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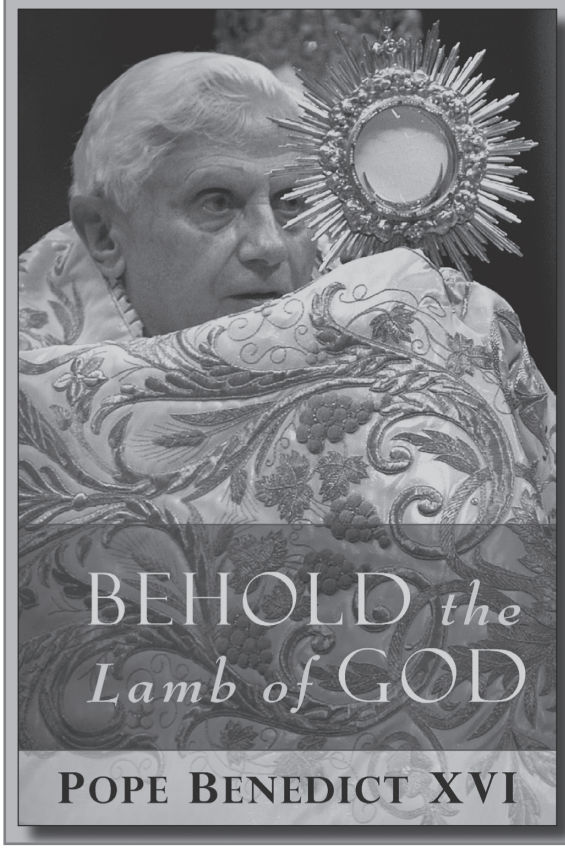

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The London Debate: Why We Lost and What We Must Learn *Editorial*

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable (2Timothy 4,1-2)

"Intelligence Squared"

In early November last year the international debating event franchise Intelligence Squared organised a televised debate in the central Methodist Hall in London on the motion "The Catholic Church is a force for good in the world." Archbishop Onaiyekan, the visiting ordinary of Abuja, Nigeria, and Ann Widdecombe MP were pitted against the atheist writer Christopher Hitchens and the popular TV star and writer Stephen Fry.

2100 people of all ages attended, most admitting at the outset that they were against the motion. It is probable that the audience was well stocked with supporters of the British Humanist association, who would have helped to swing the vote. Why it was not advertised more widely among the Catholic community beforehand in order to try to balance the audience is a moot point, but perhaps the initial statistics do pretty much reflect the state of popular opinion in Britain.

The most important thing to note is that over seven hundred people in the audience were won over during the evening to being against the motion, i.e. they became convinced that the Church is *not* a force for good in the world. That represents about three quarters of those who were either undecided or in initially favour of the Church. There are probably many factors that contributed to this sweeping intellectual defeat for the Catholic cause in England, but the most obvious fact is that the Catholic side fairly and squarely lost the arguments on the day.

Such a prominent defeat for the Church in the public forum is a very significant setback. This was not a minor event. The setting and the motion were subtly but clearly framed effectively to be putting the Church on trial in the popular mind. Thanks to contemporary media, the debate has significance far beyond the hothouse of London society, even far beyond the shores of Britain.

International Influence of The Debate

Via BBC World and *YouTube* hundreds of thousands, possibly millions, have now witnessed a slick and relentless trouncing of the idea that Catholicism is, all things considered, a force for good in society. The team who opposed the motion were experienced broadcasters and such well communicated ideas and apparent facts provide a memorable and influential template for the way people interpret the world. Damage has undoubtedly been done.

It would be understandable if ordinary Catholics who watched the proceedings felt embarrassed, confused and somewhat more circumspect about publicly admitting their Catholicism after such an experience. Practising Catholics in Western Europe are already swimming against the ebbing tide of a post-Christian culture. This latest attack will not make their lives any easier, particularly for those who live outside strong Catholic communities of support.

The observer was left with the feeling that Catholics have no real answers to the charges that were being made, only that our intentions are good. One impassioned floor speaker, calling himself an 'ex-Catholic' claimed to have "seen the light" and rejected the "death-dealing, backward, arrogant" activities of Catholics. How many more were silently prompted to agree with him and heard nothing cogent and convincing that night to help counter the diabolic temptation?

Many will have been seriously led astray by the false information so effectively presented on this evening. Many more will not bother to examine the arguments in detail, but simply note the defeat and be further influenced by the anti-Catholic momentum of popular culture. Those in authority in the Church need urgently to examine the causes of this defeat and take remedial action. At the very least our pulpits, parishes and publications should be ringing with the answers and corrective perspectives that should have been given during the debate.

Lack of Qualified Speakers

The most obvious question is why did we not have speakers who were better able to defend the Church from intellectual principle? Let us add immediately that no personal criticism is intended here towards Miss Widdecombe or Archbishop Onaiyekan, who at least had the courage to go into the lion's den and did their best to speak up for Christ with passion and sincerity in very challenging circumstances. May God bless them for their efforts.

However, we needed at least one speaker who could explain in a rigorous but popular way the objective basis of the Church's teaching, constitution and ministry, and properly analyse its salvific effects on human culture over the last two millennia. We needed someone who could answer off the cuff the detailed attacks made on Church history and policy: opposition to the use of condoms to combat AIDS, magisterial teaching about homosexuality; the Church's historical attitude to slavery, involvement in the crusades, relations with the Jewish people; someone who could properly confront and contextualise the evil actions of some members of the Church – in Ireland or Rwanda, for example.

Many might hesitate before responding to such a call. It would seem that many did. With so much negative publicity at the moment, perhaps they thought it best to keep their heads down until the storm passes; but is that the way of the Gospel? In any case, the task was not impossible. It would have been easy enough to predict that these issues would be raised. Given the profile and the foreseeable impact of the event, and given the quality of the opposing speakers,

we may ask, were the Catholic parties who did volunteer to stand up for Christ in public given any support, coaching or preparation before the event? If not, why not?

We understand that the organisers of the debate did invite the Archbishop of Westminster, who was unable to make it, but was there really no one else of standing, lay or clerical, in the English church who could have done the job? Who do we have who can defend the Church in a calm and articulate manner on these issues? Perhaps Charles Moore, John Haldane or Ian Ker. We could actually suggest a number of others, perhaps of lesser prominence, but all with the necessary skills, we think.

> "Were the Catholic parties who did volunteer to stand up for Christ in public given any support, coaching or preparation?"

The fact that there seem to be so few Catholics in our country willing and capable of defending the Church articulately on these issues is a tragic symptom of the crisis we are in. Moreover, where is the Catholic literature to back up the answers and provide the material for the debate? These are not radically new questions. They have been around for decades, some of them for centuries! Now they run largely unanswered and unchecked in the popular media. What precious little is left of Christian belief and values in our society is rapidly being eroded. Even the least educated of people in our pews are aware of these criticisms, but few have heard any answers. It would seem that the long standing anti-intellectual culture within the local Church has left us unable to counter the attack of a militant atheist and a *bien pensant* gay-rights protagonist.

Misinformation and Misunderstanding Unchallenged

The Catholic speakers gave no clear account of the nature and mission of the Church and they were, for the most part, unable to counter the articulate objections and selective propaganda thrown down by the opposition. Hitchens and Fry got away with presenting a patchwork of prejudices and common misconceptions that effectively linked Catholic teaching on sexual morality with sex abuse scandals, claiming that the Church is "obsessed with sex", then attributing it all to the Catholic claim to infallibility. This claim was caricatured and falsified as the Church thinking it is "the only owner of the truth." This is fairly typical conflation of issues, ignorance, misrepresentation and non-sequitur argumentation that we have come to expect from anti-religious propagandists. It is all answerable with skill, care, training and presence of mind.

They suggested that sexual abuse by some clergy and the Church's "betrayal […] of millions of AIDS sufferers in Africa" both flowed from the Catholic Church's "unnatural" approach to sexuality. Fry asserted that "celibacy is simply not normal and natural today". He compared the effects of the Church's supposed "obsession with sex" to the swinging between extremes of those with eating disorders. Celibacy, he suggested, was a form of affective anorexia which creates an equally disordered bulimic type reaction that has directly contributed to cases of child abuse. Again this conflation of issues can be refuted with an informed knowledge of psychology and the facts of the matter. The fact that it was not, leaves a widespread, damaging and uncritical perception unchecked and even more deeply confirmed – and our massively anti-life culture's own demonstrable obsession with sex unchallenged.

On the subject of AIDS and the use of condoms, he accused the Pope of perpetuating a lie. "And it is a lie" he insisted with great emphasis and patrician tone, to say that condoms contribute to the AIDS problem rather than helping to prevent it. The point that, among others, the AIDS Professor of Harvard University, not a Catholic, supports the Pope's view is well documented, although little publicised outside Catholic circles. This would have been a perfect opportunity to highlight the fact and explain the reasons. Stephen Fry, who claimed to be a believer in the Enlightenment and a "seeker of moral truth", could have been challenged to withdraw his slanderous calumny in the light of the actual evidence, however counter intuitive it may be to his prejudices. Sadly the opportunity was missed during the debate, but the continuing silence of others in the face of this public accusation against the Magisterium is even more disturbing. One can only conclude that those in authority simply do not accept the importance and widespread impact of the event.

Fry then made a number of historical claims designed to undermine the credibility of Catholicism through the ages. He said that Galileo was tortured. There is no historical evidence that this is true. Indeed there are many witnesses that it is not. The details and significance of the Galileo case have been discussed elsewhere (see below), but false claims like this should have been exposed.

He also accused St. Thomas More of personally putting people "on the rack" for reading the Bible in English, showing the desperation of the Church to maintain a monopoly over truth. It is interesting that Fry, who is Jewish of German extraction and an atheist, draws on the standard anti-Catholic propaganda of the English Reformation (Fox's book of Martyrs) to build his case. It seems that any "evidence", no matter how unreliable as history, will do as long as it can be made to count against the Catholic Church. The accusation of torture was made even during More's life-time in an effort to discredit him, but he vigorously protested that any one questioned in his custody never suffered so much as "a flip on the head". No supposed victim ever came forward to confirm the accusation, even among his worst enemies.

Again the questionable facts and the blatant prejudice could have been exposed. This would have been important because based on his TV appearances Fry is popularly perceived as an encyclopaedic authority on factual misconceptions and debunking urban myths. The tables

could have been turned on him, undermining his own credibility at several points.

Lack of Reasoned Arguments and Clear Answers

In the event, the central thrust of the opposition argument was left unanswered. The Bishop's main case was simply that there were a large number of Catholics who couldn't be all wrong. He mentioned the Church's work in helping the poor and those with AIDS, for example. Ann Widdecombe briefly acknowledged the pain and horror of recent scandals, conceded historic failures and then pointed out that the Church is so much more than its sexual teaching. She bravely tried to make a case that the Church's charitable work and her central message of spiritual salvation outweighs any other considerations.

> "It is no good now going over missed opportunities unless we learn from the debacle."

It was unclear from her input whether the Church's message, particularly on controversial moral issues, can be grounded in reason or not. Given the nature of the attack from Hitchens, this was an important point to miss. Stephen Fry compared her approach to the thief in the dock who says "please ignore that robbery, and the other breaking and entering, my Lord, because I annually give a present to my father". This is not in any way to impugn Miss Widdecombe's faith, but she is not a theologian, and when the attack is intellectual it is necessary to fight fire with fire. Those who sat on their hands while she at least attempted to speak up for the Church she loves are the ones who should examine their consciences.

Neither Catholic speaker critiqued atheist philosophies and the dehumanising consequences they engender, the loss of freedom, hope and social cohesion, and the violence that often characterises not just Marxist atheism but humanist secularism, as in the French Revolution, for example. The Church was not presented as the liberator from ignorance, proclaimer of the truth, and minister of grace that rescued Europe from barbarism, building our systems of justice, education and care for the sick over a thousand years, and so on. Given all of this, it is no surprise that the motion was defeated so convincingly.

However, it is no good going over missed opportunities after the event unless we learn from the debacle.

Voices of Dissent and Despair

Some Catholics might say that the real reason for the poverty of apologetic resources and apparent lack of energy within the ranks to defend the Church's position is simply that the official teaching on some moral questions highlighted by Fry and Hitchens are not actually tenable. Needless to say we disagree. That is nothing but capitulation to the world and loss of faith in the power of Christ to teach through the ages in his Church. However, we do think that the prominence given to such dissenting opinions within the Church is itself an exacerbating cause of the crisis.

Andrew Brown, a Catholic journalist for the *Daily Telegraph*, suggested on his blog that the Catholic speakers should have gone further than Ann Widdecombe did and "own[ed] up to some of the charges" to avoid being "humiliated". How many other Catholics, prominent or otherwise, agree with Brown and how might they have voted in the debate?

What dissenters in the Church often fail to understand is that, while secular intellectuals may use them to help erode popular support for Christianity, they do not respect them at all. The secularist intelligentsia routinely assume that anyone who truly uses their intellect must realise that the whole religious enterprise is childish superstition in the first place. To be a Christian doctrinal and moral relativist is, in their estimation, merely a staging post towards true "enlightenment" as a full blown secular atheist. They see them at best as stool pigeons for furthering their own agenda, at worst as woolly minded hypocrites who lack the courage to follow the rigorous path of "reason". Certainly the drip feed of dissent from Church teachings in high places lends credence to the perception, especially among the young, that Catholicism as historically understood and lived is a busted flush.

The gay campaigner Peter Tatchell, for example, predictably praised the Bishop of Killaloe for calling on the Church to drop its objection to homosexual activity, along with other moral teachings. In fact the likes of Tatchell want to go far beyond tolerance and acceptance. They want, and are rapidly achieving, a complete rewriting of the meaning of sexual activity altogether, the full consequences of which may prove to be a shocking and somewhat bitter irony. The first few pages of Brave New World are worth re-reading in the light of recent UK Government policy.

Already, last September in the *Guardian* newspaper and on a Radio 4 discussion programme Tatchell has called for the appropriateness of any sexual relationship to be judged on a purely individual basis, effectively calling for the abolition of any fixed age of consent, (http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/libertycentral/2009/sep/24/sex-under-16-underage). This is, in fact, the logical drift of the view that sex is just the expression of love divorced from any procreative or familial meaning, coupled with a general relativism of moral principle. The only way to avoid arriving at the final, shocking conclusion to that argument is to reassert the principle that informs *Humanae Vitae* and the whole tradition of the Church's teachings on the sixth and ninth commandments.

The Need for Clear Vision as well as Courage

Of course, it takes courage and clarity of mind to argue these things in public against the weight of public opinion and misinformation. Courage we must pray for, but clarity of vision must be taught, pondered, grasped and communicated. The argument cannot be won except against the background of a complete and cogent apologetic for the existence of God, the spirituality of man, the necessity of

"One can only conclude that those in authority simply do not accept the importance and widespread impact of the event."

revelation, the literal truth of the Incarnation, and the nature of the Church that flows from this fact of Divine teaching and ministry through the ages. The whole vision must be underpinned with the philosophical re-vindication of objectivity in nature and of the Transcendent as the greater reality within which all that is immanent unfolds – or to put it as St. Paul did to the sceptical and sophisticated intellectuals of Athens: "In Him we live and move and have our being".

> "The drip feed of dissent from Church teachings in high places lends credence to the perception that Catholicism is a busted flush."

It can be done. The tools are to hand. Often over the last few decades we have been told that the apologetic approach to catechesis is outdated and pastorally irrelevant, of purely academic interest. Surely, now, it must be devastatingly obvious that it is in fact most urgently needed. Without it, our people are lambs to the slaughter.

We do not know all the background to the organization and planning of the Intelligence Squared debate. What we do know is that this potential watershed for the perception of Catholicism in modern Britain and beyond was allowed to go ahead with speakers wholly inadequate to the task.

The Church on the ground is left looking as if it is quite unable to respond to the cultural car-wreck that is Western society and the increasing ferocity of its anti-Catholic bias. The situation impresses upon us, yet again, that the roots of our crisis are more of the intellect than of the will. The prophecy made by Cardinal Newman a hundred and sixty years ago is now being all too painfully fulfilled:

> "The assailants of dogmatic truth have got the start of its adherents of whatever Creed; philosophy is completing what criticism has begun; and apprehensions are not unreasonably excited lest we should have a new world to conquer before we have weapons for the warfare." (Introduction to *The Development of Christian Doctrine*)

The specific attacks on the Church could and should have been rebuffed, but there is a more fundamental project that we must all undertake. We need to sharpen the intellectual "weapons for the warfare" against the "assailants of dogmatic truth". This was the real context and spirit of the London debate.

An Intelligent Response to an Intellectual Crisis

A recent letter to the *Catholic Herald* pointed out that there was a debate on the exact same motion in Paris in 1830, which was also carried against the Church. Yet one good that was drawn out of this evil was that it prompted Frederick Ozanam, who had been present at the debate, to do something positive to bear witness to authentic Catholic action. As a result he started the St Vincent de Paul Society. Even humiliation and defeat can bear fruit in self examination and renewed effort.

We pray that this latest victory for the forces of unbelief will lead to an equally appropriate and fruitful response to God's grace, which must surely be offered in such desperate times. What we need is a coalition of faithful Catholic minds infused with an orthodox and contemporary vision of the Catholic faith, which they can articulate rationally and convincingly in the face of aggressive secularist propaganda.

If the challenge were simply criticism of ourselves in this generation as poor witnesses to the Gospel, excoriating us for failing to live as credible disciples of the standards of goodness we proclaim, then our response should be one of penance, redoubled prayer and renewal as servants of charity in the world. There is, no doubt, need for this too. But the attack is on the Church; on her impact throughout history, on the credibility, relevance, the social outcome and the actual veracity of her teaching. As such it is an attack on Christ.

As never before we need a new witness to the Wisdom Incarnate in Jesus Christ. We must be able to give an account of Catholicism that synthesises the fullness of truth revealed in him and the discoveries made about the world through science. We must be able to offer and argue confidently for a vision of life, love and, yes, the universe that re-vindicates Christ as the answer to the question that is Man.

> "Stephen Fry could have been challenged to withdraw his slanderous calumny in the light of the actual evidence"

O Word made Flesh, your Sacred Head is the seat of divine and human Wisdom. You are the Light who has come into the world to enlighten all peoples, a Light the darkness cannot overcome. We beg you, let your Wisdom so illuminate our understanding that we may proclaim You to our world with renewed confidence as the Way, the Truth and the Life through your holy Catholic Church in communion with the successor of St. Peter, who said: "Lord to whom shall we go? You have the message of eternal life".

Postscript

Humility does not prevent us pointing out that Faith has published numerous articles over recent years which have addressed in detail many of the attacks levelled against the Church in the debate. Below we offer a sample list, in reverse chronological order, with a summary of the main relevant theme of each article in italics. Such material would have been useful in the debate and is still of value in the aftermath or in similar circumstances.

Over the years we have carried many similar articles answering objections to Catholic teaching and exposing the emptiness of relativist thinking in doctrine or morals. Nonetheless, the main thrust of this magazine has always been to offer a positive and constructive synthesis of faith and reason, religion and science through which we may re-evangelise the modern world.

Recent Relevant Articles

Key Points

Christian Roots of Modern Society *Christian factors in rise of science and democracy in western society* July-Aug 2009 (see also our *Road from Regensburg* column, and Peter Hodgson articles in recent years)

The Failure of Secular Humanism *The Catholic Church is the holistic alternative to the visions that are breaking down human civility*. Nov-Dec 2007 (numerous articles)

Meditation on Church as a "force for good" "Fighting Slavery through the Sacrifice of Christ" Jul-Aug 2007

Infallibility of the Church *The Magisterium is a profoundly rational and Christian concept*. July-Aug 2006

Specific Issues

AIDS and Condoms *Formally giving out condoms is to become party to the basic problem which is promiscuity, thus making overall problem worse. Uganda which has prioritised the promotion of abstinence, has been successful, in contrast to those that don't*. May-June 2009 *See also review of "The Case for Condoms"* Mar-Apr 09

The Role of Women *Fashionable feminism has been mainly very bad for women and men. The Church's vision is at the heart of a healthy approach today*. Mar-Apr 2009, (two relevant articles). See also July 2009 (on modernity) March 2009 (on husband & wife) and May 2008 (on fatherhood)

The Sinful Priest *The Church has always recognised the tragic presence of sin in its midst – but this does not annul the "faithfulness of Christ" in the Church as the source of hope in civilization*. Nov-Dec 2008

The Slave Trade *The papal magisterium consistently condemned it from the very beginning, despite high profile opposition inside and outside the Church*. July-Aug 2008

Priestly Abuse *Some insights into its causes and contexts: Review of 'After Ascetism'* Jan-Feb 2008

Teenagers and Contraception *The government's perennial "more of the same" policy makes things even worse*. July-Aug 2007

The Inquisition *The real sins of some human individuals, sometimes with a certain authority in the Church, need proper contextualization* Jan-Feb 2007

The Crusades *Some were in principle justified*. May-June 2006

Sex *The Church has a beautiful and profoundly rational approach to sex. The separation of sex from procreation has been disastrous for our civilization*. Mar-Apr 2006 (several articles)

Homosexuality *We do not define people by the sexual tendencies and temptations they experience*. Nov-Dec 2003

Our pastoral column ***The Truth Will Set You Free*** is also dedicated to exploring the practical application of sometimes controversial Church teachings. Past issues and articles can be reviewed at *www.faith.org.uk* See also our latest range of pamphlets – see advert below.

The Defence of the Priesthood Against Luther: The Prologue *St John Fisher*

In this Year of the Priest we publish a British Bishop's defence against another full frontal attack upon the Church in an earlier age.

There have been published to the world from Luther's printing press many books which I have perused with great grief, for I found scattered throughout them so much of that poison by which innumerable simple souls, day by day, are destroyed. Yet of all that I have seen none is more pestilential, senseless or shameless than the one he entitles The Abrogation of the Mass, for in it he tries utterly to destroy the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ, which the Church has ever held to be most salutary, and the chief object of devotion to all the faithful of Christ. To effect his purpose, with much display of words he contends that there is no visible priesthood, and in every possible way he tries to show that the priesthood to which for so many centuries our forefathers have been accustomed was established partly by the lies of men, partly through the inspiration of Satan. This he asserts almost at the opening of his book: "If you wish to be truly a Christian, be certain, and never allow yourself to be moved from that certainty, that there is in the New Testament no visible and external priesthood save what has been set up by the lies of men and by Satan."

To put it briefly, Luther makes three attacks against the sacred priesthood. He brings forward three arguments by which, as with three battering-rams, he imagines that he can utterly destroy this Christian truth. For after he has delivered these three attacks upon the priests he adds

> "I am confident that by these three arguments every pious conscience will be persuaded that this priesthood of the Mass and the Papacy is nothing but a work of Satan, and will be sufficiently warned against imagining that by these priests anything pious or good is effected. All will now know that these sacrificial Masses have been proved to be injurious to our Lord's testament and that therefore nothing in the whole world is to be hated and loathed so much as the hypocritical shows of this priesthood, its Masses, its worship its piety, its religion. It is better to be a public pander or robber than one of these priests."

My God! How can one be calm when one hears such blasphemous lies uttered against the mysteries of Christ? How can one without resentment listen to such outrageous insults hurled against God's priests? Who can even read such blasphemies without weeping from sheer grief if he still retains in his heart even the smallest spark of Christian piety?

"He brings forward three arguments by which, as with three battering-rams, he imagines that he can utterly destroy this Christian truth."

Trusting therefore in the goodness of our Lord we will in our turn try to launch three attacks against Luther by which as with a sponge we hope to wipe away all the filthy and blasphemous things that have proceeded from his mouth against priests. But, to avoid confusion, lest the reader, when he hears of attacks, should be uncertain whether we mean our own or Luther's, we shall call our attacks rejoinders. Our first rejoinder then shall be the prescriptive right of existing truth which, from the founders of the Church through the orthodox Fathers has come down infallibly to us. The second shall be a series of axioms, drawn from the Holy Scriptures and arranged in due order, by which that priesthood, which he calls a visible one, shall be fully established. The third shall be a clear and direct rebuttal of Luther's objections, one by one. But as we do not wish to waste time with many words we shall at once enter upon our subject.

P. E. Hallett's Burns Oates 1935 translation of "Sacri Sacerdotii Defensio Contra Lutheram, first published July 15th, 1522. ■

"Like Us In All Things But Sin": Christ's Humanity and Our Self-deception *by James Tolhurst*

Fr James Tolhurst shows how the realization of the divinity and primacy of Christ draws us to a high definition of human nature in contrast to a perennial tendency to deny our woundedness. Manhood is defined by God made Man, not fallen Man.

Fr. Tolhurst is the author of *The Glory of These Forty Days*, Gracewing

The man whom Jesus cured of his blindness was asked if he believed in the Messiah and, rather plaintively, answered "Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?" Jesus' response is well known, as is the man's reaction, worshipping Jesus.

In a sense, we are all blinded by our culture, our background, our prejudices and, especially, our sins. But we need to start by recognising our handicap instead of persisting in saying we see when our blindness remains (John 9:41). The call to conversion which was placed at the heart of ecumenism by Vatican II and was reiterated by Pope John Paul as an adjunct of the millennial celebrations must be taken into consideration when we respond to Jesus' question about belief which he first put to the man born blind.

Maintaining Balance of Full Divinity and Humanity

St Paul told the Christians at Corinth that many of their deepest problems could be put down to their failure to respond with complete faith to Jesus present in the Eucharist. He writes "That is why many of you are weak and ill and a good number have died" (1Cor 11:29). Without going into the whole question of the impact of sin on the physical creation, we can note that St. Paul highlights the failure to recognise Christ in the Eucharist for who he is. The incidence of illness and death allowed Paul to bring to draw attention to the underlying cause of sickness: the failure to recognise the Real Presence of Christ. This failure had repercussions on the whole Christian community which manifested themselves in the divisiveness which had entered into the *agape* (1Cor 11:21).

The same issue was at the root of Jesus' question to his apostles: "Who do people say the Son of man is?" (Matt 16:13). If there is disagreement on this matter (as there clearly was) then one could not respond unequivocally as in fact Peter did. There was no question that Jesus was not a reincarnation of John the Baptist or one of the ancient prophets, but rather, the Son of the living God (Matt 16:16). This realisation was not one that human beings are able to reach of their own accord, anymore than they can distinguish, without revelation, ordinary bread from that which has been consecrated by a priest. There is a connection: both realities, the eucharistic body and the physical body, *are* the Body of Christ: they are both the mystery of faith.

From earliest years Christians themselves have found difficulty accepting that Jesus was truly God from God, light from light, begotten not made. Granted that nobody spoke like him, worked the miracles he did and defied the laws of nature; but this could be possible, it was argued, by drawing on divine support. This would make Jesus perhaps the greatest of the prophets, but not the Son of the living God. By making use of Greek patterns of thought, that is by appropriating and refining the notions of substance, person and nature, the bishops in the Councils at Nicea, Ephesus and Chalcedon arrived at a delicate but necessary explanation of the mystery of the Incarnation: one Person (the Son) in two natures (divine and human) without confusion or commingling.

But although it was affirmed that the human nature was assumed not absorbed in the mystery of the Incarnation, there continued to be doubts raised about the exact consistency of that humanity. In the fourth century it was argued (by Apollinarius of Laodicaea) that Jesus lacked a human soul since he was the Word of the Father. This almost has an attraction because it seems to give a greater dignity to the human nature of Christ. Unfortunately it thereby undermines the complete human nature which the Son of God assumed, since human nature requires both a human body and a human soul. But in a sense this is somewhat abstract. It is when we consider the 'workings' of the soul – willing and knowing that the problem becomes more acute. Constantinople III (681) taught that Jesus possessed both a divine and a human will operating in harmony. This is complemented by the teaching that Jesus enjoyed divine wisdom and human knowledge at the same time.

Jesus's Knowledge: Not Lacking Divinity

But these are difficult concepts to conjure with, given the fact that all human nature, except that of our Blessed Lady, is wounded by sin (original and personal) which prevents us from understanding what perfect humanity is. How for instance are we to interpret the words of St Luke that "Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favour before God and man" (Luke 2:52)? Does that entail a diminishing of the wisdom belonging to his divinity? By becoming man, did the Son of God undergo a creaturely limitation in his divine powers? In one sense, it is true that he humbled himself to take the form of a slave for our sake: this is the divine condescension which is a familiar theme in the Fathers of the Church. He needed to acquire experiential knowledge for the sake of his human nature. The intriguing mystery is what interpretation are we to put on Jesus' remarks about the final coming of the Son of man: "But of that day or hour, no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, *nor the Son*, but only the Father" (Mark 13:32)? Are we to conclude that this was hidden from the Son of God? Yet on his own evidence "I am in the Father and the Father is in me" (John 10:38).

"Jesus did completely share our humanity, but our humanity as it was in the beginning and as it will be in the new creation."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (474) is rightly circumspect in its treatment of this question. It does not go beyond what Christ himself tells us. That of which he claims to have no knowledge, he declares himself not to have been sent to reveal. But this still leaves us wondering. It has led some theologians to put forward the position that Jesus, as Son incarnate, is somehow subordinate to his Father in heaven. They argue that being "son" implies a relationship to a Father to whom one is subject at least in honour. The problem with this concept is that while seeming to solve one problem, it creates others. If we are to avoid Subordinationism (an offshoot of Arianism) we must not talk of Jesus' sonship in human terms, because in the Trinity there is equality of majesty "and no opposition of relationship" (Council of Florence 1442). This is not changed when the Son of God assumed our humanity. When he proclaims that he always does what is pleasing to his Father (John 8:29) this argues a complete unity of purpose which expresses itself also in a human nature aware that it achieves its fullest stature in doing the will of God. A theology which seeks to explain the Incarnation in terms of "from below to above" merits from Pope John Paul the withering criticism "inadequate, reductive and superficial" (*Fides et Ratio* 97) because it tries to view the Incarnation from a human philosophical perspective without taking into consideration the aspect of divine mystery which is essentially "from above".

We have to preserve in harmony both the experiential knowledge which Jesus gained during his life on earth and his continual awareness as only Son of the Father, sharing his glory. We cannot *explain* how both awarenesses can subsist in one person, but we are not dealing with a human personality but rather with the divine second *Person* of the Trinity. It does a disservice to theology if we say that Jesus was human like us because his humanity was assumed by the Word of God – our humanity is our own, and fallen at that. We must consider how we approach the humanity of Jesus without in some way diminishing the dignity of the identity of Jesus as Son of the Father.

Some writers seem to talk of a sort of identity crisis in Jesus himself. If we discount the grosser depictions of him as portrayed in *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *The Last Temptation of Christ*, we are left with the various insinuations regarding his knowledge and his will. Some ask bluntly "Did Jesus know who he was?" If we accept that awareness is a kind of knowing, then the answer must be in the affirmative. The tiniest infant is aware of its mother, even if it cannot articulate what motherhood means. Jesus explains: "I am not alone, the one who sent me is with me" (John 8:16).

Jesus's Humanity Not Sinful

When the Fathers of the Church talked of divine condescension in the Word become incarnate, they were developing the hymn in the letter to the Philippians : "Who, being in the form of God, did not count equality with God something to be grasped. But he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave." (Phil 2: 6-7a). But, given that it brought him to death on a cross, how far are we to understand that 'humiliation' as extending? The Fourth Eucharistic Prayer says that Jesus was "a man like us in all things but sin". We can compare this with the Letter to the Hebrews "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, *yet without sin*" (Heb 4:15). There is the faintest suggestion to some that Jesus shares in our humanity to the extent that he is tempted (cf. The *Temptations* in the wilderness) but did not succumb. This makes him more human, argue certain writers, because it brings him into the intimate psychological traumas of our humanity.

> "The continual unmasking of human sinfulness does nothing to enhance our respect for an underlying goodness in human nature"

But this is to argue that human weakness necessarily involves some aspect of sin. For us, this is often the case, due to concupiscence. It will always be for us that "Sin is crouching at the door hungry to get you. You can still master him" (Gen 4: 7). We have this leaning towards sin, even if we do resist with God's grace. But with Jesus, as with his mother, there was no concupiscence because there was no trace of sin. As Leo the Great says : "True God, then, was born in the complete and perfect nature of true man, completely human and completely divine. By human, I mean *that nature which the Creator founded in us at the beginning*, and which he undertook to restore. For there was no trace whatever in our Saviour of those elements which were introduced into us by the deceiver, and to which man, when deceived, allowed entrance. Nor does it follow that *because he undertook to share with us our weakness, he thereby shared our sins* (Letter 28).

Jesus did completely share our humanity, but our humanity as it was in the beginning and as it will be in the new creation. If we are to accept the conclusions of St Thomas then, since he was the Wisdom of the Father, his capacity for intimate participation in our humanity was that much greater, since sin darkens our intellect, as it weakens our will. As Jesus' will was always centred on the Father and his mind was not clouded by the attractions of sin, he was able to grasp the true tragedy of our human condition in a way that only great saints have understood. We glimpse this in St Luke's description of Jesus' lament for the holy city: "As he drew near and came in sight of the city he shed tears over it and said, 'if you too had only recognised on this day the way to peace! But in fact it is hidden from you eyes!'" (Luke 19:41-43).

But how much lies beneath the words called forth by his impending passion when in Gethsemane: "My soul is sorrowful to the point of death" (Matthew 26:38). This was

no mere rhetoric. The suffering which Jesus was to undergo, which was a result of many individual sins (the betrayal of Judas, the envy of the Sanhedrin, the cowardice of Pilate, the injustice of the crowd) was seen by the Son of God against the background of Sin itself as an assault on the will of an all loving Creator uttering it forth through his Word. The Venerable John Henry Newman claims that such was the nature of Jesus' perfect humanity that he could not "turn off" his sensibility to anguish and pain (hence the sweat of blood) and that for him there was a perspective of almost unending suffering.

In the light of all this, it almost seems impertinent to speak of Jesus' weakness when only the greatest of martyrs have been able to share, in some measure, his cup of suffering but without being able to absorb the anguish in the way that he did. He struggled not with sin, as we do with part of us leaning towards it, but as "A second Adam to the fight and to the rescue came. Should strive afresh against their foe, should strive and should prevail". (Cardinal Newman: *Dream of Gerontius*). He overcame *for* us in order to overcome in us, so deeply did he share our humanity. As the Letter to the Hebrews puts it "Now since the children share in blood and flesh, he likewise shared in them, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who through fear of death had been subject to slavery all their life" (Heb 2:14-16).

The modern preoccupation with psychological weaknesses and personal failings must not be allowed to insinuate itself into our perspective of the Incarnation. The continual unmasking of human sinfulness does nothing to enhance our respect for an underlying goodness in human nature; rather it panders to our own deep inadequacies. We need to feel that Jesus shares in our human condition – in its fragility and its mental anguish. He suffers with us in our pain and accompanies us in our death, because he has experienced it himself. But he also shows us an aspect of the dignity of our humanity that no person – no saint even can show because of who he is. Yes, he is like us in our humanity, but as it is meant to be, and one day will be. He is at the same time the revelation of the Father, full of grace and truth "He came to us out of the fullness of time contained in the mystery of God, and it was to this mystery that he returned after 'he had moved among us'" (Romano Guardini: *The Lord*. Chicago 1954 p. vi).

The Unchecked Growth of Scientism

by Murray Daw

In some extracts from Murray S. Daw's October article in the New Oxford Review *"Is Scientism Winning?", he argues that the Catholic Church is failing to engage effectively with modern science, hamstringing our attempts to re-evangelise the culture. He is Professor of Physics at Clemson University, South Carolina.*

I would like to pose a question: Is the Catholic community retreating from an engagement with science? Many Catholics, scientists and non-scientists, seem to be unaware of the importance or the urgency of this question. It is popularly believed that there should be no relationship between scientific research and the imperatives of the faith. Yet who can deny the enormous and often deadly impact of modem science?

The chasm between science and Catholic culture is a problem not only for Catholic scientists, but also for the wider Catholic community. Pope John Paul II outlined the importance of this problem and identified many of its contributing causes in his 1998 encyclical *Fides et Ratio*. Since that time, countless seminars and discussion panels have praised the insights of the Holy Father. One must ask, however, if there has since been any real, substantive progress in the understanding and practice of science as it relates to the fullness of knowledge. In order to accomplish the aims laid out by John Paul, we need to move beyond the broad endorsements of *Fides et Ratio* and toward a fully integrated understanding of science. The proper integration of science into Catholic culture requires nothing less than a full understanding of how science relates to a complete view of faith, of the world, of life as a whole, even of existence itself. Sadly, the great majority of Catholics are unaware that such integration is even possible. Indeed, I assert that the chasm between science and Catholic culture has never been wider.

These difficulties are not confined to the Catholic community. In a very real way, our time and the surrounding culture may be defined by scientific and technological advances, and perhaps even more by the incoherent and confused responses to these advances. The very real crisis of culture that characterises modernity has its roots in our understanding and use of science.

It is necessary that we Catholics realise that the solution can be found within the Church. The Catholic community can and should lead the way to a fuller understanding of all kinds of knowledge. And yet, modern Catholic culture is not even seriously engaged in, much less leading, the field of science. For centuries, Catholic scientists were to be found at the forefront of advances, but this is no longer true today. Catholic universities have, since their inception, proudly claimed the dual roles of researchers and teachers of science, but this too is no longer the case. Our institutions of higher education even those that are faithfully Catholic – no longer express a clearly Catholic vision of what science is, how it should be researched, or how it should be taught. Instead, our most faithful institutions of Catholic higher education are shrinking their science curricula. Good, faithful Catholic college students who want to major in science are caught in a bind: There are very few places to study science within a truly Catholic curriculum.

A Catholic science professor I know was recently hired by a leading Catholic liberal arts college. He was excited when he arrived on campus because, after years of working in other environments, he thought that he was finally about to learn, from his colleagues on the faculty, how one could teach science in a way that was integrated fully with the faith. It took only one week for him to discover, to his supreme disappointment, that no one on the faculty knew how this could be done.

Catholics quite rightly look to their institutions of higher education to set the standard for the integration of science and faith. Unfortunately, most such institutions are stymied on this question.

Separation of Church and Science

If one word could suffice to name the disordered philosophy at the root of our current difficulties, it would be "scientism". Scientism is the self-annihilating view that only empirical statements are scientifically meaningful […]

Scientism causes an extreme dualism, where the life of faith and the life of reason exist simultaneously but separately. It is not unusual that Catholic scientists themselves consider this compartmentalization as the arrangement most appropriate to both faith and reason, as though combining them would despoil both. Many who hold this view take it as a given that there should be a "barrier" or "wall" between the two – a sort of "separation of Church and science." For such a scientist, faith acts at best as a "moral compass," but the direction it provides does not breach the wall of separation, and is neither aided by nor aids reason. In other words, the compass itself appears to be unreasonable.

This fragmented life is untenable, as pointed out by Pope John Paul II: "Simple neutrality is no longer acceptable." We "cannot continue to live in separate compartments, pursuing totally divergent interests from which they evaluate and judge the world." Scientism thus divides us by harboring a "fragmented vision of the world." Science without faith is subject to "idolatry and false absolutes," while religion without science is subject to "error and superstition." Working together, "each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish" (*Letterio* Reverend George Coyne, Director of the Vatican Observatory, 1987).

Many times the discussion of science and faith falls into well-worn ruts, which has the effect of stultifying rather than resolving. I once asked a science instructor at a Catholic high school how the subject of faith and reason was handled in his science class. His response was a cheerful one: "Oh yes, we have talked about Galileo." […]

The Two Natures of Christ in the New Testament *by Dominic Rolls*

Fr Dominic Rolls shows how some key Gospel texts are at the heart of the classical and crucial Christian doctrine, as articulated in the Catechism, that Christ is one person with two distinct natures. He uses some of Edward Holloway's words to bring out the import of this doctrine. Fr Rolls is Parish Priest of Dorking and scripture lecturer at St John's Seminary, Wonersh, Surrey.

Introduction

Pope St Leo the Great tackled the key issue of the Personhood of Christ decisively at the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451. He was responding to the monophysite heresy proposed by Eutyches and others, which tended to deny the dual natures by overemphasising the divine nature of Christ at the expense of his human nature. Leo countered:

> "Following, then, the holy fathers, we unite in teaching all men to confess the one and only Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. This selfsame one is perfect both in deity and in humanness; this selfsame one is also actually God and actually man, with a rational soul and a body. He is of the same reality as God as far as his deity is concerned and of the same reality as we ourselves as far as the humanness is concerned; thus like us in all respects, sin only excepted. Before time began he was begotten of the Father, in respect of his deity, and now in these 'last days', for us and for our salvation, this selfsame one was born of Mary the Virgin, who is God-bearer in respect of his humanness.
>
> "We also teach that we apprehend this one and only Christ- Son, Lord, only-begotten- in two natures; and we do this without confusing the two natures, without transmuting one nature into the other, without dividing them in two separate categories, without contrasting them according to area and function. The distinctiveness of each nature is not nullified by the union. Instead, the properties of each nature are conserved and both natures concur in one person (*prosopon*) and in one reality (hypostasis). They are not divided or cut into two persons, but are together the one and only and only-begotten Word (logos) of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus have the prophets of old testified; thus the Lord Jesus himself taught us; thus the Symbol of the Fathers (Nicene Creed) has handed down to us"(Definition from Leo's *Tome*. Chalcedon AD 451)

Whilst there can be little doubt that Leo's Tome saved the Church at a time when many bishops outside Rome were teaching heresy, there are difficulties in understanding exactly what Leo meant and taught. How is it that we can understand the humanity of Christ, which implies limitation, and his divinity, which implies infinity? Theological issues arise as to how Jesus can be free, as to how he can suffer, and as to how knowledge and self-consciousness worked in him. Leo's teaching brilliantly balances the human and divine natures existing within the one divine person in Christ without mixing, separating or diminishing the integrity of the natures, but the problem for biblical theologians lies in Leo's use of non-scriptural terminology, most notably 'person' itself. In outlining his magnificent definition, he tells us clearly: "Thus the Lord Jesus himself taught us", but he does not say where or how. If Sacred Scripture is the soul of theology, then there must be continuity between Leo's deliberations guided by the Holy Spirit and the sacred text itself. There can be no disjunction between the voice of the bible and the solemn teaching of the Magisterium.

This paper will attempt to delve into the scriptural evidence for Jesus, bearing in mind how the hypostatic union of Our Lord can be understood. It is not possible to unwind and analyse all texts, or to address every key issue, but it is hoped to provide data for discussion and more profound meditation. In addition, an attempt will be made to comment on the texts Edward Holloway used in delving into the mystery of the Word made Flesh. Some of the Fathers of the Church will also be considered by way of contrast, and also the writing of the present successor to Peter and Leo's direct descendant in office, Benedict XVI. The Catechism of the Catholic Church makes widespread use of scripture. Its teachings on Christ will be considered to demonstrate how so profound a doctrine is presented to the Church moving through the 21st century.

Scriptural Evidence

Bearing in mind Leo's insistence on the literal divinity and literal humanity of Christ, texts will be considered that emphasise firstly his divinity and secondly his humanity. This is not to parcel up Christ, as if Leo did not equally stress the oneness of Jesus' divine person, but merely an exercise in seeing how these distinct natures work. No consideration of such a massive subject could possibly begin without remembering the wistful dilemma contained in the last verse of John's gospel: "There were many other things that Jesus did; if all were written down, the world itself, I suppose, would not hold all the books that would have to be written" (Jn 21, 25). Like the evangelist, much will be left out that is of great importance. The choices made are by no means exclusive.

Divinity

"In the beginning was the Word …" John 1:1f

Leo himself refers to Jesus as the 'only-begotten Word of God', placing himself directly in the line of those Fathers, such as Polycarp and Irenaeus, who received the apostolic teaching of St John. Of course, the Prologue of John emphasises the whole Christ, human as well as divine, making great play of the fleshly reality of the Word (Jn 1, 14). But it is the fact of divinity that adds power to this meditation. Something new has happened in the world. The Old Testament speaks of the Word of God, and of his Wisdom, present with God before the world was made (cf. Pr 8, 22ff; Ws 7, 22ff). By it all things were created; it is sent to earth to reveal the hidden designs of God; it returns to him with its

work done (Is 55, 10-11; Pr 8, 22-36; Si 24, 3-22; Ws 9, 9-12). For John, too, the Word existed before the world in God (Jn 1, 1-2); it has come on earth (Jn 1, 9-14), being sent by the Father (Jn 3, 17.34) to perform a task (Jn 4, 34ff), namely, to deliver a message of salvation to the world (Jn 3,11ff); with its mission accomplished it returns to the Father (Jn 1, 18). The Incarnation enabled the New Testament writers, and especially John, to see this separately and eternally existent Word-Wisdom as a person – the person of God: "Something which has existed since the beginning, that we have heard, and we have seen with our own eyes; that we have watched and touched with our hands: the Word, who is life – this is our subject" (1 Jn 1, 1).

John the Baptist appears as a witness in John's gospel (Jn 1, 7), but he also acts as a contrast to the Word in the Prologue. He was a man who came, sent by God (Jn 1, 6) in juxtaposition to the Word who was coming into the world (Jn 1, 7). A mere man is placed side by side with the divine person, and the contrast jars. Many commentators view the Baptist parts of the Prologue as later additions, but the vast abyss between the God of holiness and the greatest of his servants serves to throw both vocations into relief. The Baptist verses of the Prologue are an integral part of the mind of the Beloved Disciple. Furthermore, the pre-existence of the Word is also emphasised through the words of the Baptist. In human terms, Jesus is six months younger than his cousin, but the Baptist's understanding of Jesus' divinity comes through robustly: "He who comes after me ranks before me because he existed before me" (Jn 1, 15).

John's Prologue also lies at the heart of Holloway's theology in his book, *Catholicism: A New Synthesis*. For Fr Holloway, Jesus Christ is the Heir of the Ages, predestined from all eternity in the plan of God to come into "his own things, his own inheritance" (p. 240 echoing Jn 1, 11). For this very reason the Word of God, the Divine Wisdom who is a Person, was made flesh, "that God might show that every peasant is a prince, and every serving maid a princess, for they are born into the family of God" (p. 216). Time and again he emphasises the necessity of the Incarnation in God's purpose for creation. It is the impact of divinity that saves us:

> "It is necessary that the Heir of the Ages come into his own through the womb of woman, so that the human nature of man may be the perfect means of the action and hallowing of God in Person upon 'his own' (cf. Jn 1, 11) and upon the material order itself, through mankind. Since the incursion of sin it is also necessary that through the same human nature of God in his Divine Person, there should be given the perfect vehicle too of reconciliation and restoration, not only as a fact, but as an ontological work in the real order, in the living order, in its own right" (p. 240)

"*He took Peter and James and John and went up the mountain to pray…*" (Lk 9, 28f).

The phenomenon of the Transfiguration conveys both awe and wonder. Prayer for the monks of the Eastern Church focuses on the Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me a sinner") with the purpose of perceiving the uncreated light of Tabor within the depths of the soul. This mystical union finds its inspiration in the singular grace afforded Peter, James and John on the holy mountain. In Gen 15, 7-21, God makes a covenant with Abram, showing himself in the "smoking furnace and a firebrand" (Gen 15, 17), whilst for Abram the whole experience is one of fear and dread: "Now as the sun was setting Abram fell into a deep sleep, and terror seized him" (Gen 15, 12).

"Pope Benedict XVI makes a clear connection between the events on Tabor and those on Mount Sinai"

To experience the holiness of God is to experience his utter separateness and the vast abyss between Creator and creature. This is exactly what the apostles find on Tabor, though by a miracle of grace they stay awake: "Peter and his companions were heavy with sleep, but they kept awake and saw his glory" (Lk 9, 32). They are in the presence of God as divinity shines out through humanity, and their Master is transfigured (Lk 9, 29). Note that he is not changed, but transfigured. Nothing new happens to Jesus; he is merely seen literally in a new light. The distinctiveness of each nature is not nullified by their union, nor are they confused (cf. Definition of Chalcedon above). Later on, Peter will rely on this encounter to help counter the "cleverly invented myths" (2 Pet 1, 16) of the Gnostics, who denied the flesh in Christ: "we had seen his majesty for ourselves. He was honoured and glorified by God the Father" (2 Pet 1, 16-17). The Prince of the Apostles witnesses to the literal divinity of Christ shining out through his literal humanity.

In his book, *Jesus of Nazareth* (p. 308), Pope Benedict XVI makes a clear connection between the events on Tabor and those on Mount Sinai in Exodus 24: "To Moses he said, 'Come up to Yahweh, yourself and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu'" (Ex 24, 1). If Jesus is the new Moses, the apostles are the Israelite leaders, even though, as the Pope realises, seventy of the elders are included in the Exodus account. Both accounts emphasise the saving power and mercy of God without losing a sense of intimacy and even tenderness: "He laid no hand on these notables of the sons of Israel: they gazed on God. They ate and drank" (Ex 24, 11). In the Exodus account, transcendence and immanence shine forth. In the fullness of time, they will reach their culmination in the divinity and humanity of Christ, united in the divine person of God the Son, which shines out on Mount Tabor.

Pope Benedict analyses Luke's account of the Transfiguration in the context of Jesus' prayer, as Luke is the only evangelist to state Jesus' intention to pray as the reason to ascend Tabor: "The Transfiguration is a prayer event; it displays visibly what happens when Jesus talks with his Father: the profound interpenetration of his being with God, which then becomes pure light. In his oneness with the Father, Jesus is himself "light from light". The reality that he is in the deepest

core of his being…that reality becomes perceptible to the senses at this moment: Jesus being the light of God, his own being-light as Son." (p. 310). The Pope further explores the profound relationship between Father and Son in a beautiful passage on the cloud and the voice of the Father (cf. Lk 9, 34): "The holy cloud, the 'shekinah', is the sign of the presence of God himself. The cloud hovering over the Tent of Meeting indicated that God was present. Jesus is the holy tent above whom the cloud of God's presence now stands and spreads out to 'overshadow' the others as well. The scene repeats that of Jesus' Baptism, in which the Father himself, speaking out of the cloud, had proclaimed Jesus as Son: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased (Mk 1, 11)" (p. 316).

> *"All things were delivered to Me by My Father. And none knows who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son wills to reveal Him"* (Lk 10, 22 and Mt 11, 27)

The Arians of the fourth century denied the divinity of Christ by claiming of the Son that 'there was a time when he was not'. By denying the equality of Father with Son, and admitting a degree of subordination of Son to Father, they emptied out the literal divinity of Christ and made a mockery of the Incarnation. Arius followed the school of Antioch in his scriptural exegesis, which favoured a literal interpretation of the sacred text. He was vehemently opposed by Athanasius, who valiantly and almost single-handedly upheld the orthodox view of Christ as God the Son. The latter followed the Alexandrian school of exegesis, which emphasised the allegorical sense of Scripture. By examining the way Athanasius strenuously refuted the Arian misinterpretation of Scripture, the true divinity of Jesus in the New Testament shines through.

In his treatise, "On Luke 10, 22 and Matthew 11, 27", Athanasius claims decisively that the text refers not to the eternal Word but to the Incarnate Word. He adds further that

> "from not perceiving this they of the sect of Arius, Eusebius and his fellows, indulge impiety against the Lord. For they say, if all things were delivered (meaning by 'all' the Lordship of Creation), there was once a time when he had them not. But if he had them not, He is not of the Father, for if He were, He would on that account have had them always, and would not have required to receive them. But this point will furnish all the clearer an exposure of their folly. For the expression in question does not refer to the Lordship over Creation, nor to presiding over the works of God, but is meant to reveal in part the intention of the Incarnation" (sect. 1.1ff).

Athanasius then makes clear that the operation of God implies no subordination or imperfection: "for God is not imperfect, nor did He summon the Son to help Him in His need; but, being Father of the Word, He makes all things by His means, and without delivering creation over to Him, by His means and in Him exercises Providence over it, so that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father (Mt 10, 29), nor is the grass clothed without God (Mt 10, 30), but at once the Father works, and the Son works hitherto (cf. Jn 5, 17). Vain, therefore, is the opinion of the impious. For the expression is not what they think, but designates the Incarnation." (sect. 1. 18-24)

Athanasius further explains the purpose of the Incarnation, and therefore the correct interpretation of the deliverance of Father to Son referred to in the above text:

> "He 'delivered' to Him man that the Word Himself might be made flesh, and by taking the flesh, restore it wholly. For to Him, as to a physician, man 'was delivered' to heal the bite of the serpent; as to life, to raise what was dead; as to light, to illumine the darkness; and, because He was Word, to renew the rational nature. Since then all things 'were delivered' to Him, and He is made Man, straightway all things were set right and perfected. Earth receives blessing instead of a curse, Paradise was opened to the robber, Hades cowered, the tombs were opened and the dead raised, the gates of heaven were lifted up to await Him that 'comes from Edom'" (sect 2. 6-13). Athanasius continues to defend the divinity of Christ, quoting from the parallel text, "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand" (Jn 3, 35): "Given in order that, just as all things were made by Him, so in Him all things might be renewed. For they were not 'delivered' unto Him that, being poor He might be made rich, nor did He receive all things that He might receive power which before He lacked: far be the thought: but in order that as Saviour He might rather set all things right." (sect. 2. 18-21)

"Unless Christ be the 'Son of Man' as well, he cannot offer priestly sacrifice for us"

Using another parallel text, "Everything the Father has is mine" (Jn 16, 15), Athanasius shows how allegorical exegesis can be used to refute error and uphold the true divinity of the Son: "As then the Light from the Sun, which illumines the world, could never be supposed, by men of sound mind, to do without the Sun, since the Sun's light is united to the Sun by nature; and as, if the Light were to say, 'I have received from the Sun the power of illumining all things, and of giving growth and strength to them by the heat that is in me', no one will be mad enough to think that the mention of the Sun is meant to separate him from what is his nature, namely the light; so piety would have us perceive that the Divine Essence of the Word is united by nature to His own Father" (sect. 4 1-6)

Humanity

> "'*Look at my hands and feet; yes, it is I indeed. Touch me and see for yourselves …*" (Lk 24, 39f)

Few texts display the humanity of Christ as graphically as the gospel accounts of the resurrection appearances. There is continuity and discontinuity with the human nature Christ displayed before his Passion, death and resurrection. Here, the continuity staggers the apostles. It is the same Jesus;

the one they spent three years accompanying on his public ministry, and came to know and love so well. It is the same body that they abandoned in his moment of trial, which was then transfixed on a cross in a cursed death, imparting grievous wounds in his hands and his feet. These wounds are displayed to the dumbfounded apostles (Lk 24, 40). He ate fish before their eyes (Lk 24, 43), displaying the cast-iron reality of his material nature. Then there is the discontinuity. Jesus no longer appears constrained by space and time in his risen humanity. He comes and stands among them in the upper room (Lk 24, 36) as suddenly as he had vanished from the sight of his companions at Emmaus (Lk 24, 32). In his apparitions described by Luke and John, the disciples do not at first recognise the Lord: they need a word or a sign (Lk 24, 30f.35.37.39-43; Jn 20, 14.16.20; Jn 21, 4.6-7; cf. Mt 28, 17). This is because the risen body, though the same body that died on the cross, is in a new condition; its outward appearance is therefore changed (Mk 16, 12), and it is exempt from the usual physical laws (Jn 20, 19). Whatever the miracle of his new state after resurrection, Jesus is still the same member of the human race.

> ""it becomes us to fulfil all justice' (cf. Mt 3, 15), which is to say, every order of rightness and proportionality."

This humanity of Christ found one of its greatest defenders in St Ignatius of Antioch: "For my own part, I know and believe that he was in actual human flesh, even after his resurrection. When he appeared to Peter and his companions, he said to them, 'Take hold of me; touch me, and see that I am no bodiless phantom'. And they touched him then and there and believed, for they had had contact with the flesh and blood reality of him" (Letter to Smyrna, Chap III, 1ff). Ignatius died for the Faith in the early years of the second century. He was a convert to Christianity and governed as bishop in Antioch for many years, appearing voluntarily before the Emperor Trajan in Antioch in 107AD, where he boldly professed his Christianity. He was condemned to the wild beasts, and began the long journey to eventual martyrdom in Rome on 20th December in the same year.

Virtually nothing is known of his time in Antioch, but the letters he wrote to the churches as he journeyed to his death reveal many details of the apostolic Church, including docetist attacks on the humanity of Christ. These heretics claimed that Christ only seemed to take on human nature (thus 'docetism' from the Greek 'dokein' to seem). They despised the common episcopacy and clergy, who had none of the special 'knowledge' they arrogated to themselves. Ignatius gives a vigorous defence of orthodoxy to the Church in Smyrna, which reads like a post apostolic Symbol of Faith in the flesh and blood reality of God the Son:

> "Glory be to Jesus Christ, the divine One who has gifted you with such wisdom. I have seen how immovably settled in faith you are; nailed body and soul, as it were, to the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and rooted and grounded in love by his blood. You hold the firmest convictions about Our Lord; believing him to be truly 'of David's line in his manhood', yet Son of God by the divine will and power; truly born of a virgin; baptised by John 'for his fulfilling of all righteousness'; and in the days of Pontius Pilate and Herod the Tetrarch truly pierced by nails in his human flesh (a fruit imparting life to us from his most blessed passion), so that by his resurrection he might set up a beacon for all time to call together his saints and believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, in the one body of his Church" (Smyrna I, 1-6).

> *"They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us?. …"* (Lk 2, 48f)

Jesus' finding in the Temple gives a rare glimpse of the adolescent humanity of God the Son. It gives a tantalising insight into the relationship of Son to Father, especially thrown into relief by Our Lady's reference to Joseph as the father of Jesus (Lk 2, 48). An alternative translation of Lk 2, 50 reads 'in my Father's house' for 'busy with my Father's affairs'. In either case, Jesus is asserting his own personal duty to his Father (cf. Mt 4, 3ff) and, in the interests of duty, an absolute independence of creatures (cf. Jn 2, 4; Mt 12, 46-50).

Holloway gives this helpful insight into the workings of the humanity of Christ:

> "When the Person of the Son speaks from the contents and requirements of his nature as man, there is all the longing of the 'Son of Man' for release from his travail, and for total repossession of the Father. There is a certain dependence, even subordination of tone which does not deny his Godhead, but marks his mediatorial role, his Kingship over men, and his priesthood through his human nature. Unless Christ be the 'Son of Man' as well, he cannot offer priestly sacrifice for us, in his Person, for a priest is essentially a mediator, and as the Eternal Word, Christ is 'One' in God […] As Jesus Christ, God and man, he is the One from whom we spring, and One with the Father in being. Yet it is right when he speaks in the nature of man, that we should see that the 'Father' is still his fruition, in the Divine Person, and that we should see in his human nature also, as the Son of Man and High Priest of Mankind, the reverence, the subordination, and the joy with which we should be swept up in and through him to the Father. As Christ himself said, 'it becomes us to fulfil all justice' (cf. Mt 3, 15), which is to say, every order of rightness and proportionality. We see the truly human in Christ in the words spoken in the olive grove (cf. Lk 22, 42), and in the reminder to the apostles that if they loved him, they would put selfishness to one side, and would be glad that he was going to the Father, 'for the Father is greater than I' (Jn 14, 28), which is but to say that the Father is the source of my origin and my joy. The word used for 'greater' also means 'forbear' in Latin. […] That Christ always spoke of God the First Person of the Trinity as 'my Father' in a special and proper sense, and regarded him as the source of his joy and the goal of

his homecoming, is evident from the incident when, as a boy of twelve, Christ showed a grave surprise that Mary and Joseph should have looked for him as lost when they should have realised that "I would be at my Father's House" (Luke 2, 49)" (*Catholicism*, pp. 230-231).

Regarding the hypostatic union, Holloway insists that there is no interaction, in the sense of fusion, between the divine and created natures of Our Lord:

"Christ is not a mixture of God and man. In the full sense of the Messianic title, Christ is the Son of Man only from the time of the Incarnation, but he is not, not ever a human person, a human *thing*. There is only the Divine Person, who is both God and man, perfect in the nature of both. When God wills into being an angel or a man, he wills that some other thing shall subsist besides the Divine Necessary, and that this substance be fulfilled through himself. This is to make the created personality with its created subsistence. When God wills that, for the perfection of the work of creation and the salvation of mankind, he should take upon himself a created nature, he wills that 'I' shall be a man, so that the human nature of God lives through the Divine 'I', through the Divine Person of the Word, who subsists in the Essence of God. There does not proceed, therefore, a created human personality because this is, in God, simply 'Me'. It is not 'the other', created through the will of God." (ibid, p. 230).

"*While they were at table eating, Jesus said, 'I tell you solemnly, one of you is about to betray me […]'*" (Mk 14, 18f).

"*After psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, 'You will all lose faith, for the scripture says*: ***I shall strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered*** *[…]*" (Mk 14, 26f).

How is it that we can understand the human knowing of Christ, which the above text illustrates so graphically? His foreknowledge regarding the Passion is a clear exercise of his divinity, but expressed through his sacred humanity. The Catechism of the Catholic Church explores this mystery in a powerful section on Christ's soul and human knowledge (CCC 471-478).

Pope Damasus I condemned Apollinarius for asserting that in Christ the divine Word had replaced the soul or spirit. Against this error the Church confessed that the eternal Son also assumed a rational, human soul (CCC 471). The Catechism continues:

"This human soul that the Son of God assumed is endowed with a true human knowledge. As such, this knowledge could not in itself be unlimited: it was exercised in the historical conditions of his existence in space and time. This is why the Son of God could, when he became man, 'increase in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man' (Lk 2, 52), and would even have to enquire for himself about what one in the human condition can learn only from experience (cf. Mk 6, 38; 8, 27; Jn 11, 34). This corresponded to the reality of his voluntary emptying of himself, taking 'the form of a slave' (Phil 2, 7)" (CCC 472).

The Catechism is insistent, however, that this human knowing of Jesus was not autonomous, taking strength from the thoughts of the Fathers, particularly Gregory the Great and Maximus the Confessor:

"At the same time, this truly human knowledge of God's Son expressed the divine life of his person. 'The human nature of God's Son, not by itself but by its union with the Word, knew and showed forth in itself everything that pertains to God'. Such is first of all the case with the intimate and immediate knowledge that the Son of God made man has of the Father (cf. Mk 14, 36; Mt 11, 27; Jn 8, 55). The Son in his human knowledge also showed the divine penetration he had into the secret thoughts of human hearts (Mk 2, 8; Jn 2, 25; 6, 61) [… thus] by its union to the divine wisdom in the person of the Word incarnate, Christ enjoyed in his human knowledge the fullness of understanding of the eternal plans he had come to reveal. What he admitted to not knowing in this area, he elsewhere declared himself not sent to reveal (Mk 13, 32; Acts 1, 7)" (CCC 473-4).

Mark's Passion narrative, of which the above text is a small but significant part, brings home the sheer sadness and isolation of Christ's betrayal. As such, it has all the power of a human drama, where the weakness and vulnerability of Christ do not compromise his divinity, but serve rather to accentuate the staggering generosity of his self-sacrifice. Even Peter's attempt at bravado only exacerbates Jesus' sense of being utterly alone. Our Lord's self-emptying is total, but it is also tragic and moving. His death should never have happened.

Though he is fully God, he is also fully human. It was no charmed path leading him through Gethsemane to Golgotha, but a brutal and savage barrage of barbarity that would have been as terrifying as it was painful, as humiliating as it was unrelenting. Contemplating the humanity of Christ brings the horror of the Way of the Cross home to us. It is only then that men can be touched in their own hearts, for

Jesus did it for us. As St Teresa of Avila insisted to her sisters, "It is the humanity of Christ that saves us".

Conclusion

The divinity of Christ bursts forth on every page of the New Testament. Though Leo the Great quoted no Scripture in his Definition at Chalcedon, the truly divine and truly human Jesus encountered in the gospels is the same Christ whom the Pope defended and proclaimed in the teeth of great opposition. Both Scripture and Magisterium are guided by the Holy Spirit and form one line of truth coming down to men of every age. From creation to final consummation at the Second Coming, there is only one wisdom and plan of God for salvation. He is the Divine Person of the Son made flesh, fully God and fully man.

The Unchecked Growth of Environmentalism *by David Taylor*

Is the Church really aware of, or concerned about, the rapid growth of various environmental movements? Their aims are mainly good but a significant proportion are semi-pagan and wholly indifferent if not hostile to Christianity and the Church.

First of all I must state that I am not referring to, and largely approve of, the older and more scientific environmental and sustainability organizations that are trying to prepare us for the very different and difficult future we will face in the coming years. Such organizations as Friends of the Earth, The Permaculture Association, The Centre for Alternative Technology, The Soil Association, Garden Organic (previously the Henry Doubleday Research Association – HDRA), the many Wildlife Trusts and Conservation bodies and the recent Transition Towns Network try to address these issues. These organizations are not the problem I wish to highlight.

But many also try to provide for the spiritual longings of those today who reject organised religion. This ranges from legitimately reconnecting people with the natural world, to, in varying ways, providing a "spiritual journey". Some of this seems like a re-run of the early 19th century Romantic Movement – many today clearly desire to escape from industrial civilization and live a simpler life. This religious quest results in centres holding courses entitled "The Journey", "The Homecoming", "The Circle of Fire", this latter being described as "a handrail into the mystery of becoming […] a descent and an ascent". Others include, for their summer festivals and camps, Earth Mysteries, Earth Energies and Ley Lines, Ancient Knowledge, Mayan Calendries, Shamanism, Serious Esoterica. All this mixed up with, in this writer's view, perfectly valid concerns about the environment, conservation, sustainability and the importance of the natural world for human well-being. It is a real jumble.

There is often an infatuation with all things "Celtic". This occasionally includes the Celtic Church, but with little understanding that it was an integral part of the One Church, and was thoroughly orthodox and Trinitarian. However, the monks in Celtic lands do seem to have had a greater awareness of the Creation as a revelation of God than has often been the case.

But what is almost universal is that in all the emphasis on "honouring the sacred" Christianity has almost no place, whereas Buddhism, Shamanism and Native Religions often do. Christianity and the Church are regarded as, at best largely irrelevant and at worst as actively malevolent. Many sites and festivals that have a "sacred" emphasis do in practice indulge in various forms of nature worship, sometimes overt. On one website which asks, "Did the Christians get it wrong?" – the sun is regarded as a conscious entity whose worship has been "cast out by today's dominant religion".

Thus what is happening, and quite rapidly, is the recrudescence of paganism in this country, all combined with valid environmental concerns and various alternative therapies and life-styles. Much of this can be gleaned by looking at the multitude of "Green Events" in pamphlets, flyers and websites.

All this does not, however, prevent some of the pagans from stealing from Christianity when it suits them. On a weekend singing (and environmental) course the woman leader, who turned out to be shaman, used as her favourite chant *Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est*. At another venue, Gregorian chant was being taught – but the words were poems about nature. One of the poems – a good one about animate and inanimate nature – began Glory be to Gaia. The teacher said it was just a song about nature – "nothing religious about it".

This paganism, with the quasi- or actual worship of nature, leads easily to worship of the Earth as the deity – the worship of Mother Earth, or the Goddess.

Resurgence magazine may be called the flagship of many of these groups; it is in many ways an excellent magazine and is deeply concerned with "spiritual awareness" as well as with environmental matters, but needless to say it considers orthodox Christianity to be totally irrelevant.

The Church does not seem to be very aware of this diffuse but growing neo-pagan movement. Most Christians seem to know little or nothing about it.

How the Church can counter this is no doubt a difficult question. First it has to realise the extent of this widespread and growing phenomenon. Many Catholics, in this writer's experience, seem to think that any concern for "Green" issues, environmental degradation, ecological collapse or climate change is non-Christian and automatically puts you with the New Agers and pagans. Sadly, the ones most likely to be interested and concerned are the liberals, not the more orthodox.

I find it interesting that Teddy Goldsmith, who founded the *Ecologist* magazine and who recently died, has been called "The Godfather of Green". In an article about him (*Ecologist*, March 2007, reprinted after his death on the Ecologist web site), it states that,

> "Today's leading Greens are almost all drawn from the political left […] and are anxious to trumpet their 'progressive' principles. In this context, Teddy Goldsmith's stubbornly small-c conservative vision, and his commitment to 'stability', 'tradition' and the teachings of ancient religions are red rags to a green bull."

The article also said that in his time he had been called "an extreme right-wing ideologue", a "fascistoid", a "Bolshevik", a "wacko-communist liberal" and a "Jacobin terrorist". So maybe he got it about right.

Perhaps this is another reason why many Church people are ignorant of, or hostile to, Green and environmental matters – they perceive them as extreme left-wing issues. But they are not, and surely Christians, above all, should be working hard to proclaim the glory of God's Creation and doing their best to protect it – not leaving it to pagans and secular left-wingers.

For further information:

www.earthcentrenetwork.org.uk gives a list of some of relevant organizations. New websites seem to be appearing all the time.

www.sunrisecelebration.com is one of the more pagan organizations, which also includes valid environmental concerns.

Recent Science and the Personhood of the Human Embryo *by Dylan James*

Fr Dylan James Parish Priest of Shaftesbury, Dorset, and Moral Theology Lecturer at Wonersh Seminary, Surrey, argues that the 2008 Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act radically failed to reflect the implications of recent science. This is a focussed update of his longer March 2007 article.

It's now over two decades since the Warnock Report of 1984 led the way in approving experiments on human embryos in Great Britain. Back in 1984 many scientific claims were made to justify the 14-day time period that was given to experiment on embryos. More recently, the UK government's Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act of 2008 has extended embryo experimentation while working on the assumption that the 14-day time frame can be accepted as a starting point. However, recent science undermines the claims that were initially made for Warnock and this article will outline some points which indicate why the government should have re-thought the Warnock position and not used it as a foundation.

Before looking at the science, it must be noted that the notion of a "person" is a philosophical concept and not a scientific one. Similarly, which "rights" we should accord to persons is an ethical matter and not a scientific one. However, science is very relevant because it shows us whether or not the embryo meets the criteria which define a person. Catholic bioethicists typically use the definition of the person proposed by Boethius in the sixth century: "a person is an individual substance of a rational nature". Turning this into a set of scientific criteria, this means that a human person must be an "individual" and thus a basic question that needs to be asked about the early embryo is whether it is just a loosely-related collection of cells or whether it is properly an "individual". Scientific data now implies that the transition from egg and sperm to a new individual takes place within minutes of fertilisation beginning. Of course, none of this is likely to convince the hardened utilitarian who merely cares about the greatest good for the greatest number and does not care about whether it is a person he is experimenting on. But most people don't appeal just to utilitarian calculus and neither should our legislation.

1. First, let us recall what the Warnock Report took as being scientifically established. In the 1980s it was claimed that the cells of the early embryo were "undifferentiated" and that the embryo was thus no more than a "loose collection of cells". The supposed evidence to back this claim was that (it was then thought) it is not yet established which cells will become which types of future tissues, e.g. which will become the placenta and which will become heart cells. The early cells were referred to as "totipotent" meaning that any one of them could become a whole new individual if separated from the cluster. It was thought that the cells only become differentiated at 14 days when the primitive streak (the early backbone) forms. As evidence of the undifferentiated status of the cells, it was pointed out that up until the formation of the primitive streak at implantation the embryo can divide and form identical monozygotic twins. It thus seemed to Warnock fair to claim that prior to 14 days there was no "individual", there thus could not be a "person", and so it was ethical to experiment on the early embryo. Standard literature thus came to call the pre-implantation embryo the "pre-embryo" to indicate that it was judged to have a significantly different status to the later embryo.

Since the turn of the millennium, however, embryology has been aware of the "positional information" possessed by the cells of the early embryo. This means that the cells are not as "totipotent" as once thought and that the cells are in fact already differentiated at the two-cell stage with it being largely determined which cell's progeny will form the "embryo proper" and which cell's progeny will form extra-embryonic material like the placenta. This positional information is established by the position of the initial sperm entry point, at fertilisation, long before the formation of the primitive streak at 14 days. It is the position of the sperm entry point that establishes an axis that determines where the initial cell will divide into two cells, where the position of the primitive streak will be, and thus where the backbone will form. There is thus a direct line of continuity from the position of the sperm entry point to the future adult body. Further, we also now know the speed and manner in which the ovum's outer membrane changes to repel further sperm penetration, a process that establishes the zygote as a closed system. This process takes 1-3 *minutes* from initial sperm penetration of the outer membrane.

2. This said, what of the claim that the capacity of the pre-implantation embryo to divide into twins means that it cannot be an individual? As the philosopher Prof. Kevin Flannery SJ has noted, a divisible individual is still an individual, and a "divisible individual" is not a contradiction in terms. As Aristotle observed, many living individuals are divisible into two or more other living individuals, like plants or flatworms. Being divisible does not stop you being a living individual. Of course, what happens to the identity of the pre-existing individual is unclear. If the initial zygote possesses a spiritual soul, what happens when the embryo splits? Does the original embryo die and its soul get replaced by two new souls in the two new twins? Or does it continue and a new person split off from it, with its newly created soul? Or is twinning the result of an internal materially determined factor that would indicate that there were two souls present from fertilisation onwards, each relating, in their own specific manner, to the one physical, organic unity of cells?

Though such questions cannot be easily answered, Nicanor Austriaco OP has argued that the first explanation corresponds better to some of the scientific data. What scientific data might indicate whether or not the embryo starts out as an individual person that is then destroyed in

the division that produces two new individuals or whether it starts out as two closely related persons destined-to-twin? If the first scenario holds, then twinning would seem to be some form of defect in the program of development and if this is the case then we would expect to see some other signs of defect. This is, in fact, what we do find, with identical twins suffering from a statistically significant greater number of birth defects, defects ranging from indeterminate sex to anomalies of the tongue to Down syndrome. The fact of these defects does not easily accord with the second two scenarios and suggests that the first scenario could be the philosophically correct way to interpret the situation. This said, recent studies from the Mio Fertility Clinic in Yonago, Japan have suggested that it may be possible to predict which embryos will divide into twins. The research on this point is presently inconclusive, but, if this is true, then it would seem to follow that the third scenario outlined above is the correct interpretation. In short, we don't yet have enough scientific information to be confident in determining which of the three philosophical interpretations is correct.

Nonetheless, whether twinning is the result of an individual that becomes two individuals or is the result of a cell cluster that was already two individuals but looked like one, the potential of the pre-implantation embryo to divide does not imply there is not already an individual present (or two individuals present), an individual who is a person with rights. Despite the fact that we don't presently fully understand the factors that lead to the phenomenon of twinning, its existence as a relatively rare phenomenon does not give us grounds to deny the early embryo its personal rights.

3. Having said that the cells of the early embryo are already differentiated, it must be noted that before the 14-day stage the cells do still have a certain "plasticity" in that they can be re-programmed to another differentiation: the positional information they once possessed seems to be destroyed by their being separated from their cluster. None of this suggests, however, that the cell cluster was not an individual prior to such a change, nor does it suggest that more individuals appearing in twinning is a philosophical problem.

Another aspect of the "plasticity" of the cells of the early embryo can be seen in the formation of chimeras. A chimera is a creature that has cells of a different DNA in different parts of it. In Greek mythology the chimera had a lion's head, a goat's body and a serpent's tail. In modern science chimeras have been created with mice by merging together two different embryos when they are at the cell-cluster stage. Amazingly, the cells seem to re-differentiate themselves to form one new embryo that will mature into an adult mouse that has some parts of it with one set of DNA and other parts with another set of DNA –black and white mice embryos have been combined to produce this in a visual way. This phenomenon seems also to occur naturally and some humans have been found to be such chimeras with different DNA in different parts of their body. One thing this indicates is that DNA is not as central to individuality as was once thought: some writers used to claim that the early embryo was an individual because it had established DNA, however, the existence of chimeras suggests that DNA is not a precondition of individuality. In fact, the previous paragraphs have argued that individuality is established within 1-3 minutes: well-before DNA is established.

4. One final scientific issue: some sceptics of the personhood of the early embryo point out that the embryo suffers from a very high mortality rate. Some estimates claim that as many as 50% of embryos do not survive to birth. If all of these embryos are persons and thus have immortal souls, is heaven really full of people who never even achieved birth? This may seem like a startling concept.

In considering this it is worth noting that many "lost" embryos are not real embryos at all but are rather "pseudo-embryos" and that this is why they are expelled from the womb. While science's ability to analyse this is still developing, Austriaco illustrates the issue by arguing that "complete hydatidiform moles" are such non-embryos while "partial hydatidiform moles" are embryos (but disabled ones). But in the final analysis it should be noted that for much of human history infant mortality has approached or exceeded 50% and thus this also suggests that heaven is full of people who never achieved adulthood. No Catholic would conclude from this that the baby at the breast is not a person worthy of full respect and protection. Similarly, the high mortality rate that embryos suffer from is no reason not to consider them to be persons.

5. Finally, when all is said and done, it must be conceded that a debate remains. Though science today gives us stronger reasons to argue for the personhood of the early embryo than there were two decades ago, some people still doubt the pre-implantation embryo's personhood. How then should we proceed in the face of doubt? When dealing with the rights of others, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1974 identified an important moral principle when it reiterated that, "It is objectively a grave sin to dare to risk murder". If a deer hunter sees a bush moving he cannot shoot until he is morally certain that it is a deer and not a person who is moving it. The basic point with respect to the embryo is that recent science has shifted the burden of proof strongly in favour of the notion that an individual is established at fertilisation and thus strengthens the philosophical position that a person is instantiated this stage. It follows that the risk of murder is even clearer now that it was when the Warnock Report was produced in 1984. The fact that the 2008 Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act failed to recognise this is much to be regretted. ■

Letters to the Editor

The Editor, St. Mary Magdalen's Clergy House, Peter Avenue, Willesden Green, London NW10 2DD editor@faith.org.uk

ARE WE ABLE TO DEFEND THE POPE?

Dear Father Editor,

Pope Benedict's visit to visit Great Britain in 2010 is not only an excellent opportunity for Evangelisation, it also offers us the chance to put the record straight and defend the Faith. I'm thinking in particular of William Oddie's "Comment on the Comments" last July on the Roman Curia ("Friends Like These").

Catholics will need to be prepared for the major discussions which the Pope's visit is likely to provoke, such as on "condoms in Africa", contraception in general, abortion, child abuse and sex before marriage. In the lead up to the Papal visit, do you think *Faith* magazine could present a series of articles on the topics most likely to make the news? Perhaps a summary of the basics of Catholic teaching on each issue, arguments from scripture, arguments from natural law and empirical evidence from modern society and scientific understanding?

When the inevitable media backlash against the Pope occurs, we may then have thousands of Catholics ready to take them on in the pubs, workplaces, homes, blogs and social networking sites across the country.

Yours faithfully
Luke O'Sullivan
Beverley Close
Swansea

EDITORIAL COMMENT:

We thank Mr O'Sullivan for his, we think rather too generous, flattery concerning our capacity and our influence. Our current editorial does, in effect, argue that our Church increasingly needs to become so able and should rise to the challenge. The *Guardian* has indeed signalled open season with Tanya Gold's 29th September propaganda piece headlined "Ignore the bells and the smells and the lovely Raphaels, the Pope's visit to Britain is nothing to celebrate. Gordon Brown is 'delighted', David Cameron is 'delighted'. I am 'repelled'." Meanwhile we would refer Mr O'Sullivan to our list of recent relevant articles on page 6.

UNDERSTANDING HERESY

Dear Father Editor,

I was heartened to read James Tolhurst's article on "The Nature of Heresy" (July 2009) and only wished he had expounded further at length and also got right back to first principles quoting St. Augustine of Hippo and the great St. Paul that the inimical core of all heresy is: "worshipping the creature rather than the Creator."

Yours faithfully
Anthony Brett Dawe
Cherwell Street
Oxford

THE REAL PRESENCE

Dear Father Editor,

I could not help noticing that neither Fr Thomas Crean nor yourself (July 09) made reference to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Last Supper. Surely if the Mass comes from anywhere it is the Last Supper. Christ says to do this in memory of ME. I take that to mean His birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension; His teaching and everything he stood for.

Yours faithfully
Douglas Gibbons.
Malden Rd
New Malden

Dear Father Editor,

Fr Crean's article on the Eucharist (Sept 09) stresses the need to see the sacrifice of our Lord's mortal body as the essential fact which makes the offering of the Mass a sacrifice; and his thesis is usefully complemented by the editorial comment, which reminds us that "the presence of the Lamb that was slain for our sins is inseparable from his risen and glorified presence before the Father in heaven". The sacrifice of our Lord's mortal body was a *once and for all* sacrifice, but the interior sacrifice, which the 'bloody' sacrifice expressed, is a *for ever* 'unbloody' sacrifice. The editorial comment makes clear that, seen in the proper context, the resurrection of our Lord is relevant to the full understanding of what is accomplished by the celebration of the Eucharist.

It is remarkable that our Lord's own comment on this subject is so rarely mentioned. Our Lord foreshadowed the institution of the Eucharist by the miracle of the loaves, then he preached at length to the crowd who followed him to the synagogue in Capernaum, telling them that he was the true Bread from heaven and that this Bread was his flesh which they must eat if they wished to inherit eternal life. This aroused disbelief and hostility in the crowd, even amongst many who had become his disciples. They said, 'This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?' (John 6:60). They were appalled at what they understood to be our Lord's justification of cannibalism. Jesus understood what they felt, and his reply was not, 'But I mean this only in a metaphorical sense' – which is an interpretation often given to his words by devout non-Catholics, who share the Capernaum crowd's view of what Jesus was saying. Jesus refuted their implicit imputation of his justifying cannibalism in these words:

"Does this upset you? What if you should see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before?" He followed this reply by a statement which seems to contradict what he had just said about the necessity of eating his flesh in order

"Catholics will need to be prepared for the major discussions which the Pope's visit is likely to provoke"

to attain eternal life: "It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer." Our Lord was now speaking not about his sacrifice on the Cross, which was indeed the sacrifice of his mortal flesh but of the eating of his sacramental body in the Holy Eucharist. It was his mortal flesh that was sacrificed on the Cross, it is his risen and glorified flesh that is present in the Holy Eucharist. It is this spirit filled flesh and not the dead flesh of the Saviour on the Cross that gives life.

The resurrection throws light therefore on the doctrine of transubstantiation. The medieval scholastics, themselves largely responsible for the terminology of this doctrine, were uneasy about it: that a substance could change without the accompaniment of a change in the accidental attributes of that substance was a concept that their logical theory ruled out.. Duns Scotus in particular affirmed that he accepted the doctrine not through logical persuasion but on the authority of the fourth Lateran Council.

The logical anomaly contained in the doctrine of transubstantiation disappears if it is our Lord's risen body that is really present in the Eucharist, for the risen body will have different attributes from the body in its mortal state. It follows also that our mortal flesh cannot perceive the risen body of Christ, and so it is not our fleshly body that is eating the body of Christ but our eternal spiritual person who is becoming united with the risen Christ (body, blood, soul and divinity) when our mortal bodies eat and digest the sacred species in the Eucharist.

In receiving the Eucharistic species we are momentarily raised up into that life where the body of Christ will continue to be the food of our immortality. The substance of Christ's risen body will also be that with which he 'fills the whole creation' (Eph 1:23).

Yours faithfully
Fr Ronald Walls
Orkney Islands

SYMPHONY OF THE WORLD

Dear Father Editor,

I find the words of Fr Michael Heller reported in your July '08 Cutting Edge column moving ("Templeton Winner, Mind And Mathematics"). He argues "Within the all-comprising Mind of God what we call chance and random events are well composed into the symphony of creation".

Some years ago I was listening to a Beethoven symphony on my stereo when the music suddenly 'took hold of me'. I was transported from my previously listless state, finding myself experiencing wave upon wave of something akin, it seemed to me, to rapture. It soon flashed in upon me that this blessed state I was in was all due to the exertions of another human being; a tortured, tempestuous character who was prey to increasing deafness and melancholia. Such suffering, yet such sublime, exquisite outpourings. And nearly two hundred years after his death here was I, a favoured recipient of the fruits of his travail.

To my rapture was now added wave upon wave of gratitude. I wanted Beethoven to walk into that room so that I could hug him, there and then, for the pure delight he had given me (perhaps, in that region as yet somewhat beyond our comprehension, he too was able to take delight in my response).

Then, in the fleeting swiftness of a second, I became aware of all the musicians, and of their conductor, whose various God-given talents had been compounded together into a melodious whole; and all for me to share in. Years of study and accumulated years of practice, the constant striving for better and better – more gratitude, more gratitude, and yet more still.

My being was now totally alert. I knew that, in turn, I would not be experiencing this bliss if it had not been for the wonders of electricity; obeisance then to its discoverers, yes, and to the electricians, the technicians, the music publishers, the record publishers, the record producers, the instrument makers and cabinet makers, the storekeepers, the delivery men, yes to all those myriad men and women whose seemingly un-coordinated efforts, which in themselves were the product of millennia of past strivings, had unwittingly, conspired to bring me, yes me, paradoxically as it must seem, a few fleeting moments of timeless bliss. And I was not swallowed up by this experience but was consciously, vibrantly aware of every single element in it.

There was I, an isolated example of bewildered twentieth century urban man, touched by the finger of God. Then came the realization of what life could be, must be, and with Christ as our example and support, will be, for 'Behold, I make all things new' (Revelations 21:5) – more gratitude.

And so, if the scientists are right and the human journey is from Big Bang to Big Crunch (or whatever, for God may very well have his own ideas) we will not, as natural materialists say, have travelled from one void to another but from beginning of life to fullness of life: to borrow from T.S. Eliot,

We will have finally ceased from all our exploring

and
The end of all our exploring will be to have arrived

back
At the place from where we started, and we will

know it for the first time – ah, how wonder-full it will appear.

Yours faithfully
Gerry Egan
Fairview Avenue
Wallasey
Merseyside

Comment on the Comments

by William Oddie

A Daring Decision Fulfils a Newman Prayer

> I very much hope that Catholics in this country and elsewhere will warmly welcome into our communion the members of the new ordinariates. Nevertheless, in terms of the relations between Rome and the bishops' conferences affected, the way in which these ordinariates have been invented is disgraceful.

Thus, Nicholas Lash – in, of course, *The Tablet* – on the Apostolic constitution which has authorised and enabled the setting up of jurisdictions under which Anglicans may become Roman Catholics not individually but collectively. The *Tabletatura*, of course, hate the whole thing; and they object particularly to the reception of communities rather than individuals, quite simply because far more will come, numerically, under this dispensation than under what previously obtained: i.e., special fast-track arrangements for clergy wanting reordination (this has helped substantially with the shortage of priests) but the old business of "individual submission" for the laity, and off with them to some denatured liturgy at the ghastly concrete Catholic barracks down the road. Quite simply, the Spirit-of-Vatican-II boys don't want the converts at all, because they know that they are coming not for the English bishops, and certainly not for *The Tablet*, which they loathe and despise, but for the Pope. *The Tablet* would like smaller numbers to come, one by one, in a way which provides the opportunity to acclimatise them into the kind of reductionist belief-system they favour. Thus *The Tablet's* weaselly suggestion that

> They do have an alternative …. they could, as countless converts to Roman Catholicism have done before them including many former Anglo-Catholics, apply to enter into full communion through the normal processes. Nowadays that usually means enrolling in the parish-based scheme called the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, or RCIA, which includes a rite for baptised Christians who want to become Catholic.
>
> After a journey of faith involving instruction from a parish catechist, candidates follow a series of public steps leading to a ceremony of admission, with others who have made the same journey. … A simple formula of doctrinal assent is required … far less elaborate than adherence to every one of the Catholic catechism's 2,865 paragraphs which the apostolic constitution envisages.

Well, there you have it: what *The Tablet* wants for any convert is the half-cock reprocessed seventies Catholicism you get in RCIA (I speak from personal experience) rather than the full-blooded total Catholicism of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (which many of them already know far better than most cradle Catholics).

But you can understand *The Tablet's* hostility and confusion. The fact is that the whole thing has been an enormous shock: not only to those who hate it all but to those who are still glowing with delight, for whom the words "personal ordinariate" induce not the slightest irritation at the usual graceless Vaticanese but on the contrary, sheer joy at the generous fulfilment the Pope has granted of their deepest hopes : these include many former Anglicans like myself and many more now preparing for the journey they have always longed to make, together with their whole ecclesial community. Of that, more in a while: but first, we need to get back to that extraordinary announcement: extraordinary both in its content and in its timing, as well as in its *modus operandi*. Why so very unexpected?

This was a question asked by more than one journalist. Robert Moynihan, of *Inside the Vatican* was by no means hostile. But he had questions. "I must say", he began,

> … that today's press conference was among the strangest I have ever attended at the Vatican. Why? Because many things either didn't make sense, or were not explained. For example, the "missing person."… German Cardinal Walter Kasper, head of the Council for Christian Unity, the man who has been nominally in charge for many years now of the decades-long Catholic-Anglican dialogue.
>
> According to all usual protocol, Kasper should have been at this conference, but was not (he is in Cyprus for a few days carrying on a dialogue with the Orthodox). … Levada added that the matter has increasingly come under his doctrinal congregation, and less under the ecumenism office headed by Kasper.
>
> Another oddity was the strange haste to hold this press conference. Why do I say "strange haste"? Because the normal time-frame for advising all journalists of an upcoming Vatican press conference was not respected. Normally, the Vatican gives a week's advance notice for a major press conference. … But today's conference was announced via a cell phone text message from Press Director Father Federico Lombardi, S.J, sent to journalists' cell phones at only 5 pm yesterday ….
>
> Finally, it seemed quite odd that the text of the document that the press conference was held to present was… not presented!

I have a theory which explains it all. The former Cardinal Ratzinger has been deeply concerned with this question ever since the former Bishop of London, now Mgr Graham Leonard, first asked for the possibility of receiving communities into the Church together with their priests, a request the then prefect of the CDF supported (as, at first, did Cardinal Hume). The whole thing was prevented by bitter opposition from two sources. Firstly and most decisively, from the English bishops.

"I saw their profound happiness at the Pope's great and apostolic act."

The second source of opposition, predictably, was the Council for Ecumenism, who were still clinging to the unreal fantasy – despite women-priests and what that issue revealed about Anglican ecclesiology – of Anglican-Catholic unity.

After it was all over, Cardinal Ratzinger sadly asked a group of Romeward-bound North American Anglicans, "what are the English bishops afraid of?" The Pope asked one of the most senior converts an even more damning question: "why are the English bishops so unapostolic?" (Many of them, including Cardinal Hume, were enraged, when I revealed this – as well as the details of the secret negotiations with Bishop Leonard and others – in my book, *The Roman Option*. My book was published on a Tuesday: the Bishops, who happened to be meeting at the time, issued a statement condemning it only two days later – something of a distinction, though an uncomfortable one at the time).

So, the Pope was determined that those who had stopped it all in the early nineties would, this time, be left entirely out of the loop. The operation was put under the authority of the CDF. But why was it all done so suddenly? And why *when* it was – before the relevant document was even ready? I suspect the answer is that the Pope was determined to pre-empt any political manoeuvreings that might get under way if the existence of the plan should leak, or even, if the usual notice were given, during the week's speculation that usually precedes Vatican Press conferences. He may even have heard that a leak had already taken place. So, I suspect, he acted quickly. He called a Press conference with less than 24 hours notice; and he presented the English bishops with a *fait accompli*.

I cannot resist quoting at this point – not for the first time – what John Henry Newman once said about the decisiveness of the great Popes. Though they are conservative, Newman says, it is not in any bad sense: they are conservative because they are "detached from everything save the deposit of faith", which it is their special province to preserve and also to proclaim. And although "the Popes have been old men", says Newman, they "have never been slow to venture out upon a new line, when it was necessary. And, thus independent of times and places, the Popes have never found any difficulty, when the proper moment came, of following out a new and daring line of policy… of leaving the old world to shift for itself and to disappear from the scene".

Of course, many of the English bishops, and their house journal, *The Tablet*, didn't like it one little bit: that all added to the gaiety of nations. Others did, however, including Damian Thompson, in his Telegraph blog:

> This is astonishing news. … The Pope is now offering Anglicans worldwide "corporate reunion" on terms that will delight Anglo-Catholics. In theory, they can have their own married priests, parishes and bishops – and they will be free of liturgical interference by liberal Catholic bishops who are unsympathetic to their conservative stance.

He was wrong about married bishops, but dead right to home in on the fact that those within the ordinariates "will be free of liturgical interference by liberal Catholic bishops who are unsympathetic to their conservative stance". One must, surely, chuckle with delight at the wonderfully ironic thought of the physical overlap of all those deliberately liturgically impoverished South coast dioceses with all those currently Anglo-Catholic parishes, soon to be safely in the Catholic Church but barricaded against the local Catholic bishop within their ordinariate, South coast parishes so renowned for reverent, sumptuous and utterly numinous liturgy, often with wonderful music sung by professional choirs, and glorious antique vestments, saved from the scrap heap as they were thrown out of Catholic churches by the Spirit-of-Vatican-II.

Two weeks after the announcement, I was present at the 125th anniversary of what is a kind of unofficial Anglo-Catholic chaplaincy to Oxford University, Pusey House, (where I was once one of the clergy). Oxford was where I discovered the Catholic faith in its Anglican manifestation, when I went up to be trained for the Anglican priesthood at St Stephen's House, the most unambiguously papalist of the seminaries of the Church of England. It was the beginning of a sometimes difficult road. At the ordination retreat which St Stephen's House always organised for its ordinands (mistrusting the official diocesan retreats they would be going to later) we were told that the greatest challenge we would have to face would be "to be faithful priests in an apostate Church": and so it proved.

So when I saw the faces once again of so many with whom thirty years before and in the decades that followed I had – so often bitterly embattled against the Establishment – faced that challenge, men from whom inevitably I had become separated on my own conversion to Rome; and when I saw their profound happiness at the Pope's great and apostolic act, and their excitement at the prospect before them, I could not fail to remember once more a famous passage from the *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, which the agnostic George Eliot said she could not read without tears; and certainly, I cannot:

> … I gather up and bear in memory those familiar affectionate companions and counsellors, who in Oxford were given to me, one after another, to be my daily solace and relief; and all those others, of great name and high example, who were my thorough friends, and showed me true attachment in times long past….
>
> And I earnestly pray for this whole company, with a hope against hope, that all of us, who once were so united, and so happy in our union, may even now be brought at length, by the Power of the Divine Will, into One Fold and under One Shepherd.

The miracle of the Apostolic Constitution is that for a later generation, that hope is no longer "against hope". It is almost too much for the mind to absorb: but it has happened. And for tens of thousands, life will never be the same again.

The Truth Will Set You Free

by Fr Christopher Heenan, Parish Priest of West Calden and Addlewell, West Lothian

THE CHALLENGE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY

Meetings are part of every priest's life. That particular morning I was in a meeting with our local Dean and the Head of the Catholic Secondary where I was Chaplain, discussing how the chaplaincy might develop. Some meetings seem to serve little purpose, some can be useful: this meeting was providential. News came in that one of the students had been found dead. He was 15 years old. Evidence suggested that he had taken his own life. A strategy was quickly agreed. The year group would be brought together and the Head would break the news, after which the Dean would read a passage of scripture and then I would say a few words and offer a prayer.

Thankfully, such events are rare. It highlights the crucial role of the school chaplain: to be a presence of faith.

After the funeral a memorial service was held in the school. We invited the young man's family and we also asked the Church of Scotland Minister who had conducted the funeral to participate (the young man was not a Catholic).The service was simple, dignified, and emotional but filled with Christian hope.

The chaplain also has a vital role in planning and leading the liturgical life of the school community. Differences of opinion emerge on the use of "innovation" in the liturgy. My natural tendency would be to avoid anything that could be construed as being a "gimmick". Young people are not won over by such things. Many in the school community, student and staff alike, do have some sense of God, some notion of faith, but all too often it is vague and lacks formation and solidity. Innovation and moving away from the norms of the Church's Liturgy do nothing to strengthen and build up faith and an attachment to the Church. The Chaplain is present in the school to do both. We should strive for excellence in the celebration of the liturgy and in what surrounds it: excellence in our liturgical music and well trained readers; beautiful and noble vestments and vessels; an oratory that is well kept and clearly identified as a place of worship, a place that is set apart and not a spare classroom. All these signals are picked up on. If we treat the liturgy seriously, then our young people will too.

One year on, the year group asked if they could plan a memorial service. They put together a very fine, dignified service, which was clearly Christian prayer: Scripture, prayers for the deceased, for the family, for themselves, in thanksgiving. No pop songs or poems, these came after the service during a show of photographs and memories. I was moved and very proud. It highlights another aspect of chaplaincy: trust. It is a grace if the Chaplain can trust in the gifts and abilities of other members of the school community, share his role with them and benefit from their expertise.

As time moved on, and I speak in terms of months and years, another need highlighted by this tragic situation was the need for reconciliation. Often in our sacramental provision for secondary schools Confession does not have a very high profile. Yet it can be a moment of great grace for young people. Our concentration on Confession focussed on the lower years of the School. I look back and think that we lacked courage with regard to Confession and the older students. The new school Oratory provided us with a fine venue but in future years I would have placed Confession in the context of a retreat away from the school. It is very difficult to find a perfect approach to providing Confession in the Secondary school context. The challenges are great. A retreat is a good opportunity to provide teaching on this Sacrament. Many do not avail themselves of the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament, but those who do provide the impetus for us pastors of souls to keep trying to improve our approach.

Secondary School Chaplaincy can often seem to be unrewarding. The Chaplain often feels that he is trying to promote something that many of the school community have little or no interest in. My work in the secondary school benefitted from the fact that I was in the parish for a lengthy time. I knew many of the students from the parish or from the primary schools of my two parishes. It takes time for trust to build up. But it does and that makes High School Chaplaincy "easier". Secondly, a strong Chaplaincy team made up of teachers was invaluable, not just in planning and delivery of Services, but in terms of support. The students would tell their teachers how much they appreciated a Mass or service or the opportunity of going to Confession. The teachers realised how important it was to pass this on to me. High School Chaplaincy is perceived as being difficult, this is because the rewards and impact that are made are so often not evident to the Chaplain.

It is difficult to condense ten years of High School chaplaincy into a few words. There are many other important aspects: promotion of vocations, evangelisation, relationship with local parishes, that must be looked at and form part of the Chaplain's ministry. Every aspect of the Chaplain's role must lead back to his first and most crucial task, to be a 'presence of faith' whose fidelity to the liturgy and teaching of the Church as well as to those in his pastoral care, helps to bring shape and solidity to the ambiguous but sincere faith that he encounters in his work.

The Road From Regensburg

Papal dialogue in search of a new apologetic

MODERN SCIENCE'S CHALLENGE TO CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY: NEW *A POSTERIORI* APPROACH CAN HELP

26th November to Astronomy Conference *which* was on "From Galileo's telescope to evolutionary cosmology. Science, philosophy and theology in dialogue."

It was the year 1609 when Galileo first pointed skyward an instrument which 'I myself devised', he wrote, "enlightened at the outset by divine grace": the telescope. […] "Without any doubt it is a great thing to add innumerable other stars to the immense multitude of fixed stars that until today it has been possible to discern with the natural faculty of sight, and which exceed by more than ten times the number of ancient stars already recorded". The scientist was able to observe with his own eyes what, until that moment, had been no more than controversial hypotheses. […]

With this discovery, the cultural awareness of facing a crucial point in the history of humanity increased. Science was becoming something different from what the ancients had always thought it to be. Aristotle had made it possible to arrive at the certain knowledge of phenomena starting with evident and universal principles; Galileo then showed in practice how to approach and observe the phenomena themselves in order to understand their secret causes. The method of deduction gave way to that of induction and prepared the ground for experimentation. The concept of science that had remained the same for centuries was now changing, entering into a modern conception of the world and of humankind. [...]

It is probable that over and above his intentions, the Pisan scientist's discovery also made it possible to go back in time, prompting questions about the very origins of the cosmos

[...] Matter has an intelligibility that can speak to the human mind and point out a way that goes beyond the mere phenomenon. It is Galileo's lesson which led to this thought.

Was it not the Pisan scientist who maintained that God wrote the book of nature in the language of mathematics? Yet the human mind invented mathematics in order to understand creation; but if nature is really structured with a mathematical language and mathematics invented by man can manage to understand it, this demonstrates something extraordinary. The objective structure of the universe and the intellectual structure of the human being coincide; the subjective reason and the objectified reason in nature are identical. In the end it is "one" reason that links both and invites us to look to a unique creative Intelligence.

[…] Philosophy, confronting the phenomena and beauty of creation, seeks with its reasoning to understand the nature and finality of the cosmos. […] There is no conflict on the horizon between the various branches of scientific knowledge and of philosophy and theology. On the contrary, only to the extent that they succeed in entering into dialogue and in exchanging their respective competencies will they be able to present truly effective results to people today.

THE NEED FOR "A NEW HUMANISITIC SYNTHESIS"

Cf. Caritas in Veritate n.21

10th October to African students, concerning:
the urgent need to shape a new humanistic vision that will renew the links between anthropology and theology

19th November to participants in the general assembly of the International Federation of Catholic Universities, *referring* to John Paul II's Sapientiae Christiana of 30 years ago:

[there is an] urgent need, which still persists today, to overcome the separation between faith and culture, […] in the firm conviction that Christian Revelation is a transforming power destined to permeate patterns of thought, standards of judgment and norms of behaviour […] Jesus Christ […] alone illuminates man's true dignity.

In a culture which reveals […] a lack of thinking capable of formulating a guiding synthesis Catholic universities, faithful to an identity which makes a specific point of Christian inspiration, are called to promote a 'new humanistic synthesis', knowledge that is 'wisdom capable of directing man in the light of his first beginnings and his final ends', knowledge illuminated by faith.

30th October to Astronomy Congress in Rome
Our own age, poised at the edge of perhaps even greater and more far-ranging scientific discoveries, would benefit from that same sense of awe and the desire to attain a truly humanistic synthesis of knowledge which inspired the fathers of modern science. […] true knowledge […] invites us to lift our gaze to the higher realm of the spirit. […] Revelation tells us that, in the fullness of time, the Word through whom all things were made came to dwell among us. In Christ, the new Adam, we acknowledge the true centre of the universe and all history, and in him, the incarnate Logos, we see the fullest measure of our grandeur as human beings, endowed with reason and called to an eternal destiny.

PRIMACY OF CHRIST

9th December, from the General Audience
Like other theologians of the Middle Ages, Rupert also asked: why was the Word of God, the Son of God, made man? Some, many, responded, explaining the incarnation of the Word with the urgency of repairing the sin of man. Rupert on the other hand, with a Christocentric vision of the history of salvation, enlarged the perspective, and in a work of his entitled "The Glorification of the Trinity" held the position that the Incarnation, the central event of all history, was foreseen from all eternity, even independently of the sin of man, so that all creation could give praise to God the Father and love Him as a unique family gathered around Christ, the Son of God. He therefore saw in the pregnant woman of the apocalypse the whole history of humanity which is oriented to Christ, just as conception is oriented to birth; a perspective which would be developed by other thinkers and enriched also by contemporary theology, which affirms that the whole history of the world and of humanity is a conception oriented to the birth of Christ.

Notes From Across the Atlantic

by Joseph Bottum

CARDINAL GEORGE PROPOSES A RELATIONAL METAPHYSICS FOR TODAY

Extracts from a Dec 09 First Things *article "Understanding the Difference"*

You've heard of him, of course: Francis Cardinal George, the archbishop of Chicago, current president of the U.S. Bishops' Conference, and the de facto intellectual dean of the American episcopate. Perhaps what's most interesting about his new book – *The Difference God Makes: A Catholic Vision of Faith, Communion, and Culture* (Crossroad, 384 pages, $26.95) – is the sheer fact of it, for no one besides Cardinal George has both the talent and the ecclesial weight to attempt what he's after in the book. And what he's after is a theological vision with enough breadth and depth to move beyond the crippling polarization among American Catholics over moral questions of political moment. […]

Like John Courtney Murray, he argues that Catholics can influence culture and politics in ways that genuinely appeal even to non-believers. But, unlike Murray, he does not believe this can be done politically without mining a distinctively Catholic theological patrimony, one that runs deeper than the Church's current defence of natural law.

The patristic and medieval "metaphysics of participation" (in which God is seen as the Being whose essence is to exist, rather than as one being among others) undergirds a theology and politics of communion that, George argues, late-medieval theology abandoned.

[...] the overall argument in *The Difference God Makes* is a strong one. If the metaphysics of participation undergirds a theology of communion, in which relationality is ontologically prior to individuality, then the radical autonomism of secular liberalism cannot survive. There are no pure individuals to determine themselves freely apart from a network of givens that shape identity and make communal life possible, enabling the experience of life as gift. The meaning of human life is primarily something to be discovered and received in love rather than created from the nihil of an individual freedom with no prior vision of what freedom is for. Such a network precludes characterising human self-interest and freedom in terms of a mutual conflict, along Hobbesian and social-contract lines, in which government's purpose is to limit the conflict and maintain at least a facsimile of justice. Thus solidarity comes to the fore. […]

FAITH DIVORCED FROM REASON 1

Fr Jenkins, the president of Notre Dame, has written an apologetic letter to the university's community in the wake of last spring's agitation over the awarding of an honorary law degree to President Obama. Well, kind of apologetic. Actually, not really apologetic. In fact, completely unapologetic. The letter concludes that "division", not moral scandal, is the incident's most regrettable consequence. Jenkins begins by indicating the need to engage our culture's "struggle with the morality and legality of abortion, embryonic stem-cell research, and related issues" – the aim of which, he suggests, is to "witness to the sanctity of life". How President Obama's honorary degree constitutes such a witness is lost on many in the Notre Dame community. And Jenkins' refusal to dismiss trespassing charges against eighty-eight pro-life protesters – whose single intention was to give witness – makes one wonder how he plans to discern witness in the future. Fr. Jenkins goes on to mention his intention to participate in this year's March for Life and to announce the formation of the "Task Force on Supporting the Choice for Life", which, with faculty support, will sponsor "serious and specific discussion" about pro-life concerns. He also calls attention to his advisory role in the Catholic-run Women's Care Centre. So the man is privately pro-life – which no one ever doubted. But, see, privately opposed just isn't enough. It's not enough for a Catholic politician, and it surely isn't enough for a Catholic university.

FAITH DIVORCED FROM REASON 2

In a recent interview with the *Washington Post* (part of their ominously titled "Voices of Power" series), Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius discussed Archbishop Joseph Naumann's request that she not present herself for communion because of her public support for legalised abortion: "Well, it was one of the most painful things I have ever experienced in my life, and I am a firm believer in the separation of church and state, and I feel that my actions as a parishioner are different

than my actions as a public official and that the people who elected me in Kansas had a right to expect me to uphold their rights and their beliefs even if they did not have the same religious beliefs that I had. And that's what I did: I took an oath of office and I have taken an oath of office in this job and will uphold the law." It would be painful to parse completely this jumble of worn excuses, but at its heart lies the old "personally opposed, but publicly supportive" line of the Catholic politician ever since Mario Cuomo. But the logic behind it has changed. It is no longer *despite* the fact that Catholic politicians are personally opposed to abortion that they publicly support it. It is *because* their opposition to abortion is personal, *because* it is religious, that they *must* publicly support it and with gusto. The underlying premise seems to be that for any Church teaching, there cannot be a nonreligious argument, simply because it is Church teaching. It must be as mysterious as the Incarnation and followed in the same way a Catholic follows the Church's call for Friday fasting.

PUSHING THE LIBERAL AGENDA

In an article in the journal *Contraception*, Elizabeth Westley, Francine Coeytaux and Elisa Wells worry about the future of emergency contraception. "Two decades ago," the authors reminisce, "Dr. Felicia Stewart, then serving as Medical Director of the Planned Parenthood affiliate in Sacramento, California, began her campaign to let out of the closet 'America's best-kept secret' – emergency contraception. The method had been suppressed because many providers thought the method was 'not effective enough', or would lead women to use it 'too much' (in place of using other more effective methods)." These early objections were swept aside, however, and emergency contraception products are now available worldwide, with a pharmaceutical company in the United States even providing "full-on, direct-to-consumer marketing". But, as it turns out, the early naysayers might have had it right all along: Westley, Coeytaux and Wells now acknowledge that two recent analyses suggest that emergency contraception is "not as effective in reducing unwanted pregnancy rates at a population level as we once hoped". That's putting it lightly. One of the studies, appearing in the journal *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, concludes that "increased access to emergency contraceptive pills enhances use but has not been shown to reduce unintended pregnancy rates". So more women might be using the morning-after pill now because of relaxed regulation, but overall unintended pregnancy rates have not been affected. How, if this is the case, could EC have rallied so much support, especially when there were vocal critics from the beginning? The authors give us a hint: "Our expectations for EC's effectiveness were biased upward by an early estimate that expanding access to EC could dramatically reduce the incidence of unintended pregnancy and subsequent abortion. This estimate made a compelling story and is likely a key reason why donors and others were willing to support efforts to expand access to EC." So emergency-contraception advocates were able to tell a compelling story – based on false and unsubstantiated claims – and this led donors and politicians to support increasing access. Of course, now that it has "hit the mainstream", news of the method's ineffectiveness will not put the pill back in the box. But perhaps that's the whole point: when advocates of the next best thing in sexual liberation want to push their agenda, all they have to do is ratchet up the hopes of the public, exaggerating when necessary. Even if science eventually comes down on the side of the opposition, any efforts to reverse the reforms will be stigmatised.

MUDDLED REACTIONS

"He felt his cell phone vibrate. Carhart ignored it, finishing the abortion before checking his phone." That's from the opening scene in a recent *Newsweek* article that profiles the late-term abortionist LeRoy Carhart. An odd piece of writing. At times, it marvels at Carhart's willingness and determination to continue performing abortions after the murder of George Tiller. Then, as quickly as Carhart is praised, his procedures are described in disturbing detail: "There are a few different procedures to terminate early pregnancies; Carhart uses one called suction dilation and curettage, or suction D&C.… In a suction D&C procedure, the cervix is dilated with rod-shaped instruments and the contents of the uterus removed with a tube connected to a suction device. Sometimes a thin metal instrument (a curette) is used to scrape out the uterus. Carhart enters the operating room, introduces himself as Lee, and begins operating." If the article seems conflicted, the author seems even more so. In a follow-up piece on *Newsweek*'s website, Kliff described her experience writing the original story, of watching an abortion for the first time: "The suction machine made a slight rumbling sound, a pinkish fluid flowed through the tube, and, faster than I'd expected, it was over. Women spent less than a half hour in the operating room. I'd anticipated some kind of difficulty watching an abortion; it wasn't there. At least not physically. But there was a discomfort I hadn't expected, my emotional reaction to watching ¬abortions." A discomfort, yes. Speaking of LeRoy Carhart, four of his former employees have reported unsafe and illegal practices at his abortion clinic in Bellevue, Nebraska – including unsanitary conditions and unlicensed staff starting IVs and dispensing medication. "Ex-Employees Aid Abortion Foes", declares the headline of the angry story in the *Omaha World-Herald*. Those faithless employees! Praise of whistleblowers seems to depend on whose whistle it is.

Cutting Edge

Science and Religion News

McGRATH EDGES TOWARDS TRANSCENDENT MIND

In the Christian Evidence Society's 'Drawbridge Lecture' in November, hosted at King's College, London, Professor Alister McGrath delivered a forthright argument entitled 'The Rationality of Faith,' in the face of recent years' attacks by Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, amongst others, the advocates of the so-called 'New Atheism.' Prof. McGrath was indeed one of the first off the block to publish a response in the wake of Dawkins's *The God Delusion* in 2007, and this recent lecture was part of his sustained defence of the reasonableness of faith, specifically the Christian faith. In the last main section of his lecture, he showed how the Christian faith is good at 'making sense of the natural sciences.' The following three paragraphs are a quotation from the latter part of his lecture.

> We … consider how the natural sciences fit within the geography of faith. My own time as a scientist impressed upon me the privilege of being able to investigate a universe that is both rationally transparent and rationally beautiful, capable of being represented in elegant mathematical forms. One of the most significant parallels between the natural sciences and Christian theology is a fundamental conviction that the world is characterised by regularity and intelligibility. As one modern cosmologist has noted, "the God of the physicists is cosmic order" (Heinz Pagels, *The Cosmic Code*). There is something special about the world – and the nature of the human mind – which allows patterns within nature to be discerned and represented.

This perception of ordering and intelligibility is of immense significance, both at the scientific and religious levels. As Paul Davies points out, "in Renaissance Europe, the justification for what we today call the scientific approach to inquiry was the belief in a rational God whose created order could be discerned from a careful study of nature" (Paul Davies, *The Mind of God*). Yet how are we to account for the regularity of nature? And for the human ability to represent it so well? Where do our notions of explanation, regularity and intelligibility come from? Why is nature actually intelligible to us? The human capacity for understanding our world seems to be far in excess of anything that could reasonably be considered to be simply an evolutionary necessity, or a fortuitous by-product of the evolutionary process.

The British theoretical physicist and theologian John Polkinghorne is an example of a writer who sees this as pointing to a Christian schema. There is, he argues, a "congruence between our minds and the universe, between the rationality experienced within and the rationality observed without" (John Polkinghorne, *Science and Creation*) A naturalistic metaphysics is unable to cast light on the deep intelligibility of the universe, in effect being forced to treat it as a fortunate accident. However, a theistic metaphysics argues that there is a common origin to both the rationality that we find within our minds and the rational structure of the physical world that we observe in the rationality of God. In other words, Christianity offers a framework which makes sense of what is otherwise a happy coincidence. This is the conclusion reached by the "Test of Faith" DVD which we reviewed in this column last September.

One of Prof. McGrath's latest books, *A Fine-Tuned Universe: The Quest for God in Science and Theology*, was reviewed favourably in the previous issue of Faith magazine.

HELLER EDGES TOWARDS TRANSCENDENT MIND

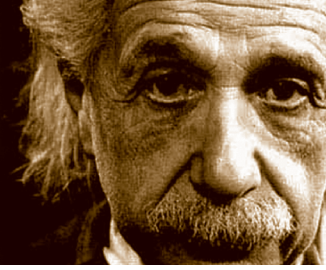
On the 12th November Professor Michael Heller, the Polish priest winner of the 2008 Templeton prize (see this column in the July/August 2008 issue) delivered a lecture entitled 'The Creation of the Universe.' He divided his presentation into two sections: 'Science' and 'Philosophy.' The first part gave a clear overview of how Einstein's mathematical equations (a key one of which was explained in some detail) related to overall theories of the universe. In the second part he posed the question 'Where do these physical laws come from?' In this he emphasised the Greco-biblical concept of 'Logos' as that "foundational wisdom of the universe." He also brought out Thomas Aquinas's insistence that based upon reason alone the universe could be eternal and that the heart of the rational doctrine of creation was the "creature's continual dependence upon the creativity of the Creator." Professor Heller's main point here was that, as per Einstein, to exist was equivalent to being comprehensible: that which is intrinsically contradictory cannot exist.

His unspoken implication seemed to be that the first half of his lecture had shown how cosmological science thoroughly supported this insight. He then humbly, if somewhat abruptly, left a final slide upon the screen with a big satellite disc looking into the night sky at a big question mark. He ended the question time by recounting a discussion he had had with Richard Dawkins many years ago. In response to a question about the difference between the two of the them Professor Heller had suggested it was just one letter: he "believed in Reason with a capital 'R', whereas Dawkins believed in reason with a small 'r'. Dawkins thought for a while and then said 'I think he's right.'"

FOSSIL EVIDENCE

One of the arguments often put about for a disbelief in Darwinian evolution is the absence in the fossil record of species 'intermediate' between others. Yet this argument is on very thin ice, since the fossil record is of its nature a very poor record of the life-forms that have ever flourished on the face of the planet. Scarcely any of the billions of living individuals have ever left their trace in an existing fossil, since the deposit of such a preserved fossil relies on very specific climatic/geological conditions to have occurred at the time of the organism's death. However, from time to time such startling 'intermediate' forms do show up in

"There is something special about the world – and the nature of the human mind – which allows patterns within nature to be discerned and represented."



palaeontologists' digs. The classic such find was only 2 years after Darwin's publishing *On the Origin of Species*: the first fossil of the species we know as *Archaeopteryx* was unearthed in southern Germany in 1861, and provided outstanding confirmation of Darwin's new ideas on evolution. We mentioned in *Cutting Edge* in the May/June 2008 issue that a fossil of a giraffe with a neck length perfectly intermediate between short-necked species and long-necked species had just been discovered by geologist Donald Prothero. And recently there has been another great fossil found by Chinese palaeontologists, namely another type of feathered dinosaur, obvious precursors of modern birds. The animal, known to science as *Anchiornis huxleyi* (named in honour of Thomas Huxley, an early advocate of Darwin's ideas) is an older species than *Archaeopteryx* by some 10 million years, being dated to the late Jurassic period, c. 151–161 millions years ago. It resembled a two-legged dinosaur, and yet had wings and lots of feathers on all four limbs. The fossil's find has been described in *Nature*, vol. 461, p. 640, and the authors consider the find a crucial specimen in resolving the so-called 'temporal paradox': whereas the most bird-like dinosaur fossils have been found from the Cretaceous (post-Jurassic) period when already there is evidence of a diversity of bird life, fossils like this *Anchiornis* show that bird-like dinosaurs did already exist before the evolution of birds, strengthening the evidence of that evolutionary link.

POPE BLESSES NEW VATICAN OBSERVATORY

On the 16th September His Holiness Pope Benedict visited the new location of the Vatican Observatory headquarters. From 1935 and until recently the Vatican Observatory had been housed within the palazzo of the Pope's summer residence at Castel Gandolfo. It has not moved far away: only to the other, Albano, end of the Pope's Castel Gandolfo gardens within a former Basilian monastery. This move out of the actual papal palace will allow greater flexibility for the observatory headquarters to stage its regular events and summer schools, and to welcome visitors more easily. On the occasion of his recent visit, the Pope blessed the new observatory premises, and visited the observatory's collection of astronomical equipment and artefacts, including (to the delight of Br Guy Consolmagno, who recounted it the next day at a talk in London) the Vatican's collection of meteorites. 2009 is the International 'Year of Astronomy,' being 400 years since 1609 when Galileo first made astronomical observations through his telescope. Even at the start of the year, the Pope made reference to the Year of Astronomy during an Angelus message, citing the interest that Popes down the centuries have taken in astronomy. Br. Guy Consolmagno took the opportunity then of expanding on the Pope's citations in an online article available here: http://vaticanobservatory.org/News_PB_IYA.html. It is always instructive to reflect on Pope Leo XIII's intention when he re-founded the Vatican Observatory in 1891: "…that everyone might see clearly that the Church and her Pastors are not opposed to true and solid science, whether human or divine, but that they embrace it, encourage it, and promote it with the fullest possible devotion."

Book Reviews

The Sacraments and the Mystery of Christ

by Fr Francis Selman, Family Publications and the Maryvale Institute,

In his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Eucharist *Sacramentum Caritatis* (2007), Pope Benedict XVI stressed the importance of the relationship between the sacramental economy and the Church: "The Church receives and at the same time expresses what she herself is in the seven sacraments, thanks to which God's grace concretely influences the lives of the faithful, so that their whole existence, redeemed by Christ, can become an act of worship pleasing to God." Pope Benedict's assertion is shared by Fr Francis Selman in his new book on sacramental theology.

Fr Selman is no stranger to this particular topic; his *Guide to the Eucharist* was published in 2006 by Family Publications. At present, Fr Selman works as a lecturer, course book writer, and tutor at the Maryvale Institute in Birmingham, and he is also Dean of Philosophy at Allen Hall Seminary and Director of Studies at the School of Evangelisation at St Patrick's, London. His most recent works include two books in the field of Thomistic studies, namely *Aspects of Aquinas* (Veritas Publishing, 2005), and *Aquinas 101: A Basic Introduction to the Thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (Christian Classics, 2007).

Selman's approach is to view the sacraments "as the way we participate in the mysteries of Christ's life, death and resurrection, which bring us healing and new life." His sources include papal encyclicals post-2000; chief amongst these is *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (2003). A major influence on Selman is the work of the Irish Dominican Fr Colman O'Neill, in particular his book *Meeting Christ in the Sacraments* (1964; revised by Romanus Cessario OP in 1991). O'Neill, like Selman, focuses on the "whole mystery of Christ." Selman additionally makes use of Edward Schillebeeckx's book *Christ the Sacrament*, though he adroitly points out that this fact should not be taken to signify a blanket approval of the Belgian theologian's other works.

Despite Selman's insistence on adopting a "new approach", most of the books cited in the text were published in the 1980s and 1990s; Paul Haffner's *The Sacramental Mystery* (1999) is the most recent book that is included in the Bibliography.

Selman does not provide us with a historical overview of the development of the sacraments; for that, see Joseph Martos' *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church* (2001), or, indeed, chapter 4 of Herbert Vorgrimler's *Sacramental Theology* (1992). Instead, the reader is presented in the first half of the book with a general thematic overview. Chapter headings include the following: "Christ the Sacrament", "Signs of Grace", "Causes of Grace", "Mystery of Grace and the Mystery of the Church", and "Why We Need the Sacraments". Part Two features individual sections on each of the seven sacraments.

Fr Selman's intention in writing *The Sacraments and the Mystery of Christ* is to provide a compact yet detailed introduction to the sacraments. This initiative is to be commended, since there is an evident need for a solid, up-to-date textbook in English on this subject. There have been a number of recent publications in this field, though they are invariably nuanced from a postmodern perspective. The target audience of this book comprises "anyone interested in deepening their knowledge and awareness of their Christian faith and of how the life and worship of the Church relate us to Christ." As such, The Sacraments and the Mystery of Christ is eminently suitable for theology students, seminarians, priests, and catechists, who require a good general account of the history and significance of the sacraments. The text is well-written, with a clear, sustained exposition of argument. Furthermore, there is a good balance of pertinent examples from Sacred Scripture, the Church Fathers, and magisterial documents. There are one or two flies in the ointment, however, such as an evident lack of synthesis, and a tendency towards repetition of both content and style. The continual references to the theories of O'Neill and Schillebeeckx in each chapter does, at times, become quite formulaic. This latter infelicity is no doubt a consequence of the work being based on lecture course notes – a point that Fr Selman, to his credit, underlines at the very beginning of the book. These criticisms should not detract from the fact that *The Sacraments and the Mystery of Christ* is a very welcome addition to the canon of sacramental theology. It serves as an interesting, instructive, and clear introduction to the discipline, and it should be included on the reading lists of theology students everywhere.

Domenico Zanre
Rome

"previous ideas on motion and gravity introduced by Aristotle were false according to observation and reason."

Living the Mystery – Monastic Markers on the Christian Way

by Abbot Hugh Gilbert, Gracewing, 193pp, £9.99

Living the Mystery is a companion volume to Abbot Hugh Gilbert's first entitled *Unfolding the Mystery*. Whereas the latter aimed at guiding us through the liturgical seasons of the year, this second publication encourages greater awareness in our daily lives of the mysteries we already share, making explicit that which is so often obscured by sheer day-to-day existence.

Fr Hugh Gilbert is Abbot of Pluscarden Abbey, and his book is a wonderful compilation of homilies and conferences he has given his monks since 2000. As such, they give a unique insight into the workings of monastic life while still very much retaining their relevance for those of us who live in the world in whatever capacity. Since they were intended for oral delivery, they are refreshingly direct and accessible.

His reflections begin and end with homilies on Our Lady; the prologue is on the Immaculate Conception and the epilogue on the Assumption, thus the start of the great mystery of our salvation and the end, the fulfilment, in which we all hope to share. Comparing God to a gardener, Abbot Hugh likens Mary to rich soil and Christ the Tree of Life that is to be planted. And that which the Holy Spirit did for Mary, He also does for us, through baptism: the rock of Original Sin is removed and the seed of grace is planted within us so that we "become a soil where the Tree of Life can take root". This book is all about enriching the soil, and its three sections are conceived in terms of being Rooted, Growing and Bearing Fruit.

Part I: Rooted begins by inviting the reader to explore what we mean by Christianity and concludes that it is essentially a knowledge of and relationship with the person of Christ. Drawing on St John the Evangelist and Cardinal Newman, he reflects on what 'knowing' Christ might entail, holding that for the Christian life to truly reach its potential, the 'idea' or 'vision' of Christ must be real. He therefore draws the reader away from common pitfalls in the Christian life, such as reducing it merely to good behaviour, or to asceticism or felt experience. Of themselves these cannot encapsulate what it means to be a Christian which is more fully expressed in the glorious commission to be 'sons in the Son'. How do we achieve this? By returning to the sources: there can be no more direct route than through the Word of God passed on to us by Tradition, Scripture and the Magisterium, the Liturgy, the Sacraments and, most especially, the Eucharist.

Part of the undeniable charm of *Living the Mystery* is that it is properly grounded in the joys and woes of every day, and nearly always in the context of community or familial living. This comes across very clearly in the homily given at Br Daniel's Solemn Profession, for example, or for Fr Maurus' Requiem. They somehow confirm the idea that the mysteries we are trying to understand more deeply are played out in the lives of real people, in this case real monks, in a vibrant and thriving community. The mysteries are played out, sometimes in peace, sometimes in turmoil. Take the case of the Requiem homily: these beautiful reflections on a gruff, strong, fiercely loyal and deeply spiritual monk take on an added resonance when we consider that Fr Maurus, elderly and quite wandered, literally disappeared from the monastery and to this day, his whereabouts remain a mystery. The point is, amid all the consternation outside the monastic walls, the faith and hope of these monks remained steadfast, and that spiritual attitude shines out very brightly in the abbot's homily. In *Part II: Growing*, the painfully real experience of those small faults and failings that plague us and wear us down are also explored with originality, compassion, realism and humour – these faults 'are left to humble us. They're left to prevent other people confusing us with Christ and therefore ceasing to live by faith'.

Part III: Bearing Fruit examines how this deepening awareness of the spiritual life bears fruit in prayer and, indeed, how necessary lectio and the liturgy are in order for us to remain rooted as Christians, especially in these days when free expression of faith is becoming less acceptable in the public forum. In short, this compact volume comes highly recommended. Drawing from Hopkins to Waugh, Mackay Brown to Kierkegaard, as well as the Fathers of the Church, faith is strengthened, understanding deepened and a real, living relationship with Christ becomes a truly achievable ambition.

Sr Andrea Fraile
Sister of the Gospel of Life
Glasgow

Book Reviews
continued

Faith in Education – The Teacher as Witness

by Thomas FitzPatrick, Mungo Books, 163pp, £12.50

In an era of crisis, not only in monetary terms, this book asks the pertinent question: Can faith in education fill the philosophical and spiritual vacuum of the third millennium?

Thomas FitzPatrick is a mathematician, natural philosopher, teacher and lecturer. On retiring as Vice-Principal of Notre Dame College of Education in Glasgow, he was awarded a Doctorate of Philosophy for his study of Catholic Secondary Education in South West Scotland. He is therefore well qualified to address such a question and does so in an effective way.

This book provides a series of deliberations which build upon each other to provide the reader with an in-depth and accurate analysis of the role of teachers in this culturally, politically, spiritually and socially turbulent time. It examines the role of the teacher as not only an educator, although precisely what this term implies is discussed, but also as witness, parent, guide, minister and cosmologist! In doing so he encourages the reader to consider the challenging nature of teaching, especially the teaching of Religious Education, in an ever-increasingly secular and broken society. The lack of values so evident today and the ever-increasing strength of secular scientific thought dominate much of the dialogue and FitzPatrick clearly recognises and shows empathy with the teacher whose job, it would appear, far surpasses the role he/she once, historically, undertook.

Each chapter highlights the vocation that is teaching. Indeed, the teacher must provide the opportunity for pupils to live a harmonious and integrated life whilst ensuring that the truth of faith has been revealed to them. It is no longer acceptable that a teacher be a mere "guide, philosopher and friend": the current role of a teacher is to break down the barriers which prohibit our young from gaining access to the one thing that will set them free – faith in Christ and His Church.

The penultimate chapter of this book continues to challenge the reader to reflect upon the tensions found within the formalised education system which prevent true unity. Drawing upon, as he has done from the outset, a wealth of extremely relevant sources, FitzPatrick tentatively convinces the reader of a need to consider what is required in order to fill the vacuum that lies so apparently empty and asks the question "Who can provide the philosophical underpinning the national education systems requires to restore the balance between the things of God and of Caesar?"

His final chapter is stark and considers what doing without God would really mean. He uses the work of Gilson, a Neo-Thomist philosopher, whose prophecy mirrors, to a certain extent, the world that we currently see before us. However, he quite rightly asserts that "all is not lost" and it is this hope and realisation which will ultimately inspire those who read this book to continue their endeavour to bring a renewed strength of faith back into the realm of education.

Included in the book's five appendices is a coherent exploration of the Christian tradition in Scottish education and clearly shows the author's wide-ranging knowledge. It affords readers with the history required to really understand the present climate and contains the struggles of both the Catholic and the Reformed traditions. Furthermore, appendix four provides the reader with an exhaustive chronology spanning two thousand years.

This book is easily accessible and timely, not only to those 'north of the border' but to the whole of western civilization. It is edifying and a great tribute to a profession in which he clearly believes passionately. Thomas FitzPatrick's own faith in education has enabled him to write such a volume and, as a teacher of Religious Education myself, his writings, which are both thought provoking and illuminating, are most welcome. Its coherency and relevance make it a book that should be read by any teacher but especially by those considering the vocation of teaching. He is to be congratulated and thanked for being brave enough to challenge us to consider what it is that we are doing in the field and with the lives of those entrusted to our care.

Alison Smith
Glasgow

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