anointed of God, and the degree of peace and joy within it, but also the *intension*, the content of doctrine and knowledge of God, and the degree of union with God in love. This is most apparent in the Messianic expectation of old and is contained simply and truly in the incident of the woman at the well who said to Jesus of Nazareth, 'I know that when the Messiah comes he will tell us all things'. The process began with Adam and will go on until the end of time. Man progresses, and the new knowledge of man must be regathered through the ages into a greater vista of God and in God. This is an aspect of the Life of Christ in the Church, an aspect which is it impossible to maintain today unless it can be declared in its essential bearings with the authority of God and not merely the enthusiasm of men.

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*Abridged from a 'Theological Comment' article by Fr. Edward Hollway in Faith Magazine in 1975.*

## Book Reviews

# The Voice of African Catholicism

*God or Nothing – A Conversation on Faith with Nicolas Diat*  
by Robert Cardinal Sarah, Ignatius Press, 284 pp, £12.1.  
Available via Gracewing.

*Reviewed by Mark Vickers*

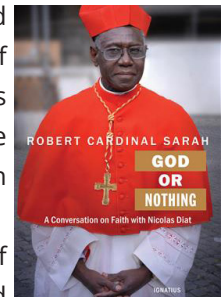
'I have read *God or Nothing* with great spiritual profit, joy and gratitude . . . All that you have written regarding the centrality of God, the celebration of the liturgy, the moral life of Christians is especially relevant and profound.' Not the opinion of your humble reviewer, but the words of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. With such an accolade, we appreciate that this is no ordinary work.

Indeed, it consciously emulates the format and content of the book-length interviews conducted by Vittorio Messori and Peter Seewald in the 1980s and 1990s which placed the person and thought of Joseph, Cardinal Ratzinger so sympathetically in the limelight. The style is similar: autobiographical material interwoven with forthright reflection upon the Church and the world.

Cardinal Sarah's indebtedness to Pope Emeritus Benedict is acknowledged at every point: 'If we are seeking the truth, Benedict XVI is an exceptional guide. If we prefer lies, silence and omissions, Benedict XVI becomes an unacceptable problem' (p. 96). Both men share the same concern for the primacy of God and prayer, the same intent to defend the beauty of the liturgy and the truth of the Faith. Yet, while with Pope Benedict, one easily imagines oneself at the feet of one of the great Fathers of the Church, Robert Sarah takes us back to an earlier age, an age of martyrs, an age when there is a freshness and vitality to the faith.

### Ordained at a time of chaos

The future Cardinal was born into a family of modest farmers in a remote Guinea in 1945. His father only converted to Christianity two years later, when he had his son baptised. Again, he is quick to acknowledge West Africa's debt to the French Spiritan Fathers, who brought the Gospel to his people at the cost of health and life.



Inspired by their disciplined spiritual life, Sarah discerned his vocation to priesthood. Ordained in 1969 at a time of chaos, he recognises the role of daily Mass in his own priestly life: 'without the Eucharist, my relationship with Christ could not achieve the great intimacy that every Christian desires' (p. 50).

After a challenging period as seminary rector, he was appointed by Paul VI as the world's youngest bishop. Guinea was suffering greatly under a Marxist dictatorship. Sarah himself was under surveillance but remained fearless, promoting Catholic families, education and catechesis, speaking out courageously. He relates what it was that sustained him: 'I think that a bishop, in order to fulfil his role, must do penance, fast, listen to the Lord and pray for long periods in silence and solitude' (p. 70). He escaped execution only due to the president's ill health and his own departure from Guinea – a painful ordeal for him. 'During those first months in Rome, I felt like an uprooted tree' (p. 255).

Recognising the danger to his life if he remained in Guinea, John Paul II appointed Sarah Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples in 2001. In 2010 Benedict XVI created him cardinal and head of Cor Unum, directing the Church's charitable work. The Pope told him why: 'I appointed you because you have the experience of suffering and of the face of poverty.'

## The botched preparation of liturgical reform

Pope Francis's appointment of Cardinal Sarah as Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship in 2014 was perhaps even more surprising. However, the African has always had a deep love of the liturgy, especially as experienced in the Benedictine houses to which he felt drawn. He has strong criticism of 'the botched preparation for the liturgical reform' which followed the Council, and its 'devastating effects on the Catholic population' (p. 84). Sarah denounces the use of liturgy as entertainment: 'the faithful go back home, after the celebration of the Eucharist, without having encountered God personally or having heard Him in the inmost depths of their heart' (p. 105). Traditionalism by itself, however, is insufficient. 'If a person respects the ancient rites of the Church but is not in love, that individual is perishing' (p. 125).

Sarah is a considerable scholar with an impressive grasp of the breadth of the Christian tradition. Yet there is relatively little engagement with contemporary intellectual issues. He has no difficulties with the findings of modern science, which 'should bring man closer to divine love' (p. 168). Yet, one senses, faced with persecution and poverty, engagement with the abstract is limited.

## Never afraid to confront mediocrity

Like Pope Francis, Cardinal Sarah speaks with great frankness. He admires the

current Holy Father's condemnation of careerism and worldliness in the Church. The interview arrives at the current day and reaches a crescendo with the Synod on the Family. There is clarity and authority: 'I solemnly state that the Church in Africa is staunchly opposed to any rebellion against the teaching of Jesus and the Magisterium' (p. 277).

The only (minor) quibble is with the occasional over-lengthy quotation from papal writings or Church documents. This is out of place in an interview format. Cardinal Sarah speaks most powerfully when he speaks personally.

This book cannot be recommended too highly. It takes us all beyond our comfort zones. Sarah is never afraid to confront mediocrity under any guise. His own experience of suffering, his utter rootedness in prayer, allow him to do so with authenticity. 'Both the clergy and the laity today are in urgent need of conversion,' he challenges us (p. 150). In a Western world which is so self-referential, all of us can benefit from listening to this voice of African Catholicism. As his interviewer states, here is 'a priest who never tires of speaking about the God he loves' (p. 12).

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*Fr Mark Vickers is a priest of the Diocese of Westminster and the parish priest of Holy Ghost & St Stephen, Shepherd's Bush*

## Murky Money in the Vatican

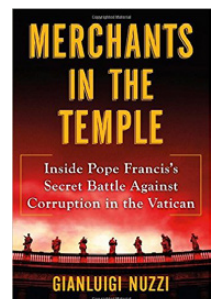
*Merchants in The Temple*, by Gianluigi Nuzzi, Henry Holt, New York. 225pp. \$ 32.50 (£22.50).

*Reviewed by James Tolhurst*

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**G**ianluigi Nuzzi and fellow journalist Emiliano Fittipaldi went on trial before three judges in the Vatican criminal court. They were not accused of falsifying facts, which the Vatican has not denied, but of "illicit behaviour in obtaining information and organized criminal association." This goes a long way to explain Pope Francis' singularly blunt attacks on the Curia. The court eventually ruled that it had no jurisdiction over them since they were not citizens of the Vatican City.

Nuzzi has already published *Vaticano SpA and Sua Santità*. His



latest book is *Via Crucis* published in English with the more lurid title *Merchants in The Temple*. In it, Nuzzi argues that the Curia is in such a mess that it caused Benedict's resignation and is virtually bankrupt owing to financial mismanagement.

Pope Francis is of sterner stuff and determined to drag the institutions of the Vatican into solvency and probity. In 2013 he established the Commission for Reference on the Organisation of the Economic-Administrative Structure of the Holy See (COSEA) under Joseph Zahra. The secretary was Monsignor Lucio Angelo Vallejo Balda, now one of the defendants alongside Nuzzi and Fittipaldi.

## Burglary and hidden microphones

The Commission found its investigation frustrated from the beginning, with dicasteries reluctant to reveal proper financial audits and the Secretary of State eventually in conflict with Cardinal George Pell's Secretariat for the Economy, whom Nuzzi terms unkindly the ambitious bulldog from Sydney. (He has worse things to say about Cardinals Bertone, Burke, Calcagno, Levada and Parolin). As if this was almost part of a film plot, in March 2014 a burglary occurred at the office of Monsignor Vallejo of COSEA in which the thieves seemed to have the necessary keys to the building and were able to target the particular locker which held confidential documents. Hidden microphones were later discovered in some offices of the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See (the control centre for financial operations).

The Vatican does not deny the veracity of documents which have been revealed, merely the method used in obtaining them. Exactly who was responsible for the burglary or the bugs remains uncertain. Various suspects would include interested curial officials (desirous of knowing what evidence there was of financial irregularity), interested parties who had business dealings with the Vatican, financial and perhaps criminal associates anxious to know to what extent their connection was known.

*Merchants in the Temple* is pure journalese, but scattered among its pages among the asides and suggestions are many juicy facts. Nobody suggests that the Curia ought to be like *The Bells of St. Mary's*, but this book reveals an attitude of clerical righteousness combined with a contempt for financial niceties. The conclusion of COSEA in 2014 was that there was a general "lack of governance, control and professionalism." It would appear that normal practice for work was not to ask for several quotations: "Competitive bidding is limited to 5-10 companies that have always worked with the Vatican. No public announcements are posted. When the works are being done there is no budgetary ceiling and no item-by-item cost estimate." It is also clear that no real financial control was exercised for instance in Vatican Radio or *L'Osservatore Romano*, and debts were rolled over from year to year. 58% of Peter's Pence was used to top up deficits in other dicasteries.



## Creative accountancy and the 'long togas'

The Pension Fund for Vatican staff was also virtually bankrupt, with a deficit of €700-800 million. Money was invested sometimes in companies with a bad track record, in one case losing over 50%; but €94 million was found to be floating around between various departments. Property owned in London with a market value of €73 million was entered on the books at €38.8 million; Swiss properties valued at €49 million were written down at €18 million. Such creative accountancy could be regarded as fraudulent. Although there should be no more than 6,000 discount cards for Vatican employees' use in their duty free stores, the actual number was 41,000. 14% of tobacco sales was registered to one unspecified card holder. The auditors reported: "During the last two years, there have been 1.6 million euros in losses, on the basis of warehouse discrepancies." This implies shoplifting on a large scale. In the Congregation for the Causes of Saints two lay postulators were responsible for 180 causes, and the recommended printing press *Nova Res* was owned by one of them. All very cosy and far from fragrant.

Nuzzi comments "The Curia is like a soft belly, absorbing and normalizing any attempt at change. Inertia is its default mode... The people who made this material available to me did so because they are pained by the deeply rooted hypocrisy they see in the Vatican... Every day they observe the huge gap between what Francis has promised and what is being done to hinder his reforms and undermine his credibility... The long togas tend to minimize everything lay people say, no matter how well supported it is by data and careful audits. 'The Church does not consist of numbers but of souls'; this is the generic response of the cardinals when a lay official allows himself to make a criticism."

Those who are acquainted with the ecclesiastical nomenclature will neither be surprised at the revelations nor at the battle now raging. It may result in Pope Francis being a casualty like his predecessor, or a renewed and more transparent bureaucracy. At the moment there is a stalemate. Nuzzi will probably not serve anything like eight years; Benedict pardoned his butler, Paolo Gabrieli and sends Christmas presents to his children. The book unfortunately has no index, which would greatly help to untangle what still reads like something out of *The Godfather*.

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*Fr. James Tolhurst has been a parish priest and a seminary Spiritual Director and is a former Book Reviews Editor of Faith Magazine.*

# A Journey into Mystery

*From the Kippah to the Cross* by Jean-Marie Elie Serbon, Ignatius, 158pp, £10.99.

Available via Gracewing.

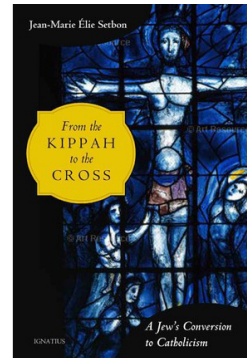
*Reviewed by John Walsh*

I have a problem with conversion stories. I have read hundreds of them and enjoyed the stories of the journeys and paths people take to find meaning and reality. The problems I have are twofold. The first problem is that being a bit of an inveterate researcher I tend to follow up leads and further mentions of people who convert. It has always surprised and in some cases shocked me to find out afterwards that the person concerned rejected the destination he or she found and entered another way (in some cases several paths). Was the original story true? What was left out? If things were so clear and certain, why the volte face?

The second reason is that learning more about psychology has convinced me how inner drives and conflicts push us to search for relief and safety. The works of the eminent Neo-Freudian psychologist Karen Horney on neurosis has been a major influence here. As we are driven by inner drives we are called by the search for meaning. The works of the great Dr Viktor Frankl has been so important in understanding this need for meaning. This does not negate the validity of conversion experiences. It broadens them. No longer can we see them as exercises in logic or a solely cerebral working out of options. Perhaps Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* stands out so powerfully as it is an attempt to think what was really going on in the great man's thinking.

## A journey by and into mystery

This work by Jean-Marie Elie Sorbin is very valuable as it is - for want of a better word - messy. Seeing one thing and going in another direction. Hints and glimmers of one thing followed by different travels to somewhere else. Perhaps the best way we can understand this is to see conversion as a journey by and into mystery. There is a mystery of conversion where the psychological, spiritual and historical all coalesce (if we can even divide these three into neat categories which I doubt). It is the story of a Jewish boy who discovers Christmas 'full of warmth' (p 24). It is the story of the same



boy who on seeing a crucifix doesn't associate it with blood or suffering but rather 'a divine presence, a very powerful presence who pardoned, reconciled, gave peace and brought me a deep interior sense of wellbeing' (p.27).

While attending Torah study he also would go to the Sacré Coeur and receive Holy Communion. He would live in Israel and study in rabbinical schools. A series of events and people entered his life, and he made the decision to become a Christian and a Catholic. This is a deep and searching reflection on one's man's story and response to what lights he saw.

I would recommend this work as it tells us that the path is often not easy, strewn with things we don't understand and yet which fill us with a longing that won't go away. It is well written and offers much for us all to think on. At a time when so many are searching for answers one thing that struck me was Jean-Marie's meeting with a priest who was so humble. He writes that 'When someone is so rooted in God and the Church he is not afraid to listen to different opinions; he can let himself be enriched by new points of view without losing his grounding in what is essential' (pp.96-7).

This open, humble and truth-centred approach is perhaps the message and means of the book. How we can be open and yet rooted in our tradition. How we can listen to all in dialogue in a way that our own light become clearer. For in this approach are to be found so many answers, hopes and possibilities.

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*John Walsh has a BA in History and an MA in Theology; he lives in Bradford.*

## Translucent with Hope

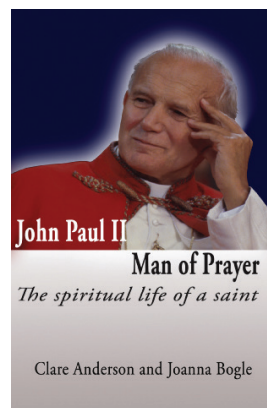
*John Paul II, Man of Prayer* by Clare Anderson and Joanna Bogle.

157 pp. Gracewing. £9.99.

*Reviewed by Bryan Storey*

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Christianity has a vital message concerning the growth of human love. All Our Lord's teachings confirm and deepen the immediate voice of conscience; they are the answer to our vital need to love and be loved. The sufferings endured through not relating to the internal Kingdom of Our Lord are of great concern - marriage breakdown, living together



before marriage, domestic violence, utter confusion over sexual matters, abortion, to name a few of the problems - when we have little idea about how to grow in love through the necessary inner emotional conversion. What a blessing it is then to have spiritual leaders with the conviction and power to lead us towards our saving God.

I cannot forget that day when the news came through. 'We have a new Pope,' a friend told me. 'He's a Pole'. We'd not heard of him. We were all very excited. The college of Cardinals was now more international, involving the real possibility of a non-Italian being elected as Pope. Yet we had no idea what a giant this Pope would turn out to be. Soon after his election, I remember a parishioner saying to me, 'Sorry I can't stop to talk - Pope John Paul II is on the television.' We had not been used to a Pope so much at home with the media. What a communicator he was and with such perfectly pronounced English. We were soon to learn of his wonderful rapport with everybody he met. We learnt too of his suffering under Communism and his contribution to its eventual collapse in his Polish homeland. 'Nobody could keep up with him,' said his successor, Pope Benedict. He travelled as no Pope had travelled before, everywhere making our Lord known. He was constantly teaching the truths for which we pine, welcome or unwelcome. 'He knows his Bible well,' said a local Methodist preacher after his visit to our country.

### A life dedicated to our Saviour

This book is wonderfully researched with many interesting stories of Pope John Paul, philosopher, theologian, poet, playwright and priest. In the bibliography, 36 books are mentioned, and in an Appendix there are prayers which the Pope either personally wrote or were his favourite ones. *John Paul II, Man of Prayer* demonstrates time and again, as its title suggests, how this great Pope could sustain his enormous activities with such steadfastness. He was utterly God-centred.

In his appreciative Foreword, the National Director of 'Aid to the Church in Need', Neville Kyrke-Smith, calls the book fascinating and goes to the central issue in saying that Pope John Paul II's whole life and witness could be said to be like that of Our Lord Himself, often in the Garden of Gethsemane but translucent with the hope of the resurrection. Those words sum it up so well and begin to point to the depth of the spirit that prompted his activities, rising up with the Crucified One by a life dedicated to our Saviour. His genuine ecumenism was thoroughly rooted in our Catholic faith. He promoted the Divine Mercy. It was so impressive to see the crowds flocking to St. Peter's Square for his funeral. So many of them were young. No wonder more than a few called for his immediate canonisation in St. Peter's Square so soon after his death.

## Suffering and resurrection

He had been influenced from his earliest days by deeply God-centred Spanish mystics including St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross. From them he learnt that to embrace life's inevitable set-backs and disappointments in union with the suffering Lord is the sure way regularly to rise again in spirit. In following Our Lord, we find with Him the intrinsic relationship between suffering and resurrection. Our Lady's role in the Lord's redemptive work had been underlined by his study of the writings of the French St. Louis Marie Grignon de Montfort. He grasped strongly the reality that God is love itself and that the more we draw near to Him, the more likely we are to banish depressions, despondencies and loneliness.

## Genuine sanctity

Many of the facts mentioned in this book reveal the inner genuine sanctity of John Paul. He advised fellow seminarists having a hard time studying in Communist times to sigh to God for greater understanding; he discovered God's will in each difficult moment; he shared with others when there was so very little to share. We learn of the importance he attached to daily Mass, his fidelity to prayer, the rosary, promoting Eucharistic adoration, weekly confession of sins, his attention to the needs of others as though he or she were the only one he'd ever met, his self-sacrifice in imitation of Maximillian Kolbe whom he had canonised; most importantly, we learn of his very deep understanding of how life is transformed through chastity for married and single alike. He promoted almost unconsciously the great and hard to believe truth that to grow in chastity is the only way to grow in genuine human love.

## Kingdom of Heaven

He shared his acute sufferings with us at the end of his life when he could scarcely walk or talk on account of his Parkinson's. 'Isn't that helpful?' I remember a housebound, very poorly parishioner saying to me one day. For sure he had entered and experienced the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Now he intercedes for us in the life after death.

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*Fr. Bryan Storey is Priest-in-charge of St. Paul the Apostle mission church, Tintagel, Cornwall.*

Ethical Sex



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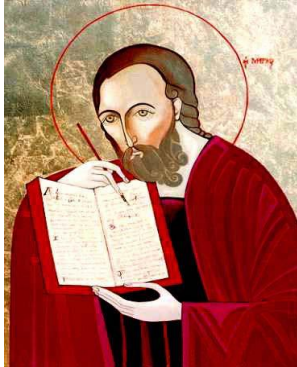
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