

# faith

Promoting A New Synthesis of Faith and Reason

Mercy, Bishops and the Vulnerable

*Editorial*

Tenderness with Life

*Frances Dawbarn*

Holloway on Vocations

The Drama of Original Sin

*James Tolhurst*

Cutting Edge: Depression and Evolution

*Gregory Farrelly*

Interview: George Weigel discusses Saint John Paul

A Distinctive Way of Looking at Things

*Sister Thomas More Stepnowski*

Book Reviews

The Evidence of God *by Keith Ward*

Facing Up to Real Doctrinal Difference *by Robert Magliola*

Courage and Conviction *by Joanna Bogle*

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux and her Sisters *by Jennifer Moorcroft*



Issue: 010 March / April 2016

Price: £4:50

[faith.org.uk](http://faith.org.uk)

# CONTENTS

- 
- 1 EDITORIAL: Mercy, Bishops and the Vulnerable
- 
- 5 Tenderness with Life  
*Frances Dawbarn*
- 
- 11 Edward Holloway on Vocations
- 
- 16 The Drama of Original Sin  
*James Tolhurst*
- 
- 21 Cutting Edge: Depression and Evolution  
*Gregory Farrelly*
- 
- 25 Interview: George Weigel discusses Saint John Paul
- 
- 28 A Distinctive Way of Looking at Things  
*Sister Thomas More Stepnowski*
- 
- 33 Book Reviews  
The Evidence of God *by Keith Ward*  
Facing Up to Real Doctrinal Difference *by Robert Magliola*  
Courage and Conviction *by Joanna Bogle*  
Saint Thérèse of Lisieux and her Sisters *by Jennifer Moorcroft*
- 

**Editor:** Joanna Bogle, [editor@faith.org.uk](mailto:editor@faith.org.uk)

**Editorial Board:** Patrick Burke, Hugh MacKenzie, Andrew Nash,  
Luiz Ruscillo, Andrea Fraile, Tim Finigan, Christina Read

**Book Reviews Editor:** Andrew Nash

**Subscriptions & Enquiries:** Sister Andrea Fraile, 104 Albert Road, Glasgow G42 8DR  
or subscribe on-line at [www.faith.org.uk](http://www.faith.org.uk), [subscriptions@faith.org.uk](mailto:subscriptions@faith.org.uk)

**Advertising Manager:** Scott Deeley, [advertising@faith.org.uk](mailto:advertising@faith.org.uk)



# Mercy, Bishops and the Vulnerable

Blessed Clemens von Galen died 70 years ago this month, in March 1946. His early life seems so remote from anything today that in many ways it seems almost hopeless to suggest him as a role model for today's bishops. He was born in 1878 into one of Germany's old aristocratic families with a tradition of service in both Church and nation. His boyhood – the ninth of eleven children – was lived in the tradition of his ancestors, in a castle lacking modern comforts and a countryside with a beauty untouched by motorways, pylons or aircraft noise, where the motor-car was unknown.

But as a bishop, he has plenty to teach us. He had been an early opponent of the Nazis, denouncing their racial bigotry, their obsession with attempting to revive pagan myths to replace Christian worship and their nationalising of various properties belonging to the Church. In 1934, as Bishop of Münster in his own native Westphalia, he fought the government's attempts to impose a national education scheme which taught an anti-Jewish message, and in 1937 he was active, with Cardinal Faulhaber of Berlin, in helping to draft the papal denunciation of Nazi ideas and ideology, *Mit Brennender Sorge*.

In 1941 the extent of the Nazi killing of the incurable and the mentally ill became known. For some while, families had been suspicious. A letter would arrive from some institution where a relative had been receiving care, reporting the sudden death and offering to send the ashes for family burial. With wartime conditions making travel difficult, and with concern that telephone conversations might be monitored and letters intercepted, people nevertheless talked and communicated their concerns. The conventional death notices in newspapers expressed, in carefully coded ways, their conviction that something was not normal about the death: 'Suddenly, after a period of excellent health, our beloved son...'

## Opposition

In a country where a police swoop could result in incarceration in a concentration camp, and where neighbours who talked about it could also disappear into 'protective custody', opposition to official policies took immense courage. But Bishop von Galen spoke from his pulpit, and did not mince his words. Describing euthanasia as 'this ghastly doctrine' which 'tries to justify the murder of blameless men and would seek

to give legal sanction to the forcible killing of invalids, cripples, the incurable and the incapacitated' he went on:

'I have discovered that the practice here in Westphalia is to compile lists of such patients who are to be removed elsewhere as "unproductive citizens," and after a period of time put to death. This very week, the first group of these patients has been sent from the clinic of Marienthal, near Münster... I am assured that at the Ministry of the Interior and at the Ministry of Health, no attempt is made to hide the fact that a great number of the insane have already been deliberately killed and that many more will follow.'

## Freedom and justice

It was not just against euthanasia that he preached, but against other Nazi atrocities: 'None of us is safe — and may he know that he is the most loyal and conscientious of citizens and may he be conscious of his complete innocence — he cannot be sure that he will not some day be deported from his home, deprived of his freedom and locked up in the cellars and concentration camps of the Gestapo.'

*A country must live under the rule of law, . . . this must guarantee safety for everyone: 'Justice is the only solid foundation of any state. The right to life, to inviolability, to freedom is an indispensable part of any moral order of society.'*

His message was that a country must live under the rule of law, and that this must guarantee safety for everyone: 'Justice is the only solid foundation of any state. The right to life, to inviolability, to

freedom is an indispensable part of any moral order of society.' In another sermon denouncing the Nazis he said, 'We see and experience clearly what lies behind the new doctrines which have for years been forced on us, for the sake of which religion has been banned from the schools, our organisations have been suppressed and now Catholic kindergartens are about to be abolished — there is a deep-seated hatred of Christianity, which they are determined to destroy.'

Copies of these sermons were widely distributed – and, smuggled abroad, made Bishop von Galen known and admired in Britain and in occupied Europe. He was dubbed the "Lion of Münster", a name that stuck.

## Noble

It does need to be understood that the Nazis were by no means universally loathed in Germany, even among those who had not voted for them and did not admire their style. Many Catholic people thought them crude and unpleasant, but still saw them as a bastion against Bolshevism. And, alas, anti-Jewish attitudes – often expressed

in horrible language – were by no means unknown in Catholic publications and in Catholic organisations and preachers in the 1930s, and not only in Germany.

Nor was euthanasia universally opposed: a feeling that the old and frail, and especially the mentally ill, lived miserable lives and would be better off dead, was quite widely expressed in many civilised countries. In the circumstances of war, with healthy young men dying in great numbers on the battlefield, and food and fuel in short supply, and general shortages of household necessities... it was quite tempting to think of plump people in mental hospitals as being over-protected 'useless eaters'.

*A Bishop to admire and an example to follow:  
loved by the best of his country's idealistic youth,  
a true patriot, a man of the Church with a great  
loyalty to the Pope.*

Bishop von Galen seems to have been seen by some Germans as representing a possibly noble, but rather too pious, vision of life. On the other hand, he was certainly a great hero to the younger anti-Nazi campaigners, such as the 'White Rose' group at Munich University (Hans and Sophie Scholl – who were, incidentally, also inspired by the writings of another great Catholic, John Henry Newman) and the youth group at St Ludwig's Church in the same city who combined opposition to National Socialism with devout Catholicism and enthusiasm for the emerging liturgical movement.

## Honoured

But even if regarded by some as old-fashioned, the Bishop was hugely popular, and his family represented a link with Germany's past which could not be attacked without damaging deep and passionate local and national loyalties. He escaped arrest and execution simply because – as subsequent research into captured Nazi documents revealed – it was felt that it would provoke widespread unrest and possibly even a general uprising if the authorities were to swoop in this way. So, by the war's end, he was in his bombed and ruined city, a figure the victorious Allies could meet, the 'Lion of Münster'.

After Germany's collapse in 1945, Bishop von Galen became a figure of hope for his people, speaking up for prisoners-of-war, for German refugees and for the homeless. He was honoured by Pope Pius XII by being made a cardinal. With great difficulty, and after prolonged negotiations with the new Allied authorities running Germany, he was finally able to get to Rome to meet the pope, and on return home the people of Münster gathered in the streets to cheer him, decorating their ruined homes with whatever they could to honour him. In poor health, he died not long after his return home, in March 1946.

Von Galen was beatified by Pope St John Paul II in 2004. His tomb in Münster's



great cathedral is never without pilgrims and visitors. A Bishop to admire and an example to follow: loved by the best of his country's idealistic youth, a true patriot, a man of the Church with a great loyalty to the Pope.

## Britain

It was actually the British who dubbed von Galen the 'Lion of Münster', and it was British aircraft that dropped copies of his sermons across Germany. While this was of course part of a propaganda war, there was nevertheless a sincere feeling in Britain, among Catholics and Anglicans alike, that this was a truly noble Christian figure who represented a finer and better Germany that might one day emerge after the defeat of the Nazis and who meanwhile spoke up for that country's soul.

It is not always easy in Britain today for bishops to speak out in defence of some important matter connected with human life: they may feel they are regarded as old-fashioned, or opposed to current national values and interests. We live in times and in a society when the prevailing winds are against the Christian truths, and so our bishops are faced with very difficult and challenging, often hostile, situations.

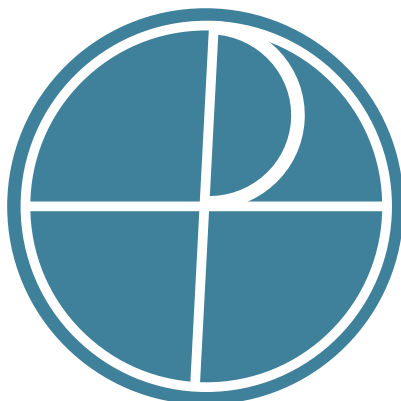
It requires wisdom, clarity and courage to be a shepherd in these days. A Bishop risks being misunderstood. He may know that some of his own flock do not really agree with what he is saying, or agree only partially. And it may be small comfort if people far away call him a 'lion'

---

*We live in times and in a society when the prevailing winds are against the Christian truths, and so our bishops are faced with very difficult and challenging, often hostile, situations. It requires wisdom, clarity and courage to be a shepherd in these days.*

---

especially if, at home, his efforts to speak out seem to be ineffective. And if honour comes, it may be a bit late, when hideous misery has already swept over the country he loves.



# Tenderness with Life

FRANCES DAWBARN

*Frances Dawbarn examines the subject of dying with dignity*

---

As I have listened to debates and arguments about assisted suicide – many have been reasonable, measured and well considered – something has occurred to me. It is the meaning of the expression, the ‘right’ to die. Death is not a right – it is a certainty! We are all going to do it. Everything living, which has lived, and which will live, must undergo change and die. Only *God* is eternal and unchanging. Our profession is to die; our whole life journey a preparation for this final truth. ‘Thou owest God a death,’ says Prince Hal to Falstaff. Simply put, but searingly and inescapably true. ‘To die’, he says, “is common as to live”. The ‘right’ to die actually means, if we’re brutally honest, that some people are seeking the legal ‘right’ to kill another human being.

Death is as natural as birth. Each one of us is journeying towards the inevitability of death, yet it is the one thing we fear to discuss or contemplate. Instead of understanding, as James le Fanu writes, that ‘the implications of mortality are intrinsic to a proper grasp of the human experience’, we choose to sanitise the things of death, including the language we use to describe it (in *Last Things*, Tablet, 29 November 2014, p.28).

Those who support the idea of assisted suicide are, very often, relatives of a terminally-ill individual whose suffering they wish would end. Allow me to state my position clearly: like most people I live

---

*As a society we struggle with contradictory attitudes fed by fear, confusion and ignorance.*

---

with questions about suffering, especially when it comes to the young, and I am not immune to the ‘why me?’ or ‘why him or her?’ moments. It is not unnatural to wish suffering to end. It is a natural response to a heart-breaking situation and no blame attaches to those who wish for it. I have wished for it myself when I nursed very ill patients, or when loved ones of my own neared the end of life. But *praying* for suffering to end is substantially and morally different from ending suffering by *taking* life.

## Contradictory attitudes

As a society we struggle with contradictory attitudes fed by fear, confusion and ignorance. On the one hand, while desperately trying to cheat, postpone or delay death we seek the right to *speed up* the process when things get tough. On the

*We are addressing the wrong issue. Instead of seeking to legalise assisted suicide, we urgently need to change our hard-wired attitude to death and, crucially, improve the provision for end-of-life care.*

other, doctors are trained to believe that death is a *failure*, and that they must battle heroically to *prolong* life at all costs. The inevitability of death is denied, the medical profession fears accusations of negligence and litigation and elderly or terminally-ill

people are subjected to rigours of surgery, or other debilitating therapies, simply because it *can* be done.

I believe this is a travesty of the physician's duty of care. Because something *can* be done does it mean that it *should* be done? We must learn that there are times when certain courses of action are inappropriate, even cruel. Atul Gawande has written about 'the callousness, inhumanity and extraordinary suffering' inflicted on the severely ill, 'with only a sliver's chance of benefit. The doctors themselves are not cruel but the narrowness of their focus on what *can* be done rather than what *should* be done makes their actions so.'

The same applies to 'assisted suicide'. It *can* be done and, at the moment, with little risk of prosecution for those who 'assist'. But *should* it be done? There is a world of difference between assisted suicide and gentle non-intervention and the introduction of palliative care when death is close. Allowing nature to take its course in the most humane and dignified way possible is not negligence, and it is certainly not murder. In hospices it is still referred to as TLC: 'Tender Loving Care'.

We are addressing the wrong issue. Instead of seeking to legalise assisted suicide, we urgently need to change our hard-wired attitude to death and, crucially, improve the provision for end-of-life care.

## Offering proper care

Sheila Hollins, crossbencher in the House of Lords and professor of the psychiatry of learning disability at St George's Hospital in London, recently wrote:

'... It is an **inappropriate** response to give people the option to ask their doctor to help them end their own life **[simply] because current care is not universally good enough**... I want to improve end-of-life care by improving the availability of palliative care – not just medical care, [but] including mental-health care [and] better social and spiritual support' (*Tablet*, 15 November 2014).



There are difficult problems which must be addressed: the number of elderly people in our country is increasing. Many are lonely and forgotten. Some in this situation, or facing its gradual onset, are frightened into believing that being killed is better than loneliness, pain and increasing dependency on others. Can we honestly say that we are doing enough about such fears?

*Faith-based belief that assisted*

*suicide is wrong has to be*

*accompanied by practical help for people who are close to despair.*

There are also younger people with an illness which gradually robs them of independence and dignity. Others face the consequences of a devastating life-changing accident. Some in despair may seek assisted suicide: simply saying this is wrong doesn't resolve their dilemma or relieve their distress.

Look at Stephen Hawking and his achievements. He is unusually gifted, but is also an example *and a wakeup call*. While applauding his courage and determination, we must think about helping others like him, so that they, too, can find new hope and a new beginning.

Spiritual support is crucial to building and reinforcing a sense of purpose and self-worth. Persuading someone in this situation that we are more than physical beings – that we have souls and, as children of God, are loved – is tough. To be convincing, we must meet God half way! Faith-based belief that assisted suicide is wrong *has to be accompanied by practical help for people who are close to despair*. We have intelligence, abilities and talents which we can develop – in ways perhaps we never

thought possible – when our bodies let us down.

*Hospices are places where however much, or little, time is left, life comes first; not places where you just wait to die.*

A young American after a catastrophic accident faced life in a wheelchair, unable to do anything for himself. He was 6' 2", intelligent, athletic and healthy. After a huge struggle with himself, during which he contemplated suicide, he turned his

energies from his helpless body to his highly intelligent mind. Because of him, in 1974, a law was passed in Massachusetts requiring public buildings to be accessible to the physically handicapped. Two years later, in 1976, he died. He was 37, and he was my husband. His work enhanced the lives of countless people.

In Britain, many have been helped by the Independent Living Fund (ILF): there is a danger that this could be restricted if local authorities choose to spend the money on other things: talk to your MP to ask that the funds be ring-fenced for the disabled.

## Hospices

We need to look properly at end-of-life care, dispel myths and offer hope. Hospices

are places where however much, or little, time is left, *life* comes first; not places where you just wait to die. They are not gloomy places where everyone speaks in subdued whispers with long faces. On the contrary. There are, of course, very sad times – how could there not be? But there is as much laughter and fun in a hospice as there is anywhere else. Perhaps this is because we have recognised that dying is part of life and that life is for living.

## Pain relief

There are misconceptions about the use of pain relief, in particular the use of morphine. Often, these are based on the misuse of opiates, which has given them a bad name. But, appropriately used, opiates have an important role to play in controlling pain and allowing terminally ill patients to regain quality of life. Morphine comes in many forms: tablets, liquid, injections and patches for use at home after visiting a hospice for symptom management. Morphine and other drugs can also be administered via an automatic syringe delivering a constant, controlled pain relief over a 12- or 24-hour period. Sheila Hollins notes:

‘Recently, a home carer told me that the family of a man dying of cancer would not allow him to have morphine **because they were afraid it might kill him; they did not believe the GP, who said it would help him.** Meanwhile, a nurse told me that her dying mother was refused morphine by her GP because she said it was against the law. But it is not against the law and it does not kill you when the doctor or nurse carefully gives you just enough to relieve your pain, an amount that may gradually need to be increased.’

---

*People’s final months or weeks can be precious. Sometimes difficult family dynamics are resolved: family feuds ended, peace found after years of bitterness.*

---

Some people believe that once morphine arrives the end is very close, and sometimes that is true. Inevitably there will come a moment when a dying patient receives a last injection. It is never given maliciously or arbitrarily. It is not given to kill, nor is that the intended outcome. In the nature of dying, however, there is a last moment for everything: the last visit home, the last drive into the countryside, the last conversation, the last smile, the last injection.

## Living

Many patients have a lot of living to do before that moment comes. They visit a hospice for various reasons, some in Day Care Units. Therapies include massage, aromatherapy, symptom-review with medical staff, social gatherings. A midday meal is shared, games and quizzes are organised, some patients are helped into a bath

or enjoy having their hair done. There is time for quiet chatting, enjoying music or a walk in the gardens. Friendships blossom. Some Day Care patients visit for months or even years.

And there are many reasons why people are *in-patients*. Some come to give families a rest, to review and treat symptoms and adjust treatment. Many stay for about a week, and can then return home or in some cases even to work, for a while.

## Peace

People's final months or weeks can be precious. Sometimes difficult family dynamics are resolved: family feuds ended, peace found after years of bitterness. Hospices also provide time – to become reconciled to the reality of death, to let go of life gradually. Each person can meet the stages of dying in her or his own way. I nursed patients physically ravaged by disease who nevertheless died spiritually serene and at peace.

Patients' religious beliefs, and non-beliefs, are always respected. Spiritual anguish is as much a part of suffering as physical pain and may be considerably worse. It can have devastating effects and consequences.

*Talk to people about hospices – explain that there is an alternative to assisted suicide. Hospices are poorly funded and need help.*

Finding ways to help is as important as giving the right physical care. Sadly, there are times when a hospice struggles to help: agitation and physical, emotional or spiritual distress is intractable and simply will not respond to intervention. This is terribly distressing for all concerned, including the nursing and medical staff who are dedicated to alleviating suffering.

When death comes, hospice staff concentrate on the family, supporting them through the first difficult days and weeks. Many come back to visit. Some become volunteers, or Friends of the Hospice. No one is killed in a hospice. In the midst of death, hospices cherish life.

## No quick-fix

Hospice care for the dying should, in a civilised society, be provided as standard for all who need it. There are *positive* steps we can take to counter the increasingly loud but desperate voice of the 'right to die' lobby.

Attitudes must change: we must break down the barriers we have constructed between us and the reality of our death. We must help people facing physical dependency, and give good end-of-life care for all who need it.

Talk to people about hospices – explain that there is an alternative to assisted suicide. Hospices are poorly funded and need help. Much encouraging work *is* being done – for example, using hospice care as a model, palliative care training is now

offered in many nursing homes and in special units in general hospitals. This is good; it is an improvement, but is still not enough.

A final word from a very inspiring terminally-ill patient: 'Life is very precious and I have learned to appreciate every day as it comes, some good, some not so good. I can be completely honest, with myself and with others. I can make my peace, build bridges and mend fences. We are all dying. I'm just doing it a bit sooner than I thought I would. I have no fear. The hospice gives us a little bit of heaven on earth.'

---

*Frances Dawbarn has a PhD in the History of Medicine, and is a qualified nurse with professional and personal experience of caring for the dying.*

## **THE CATHOLIC UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN CHARITABLE TRUST**

*invites entries for the 2016 Catholic Young Writer Award.*

The award includes a cash prize, a shield to be kept for one year and a selection of books. There are also generous runner-up prizes. The 2016 Award involves writing about saints connected with Britain, and is open to all Catholic students in Britain age 11-18, and all pupils at Catholic secondary schools in Britain.

*For details, send a stamped addressed envelope to:*  
The Catholic Union of Great Britain, St Maximilian Kolbe House  
63 Jeddo Road, London W12 9EE



**MARYVALE INSTITUTE**  
INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC COLLEGE



ARCHDIOCESE  
of BIRMINGHAM



THE HOLY SEE



**Maryvale Institute is an international Catholic college providing further and higher education in theology, philosophy, catechetics, evangelisation and ministry. Maryvale also provides support to parishes and other Catholic communities in their programmes of adult formation and education. Uniquely, all Maryvale's courses are distance learning and part-time, so students integrate their study within their daily lives.**

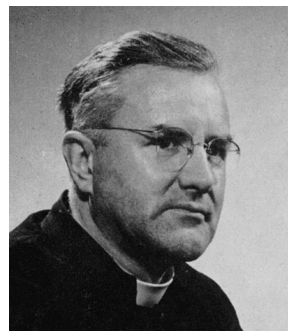
***Parish and Adult Education Courses***  
***Degree Courses***

**enquiries@maryvale.ac.uk      Tel: +44 (0)121 360 8118**

**Maryvale Institute, Old Oscott Hill, Birmingham B44 9AG UK**

# Holloway on Vocations

In the beginning of the Church's life, the personality of Our Lord Jesus Christ attracted 'vocations'. That is to say, He drew men and women to follow Him both as disciples and as apostles by the power, truth and loveableness of His majestic personality. Miracles alone may create awe, but do not create loving, steadfast disciples. To say we seek 'vocations' is to say that Christ is calling insistently for apostles, men and women, to 'come, follow Me' and from the day when Christ called Peter, James and John from their nets to the raising up of the great Orders and Congregations



in the Church, the law of life for the Church has been the same. It is the great spirit, the man or woman who radiates something of the personality of the Son of Man, who draws others to follow them along the way of total commitment to God in Christ. It is going to be the same today.

The first requirement in attracting new apostles is a holiness that appeals to the good and the noble of heart, because it makes friends of them, a friendship which is not merely social, but which derives from the touch of God within, draws further upwards to union and communion with God, and walks a common way with Christ and for Christ. This type of holiness must confer that special type of freedom and joy perfectly expressed only in the Latin word *gaudium*. Then further, this mature integrity of personality with joy of heart must appeal in its type and its impact because it is relevant to the world of today, and to the ethos of the young of today.

## Familial life of the Church

It is a great error to think and talk of seeking 'vocations' in a particularist and dismembered way. What we have to seek, what the mind of Christ inevitably should move us to seek, is to raise a family of God membered out of apostles who mutually love and serve each other, some in the lay state, some in the state of priests and religious of both sexes. We sow the seeds of a common apostolic bond of holiness, truth, love and living service which is through Christ, with Christ and in Christ. Out of this relationship Christ calls for the more intimate following of Himself, and boys and girls who already love Him in a way now much more intimate and committed, readily rise up, leave their jobs, ambitions and careers, and follow after Him as apostles in the stricter sense of that word.

In creating and re-creating the authentic atmosphere of the living family of Christ, we see growing quite naturally the relationship of the celibate priest, re-living again the likeness of Christ as 'alter Christus', to the larger family of deeply spiritual mothers and fathers, to whom he is himself bound by the bond of a most fulfilling and experienced love. This love must be free from the personal bonds of the flesh. Only so can a man enter personally into the personality of another with the freedom and authority of Christ, who yet is possessed by none. Only so can the priest challenge more intimately, and love with a depth not subject to the veto of family jealousies those who, to speak in an analogy with Christ, are born through baptism 'not out of human stock, or urge of the flesh, or will of man, but of God himself'.

In this relationship we find the cadres of the early Christian Church forming again in a natural bond of mutual membering and warm affection, and the way of perfection comes to seem what it is—that which is more right and more fulfilling, and not more burdensome.

Very importantly, in this relationship of a total, formed apostolate of men and women, boys and girls together, there begins to grow a love delightful, chaste and respectful which leads to the beauty of fully Catholic marriage, marriage in the fulness of the Faith and its ideals, with the vow 'till death do us part' fully understood and given. In working for an integrated apostolate of full truth and moral perfection, we discover perhaps for the first time, the real life and meaning of the Church as the People of God membered each to the other.

### The formation of the disciple

The formation of the disciple, so much more easily and fully attained through the fully Catholic family, and truly Catholic school than without these advantages, begins with the formation of mind, heart and personal love, in the full, reverently held, truth of Christ. There must be definite doctrine, and clear, coherently presented principles of the knowledge of God. The history of salvation as it consummates in Christ, must be presented as an organic whole, in which 'all things do hold together' in Christ' (Col. 1:17) and in which the personal, authoritative revelation of a personal and transcendent God comes to its fulness in the Incarnation of God, personally in the Eternal Word, made flesh for us men, and for our salvation. This consummation brings into history in fulfilment the last, final dimension of infallibility in doctrine, moral truth and apostolic magisterium: it becomes the final and chief mark of the Church, because only through this mark of literal and genuine Divinity, is it possible to maintain the characteristics of unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolic authenticity.

In the personal, the 'existential' order of God as loved, it is not enough to talk vaguely, without intellectual definition, about 'love' and then round this off with examples



of social commitment and 'caring'. The urgent prompting of a formed apostolate is 'seek you first the knowledge and love of that Eternal Word, and his gift of holiness (justice), and all other things will be added unto you' ... including the social care, and the Christian commitment. For the relationship to the Living God which is religion is not contained primarily in these other things, but in an ontological relationship, i.e. something that derives from the very nature of your being, to God, as the One Iain hold of in a personal, loving fulfilment which fills out both our intellect, and our capacity for loving alike. This in summary means, 'for this is Life, that they may know You, the One true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent'. If this is truly done, within a context, and with a presentation which is meaningful and inspiring, even though also demanding on the flesh, and on the fallen libido within each of us, then there will be true young Catholic Christians. There will also be beautiful marriages, many conversions from unbelief, or fuller conversion to its plenitude, and vocations to the priesthood and the religious state in abundance. Pastoral experience and the teaching of vocations forces the writer to say that the formation of vocation is also the conveying of an infection. It is an infectious joy in Christ which best summons and convinces, and you must be able to say 'if I had my time over again, I would make the same choice again, only with less hesitation: I cannot be so sure the good Lord would say the same for his part, about me'.

### By their fruits you know them

Vocations in the West have fallen away in a direct proportion to the degree of deformation of Christ and the image of his Church. They have not fallen away in those poorer, 'undeveloped' countries which have rejected the practical atheism and decadence of the West. It is wrong to think only of a 'decline in vocations'. There is first of all a decline of truly formed young Christians, there is the non-formation of friends of Christ. The decline in vocations, and the falling away from the practice of young adults in our schools, now ranging upwards to 90 per cent in many cases, is an aspect of one and the same phenomenon. They have asked for an egg and been given a scorpion: the youth of God are not being fed the Bread of Life. Where the Faith is truly taught, taught moreover with the ability to justify it, defend it and live it, there is no lack of vocations either to the full, demanding love of faithful Christian marriage or to the priesthood and the religious state.

There is in fact, in the noblest spirits among modern youth, a new great stirring of religious fire and revival. With the clear eyes of good young life, these boys and girls begin to spurn the barrage of words without meaning, and see quite clearly the nakedness of 'the emperor's new clothes'. They revolt too against the amorality of sensuality without controlled, spiritual love which soaks the society in which they

live. This great spiritual potential is not being widely or adequately tapped because it is not being properly taught or properly inspired. Catastrophe will now probably have to be faced in the Church throughout the Western world, for it seems too late to avoid it. Whether it can be avoided at the last minute, or whether we have to live through the persecution and emerge again, salvation will not come simply by praying Christ to 'still the storm and the wind'. The Church is an incarnational economy, and her people and priesthood have to live, act, do and go to crucifixion. The Church will be saved when the people are rallied and led: the legend of Peter fleeing from Rome, and meeting Christ entering the gate, carrying the Cross, and asking 'Quo Vadis Domine?' 'Lord, where are you going?' . . . to be told 'into Rome, to be crucified again for you' has a relevance to every bishop and seminary rector, not to mention even every parish priest, at the present time. There is no waiting for Godot. We are called to live the life of Christ, and if it end on the Cross, we trust the Father to raise us, and the Church again, in the likeness of Christ in His resurrection: that is the only thing we can, and must, passively leave to God!

### No encouragement for the working class

In the provision of proper training and encouragement for the boy from a home or district which is culturally 'working class' there is reason to worry. The old type of junior seminary had to go, but in the richer South of England at least, no provision at all is being made in some areas, and inadequate provision in others. The personal and family psychology of working and middle class youth differ very greatly. The middle-classes are not street or district minded in their social contacts. They live at the end of a telephone, are well provided with cheap transport, and draw their friends from over a wide area. Their homes are just cosy dormitories in the winter, and personal castles with pleasant gardens for relaxation in the summer. They are also a highly mobile group. In the upper and middle middle-class parish, turnover of parishioners, from the writer's own experience, is nearly 20 per cent a year.

The working class family – and these are cultural terms, not financial brackets – is more stable residentially, and above all the young are much more street, district and school conscious in their social contacts, with the school very much a minor, not a major element in the package. The working class boy or girl is 'gang' conscious, socially a member of a group. The working class youngster is less likely to be a loner, and unless he conforms socially and morally to the mores of the group in which he moves, then he will become a social outcast. The price of conformity is often, indeed mostly, spiritual lapsation and moral promiscuity. Refusal to conform, even if loneliness is accepted, can be met by physical bullying from the local social group. This I know from personal pastoral experience. In my opinion, this subculture of the

local 'gang' is a major reason for the almost total lapsation of working class youngsters in many parishes. Nothing is being done to examine this problem, let alone meet it.

Again, the middle-classes tend to be culturally 'white collar', professional or academic types. Even among the less gifted most of them do not make their final career decisions until 18 years of age. They remain psychologically 'open', and so they fit into existing senior seminary categories if they apply at 18 plus. The working class boy, even when highly intelligent, is craft or production minded, and he is still expected by his parents to have made up his mind by the end of his 16th year. He may leave school at 16, but even if he stays on, he is psychologically committed earlier in his training, his friendships, his social habits and his datings. We must find some way, some sort of grouping, in which boys and girls can meet and live full Catholic Christian standards if they will. Such groups will allow good youngsters mutually to encourage and to hearten each other.

### New Forms of Junior College

There must be some form of junior college provision for working class boys in particular from 16 years of age. Most of their parents will not allow them to change course and 'waste' their training or their prospects after that age, even if the boy himself is willing. One possible way is an initiative the editor advocated years ago when teaching 'late vocations', which means mostly young men of 18 to 24 with inadequate English. It should be possible to form very useful, fully viable units of some twenty-five to forty students, some of whom would go out to work during the day, and study part time in the evenings in residential colleges of the sort in which this writer lived and taught for twelve years. Such students could be 'upgraded' to full time studies when they, and you, were mutually sure about things. Other men could come in on a full time, tutorial course basis. Another possibility is the residential House attached to a good Catholic school which offers a wide ranging education. This can only work if the school is vividly and consciously Catholic. Likewise, it requires in the residential chaplain deep and mature spirituality, a high intelligence, and the ability to form the mind and heart of youth in spiritual life.

The young are not going to be attracted by a succession of impulsive gimmicks, nor by the devaluation of the doctrine and the spiritual life of the Church. Give them the full vision of the majesty of Christ, King of all wisdom and truth in creation, together with the full, demanding heritage of the ascetic and spiritual life of the Christian man, and you will be surprised at the readiness with which they come: 'everyone who belongs to truth, will listen to my voice'.

---

*This is an edited version of the Editorial for the July/August 1974 issue of Faith Magazine.*

# The Drama of Original Sin

JAMES TOLHURST

*Fr Tolhurst explains that understanding the reality of Original Sin enables us to collaborate with Christ in his work of our redemption*

---

## 'In sin was I conceived'

It is easy to be pessimistic. William Golding would say 'Man is a fallen being. He is gripped by original sin. His nature is sinful and his state perilous.' That was Luther's conclusion also. He could identify with St Paul's 'I am carnal, sold under sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate' (Rom. 7:14-16). He concluded that what we would term concupiscence was in fact a manifestation of the totally sinful condition which burdens humanity: 'carnal, sold under sin.' Calvin would go a step further and argue that some are in fact predestined to damnation from the beginning, which became the position of the Jansenists.

Although there is abundant evidence of the extent of sinfulness in humanity, there is also a cogent reason to reject the concept of humanity's total corruption. Although concupiscence at times appears to overwhelm us, there is a far greater reason to reject it as evidence. Sin can have no place in matter because you need Spirit to comprehend the evil of sin. Although we say 'Bad dog,' when the pet has gnawed our slippers, he knows you are not pleased but he has not sinned. We have to realise that all brute matter, including dogs, cannot commit sin. Sin as a concept is only possible for human beings and pure spirits. In addition, the spirit in man cannot totally undo the law of the good and the true which is embedded in the physical nature of human beings.

In recent years Luther's views have had a make-over. Paul Tillich in his *Systematic Theology* would say that 'The doctrine of original sin seems to imply a negative evaluation of man and this in radical contrast with the new feeling for life that has been developed in industrial society.' It almost seems as if the fifth-century monk, Pelagius, had come back to life.

## Various alternative theories

However, instead of a reliance on humanity's own efforts to claw itself back some entitlement to salvation, there is a discernible wish for absolution from any responsibility at all. This also includes a very free interpretation of the third chapter of Genesis. Rabbi Kaplan would write in 1970: 'Emancipation from the authority of that text makes possible the substitution of a more constructive view of human nature as capable of improvement.' Hans Küng would add that Genesis was 'problematic' and that we are talking of a 'mythological idea'. Karl Rahner in *Foundations of Christian Faith* would argue that 'Original sin does not mean of course that the original, personal act of freedom at the very origin of history has been transmitted in its moral quality. The notion that the personal deed of 'Adam' or the first group of people is imputed to us in such a way that it has been transmitted to us biologically, as it were, has absolutely nothing to do with the Christian dogma of original sin.' This is broadly the argument in favour of *the sin of the world theory (peccatum mundi)*, advocated by Piet Schoonenberg among others. It says that The Fall is the story of the state of disharmony between the Creator and his creation into which we are born. This amounts to sin by *imitation* and does not accept that sin can be passed on, nor face up to the problem of the genesis of sin or the question of human responsibility. It happens to sit neatly with the opinion of some astronomers who hold that the universe was always there and did not need a beginning.

Many of these theories would seem to excuse, or at least apologise for, human failings. Bishop Richard Holloway took this to its natural conclusion in 1995 when he wrote in *The Times* 'God has given us our promiscuous genes, so I think it would be wrong for the Church to condemn people who have followed their instincts.'

## An inherited sin

If we do not want to see humanity as corrupt, we also do not want to see original sin as some sort of collective disease, which A. M. Dubarle would call 'an atmosphere that envelops everyone and infects everyone'. The Church

---

*Genesis lays bare in short  
brush strokes the extent of the  
primordial calamity.*

---

has always held that we are talking of something *inherited*: 'In each act of generation human nature is communicated in a condition deprived of grace.' There is a real *state of sin*, of which we are not personally guilty but which we nonetheless individually inherit. There is a deep truth in the passages of Genesis which must not be gainsaid. Karl Wojtyla, the future St John Paul II would say in *Sign of Contradiction*: 'Even in the apparent simplicity of the biblical description we cannot fail to be struck by the depth, the present-day relevance of this problem', Genesis lays bare in short brush strokes

the extent of the primordial calamity. In the beginning there was that friendship where our first parents walked with their Creator and lived in peace with creation. After their sin they hid from God, were filled with guilt and shame and experienced that loss of harmony in themselves and with their environment.

John Henry Newman makes the point in his *Grammar of Assent* that 'The real mystery is not that evil should never have an end, but that it should ever have had a beginning.' The state of perfection which is known as original justice was of such unimaginable joy and fulfilment that it was almost inconceivable that it could ever have been surrendered. But once lost we need to understand the inner drama that took place.

The result of that decision has been explained by St. Thomas as a collective sin of 'the whole human race in Adam, as one body of one man' (*De Malo* 4,1), following on St Paul's teaching that in Adam all die (1 Cor. 15:22). St. Thomas held to the view that as a result of Original Sin, the wounding of human nature was only relative to its primitive condition, having lost its preternatural gifts. But this does not seem to explain fully what the use of such terms actually means to the individual soul and body of mankind. The Council of Trent condemned in Session 5 the opinion that 'the sin of Adam damaged him alone and not his descendants, and that the holiness and justice received from God, which he lost, he lost for himself alone and not for us; or that, while he was stained by the sin of disobedience, he transmitted only death and bodily pains to the whole human race, but not that sin which is the death of the soul.' Theologians tend to state that the instrumental cause of Original Sin is the act of generation, but that does not help to explain the exact mechanism. Fr. Holloway analyses the effects of that first sin from a theological, and what could be termed a psychological, perspective. He draws attention to the thunderous effect of sin on the soul which from its first creation is totally centred in truth and love on God, its author and environment. All of a sudden, 'The soul knew in its very depths that it was living a lie, and this knowledge, together with the will to perform could only be communicated

---

*The state of perfection which is known as original justice was of such unimaginable joy and fulfilment that it was almost inconceivable that it could ever have been surrendered. But once lost we need to understand the inner drama that took place.*

---

to the body as a resistance against its law of total obedience to the universal law of the Good and the True.' It is because there is only the dry acceptance of the fact that we have a soul

and a body without any real comprehension of the interaction and interdependence of soul and body that the impact of the very first sin cannot be imagined in its awfulness; in almost the same way as the theory of nuclear physics could not fully comprehend the devastating impact of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Both had



a catastrophic effect. In the case of Original Sin, this introduced a new flaw or what Fr. Holloway would call a lesion or wound, distorting in us the sense of that inherent law of the true and the good. This did not lead to a corruption of nature, but it was of such an impact that it was received by the body of our first parents and inherited by all generations that followed. (In an analogous way, ancestorstransmit genetic defects to their descendants.)

## The Remnants of Original Sin

The fifth century Church document known as the *Indiculus* states that 'At one time man fully exploited his free will when, using his gifts too freely, he fell and sank into the abyss of sin. And he found no way to rise from those depths.' Salvation only came from Christ's saving death and resurrection which is applied to us in baptism. But the Fall also involved the loss of those gifts which our first parents enjoyed in paradise, which resulted in, among other things, concupiscence, suffering and death. These are not termed punishments but, in a nice turn of phrase, poenalties. It might be asked why, if we are to be restored and forgiven, such 'drawbacks' still remain? Could God not remove what, in St. Paul's case, he calls 'a sting of the flesh'? The unfortunate fact is that although God forgives, in a sense nature does not; and Original Sin is a sin of nature (*peccatum naturae*) and has profoundly affected our nature. Concupiscence however is not simply disordered sexual urges, but addictive cravings, the *fomes peccati* (the tinder which can set sin off), 'the whirlwind of desire'. (Wis. 4:12). But it cannot harm those who do not consent, but instead resist. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* nn.1264.2515).

Certainly death is now seen as something which fills us with dread (together with the expectation of 'bodily pains') rather than, as it was meant to be, the gateway to eternal life. Sin has also introduced into the world the activity of Satan who has been granted, by the surrender of our first parents, a certain sway over the kingdoms of this world, especially over those who, wittingly or unwittingly, grant him entrance into their lives.

## The impact of the Fall

In view of the current concern for the environment we might ask how far this damage extends. Genesis says that because of their sin 'cursed is the ground because of you' (Gen. 3:17). Fr. Holloway maintains that Original Sin does have a cosmic dimension: 'All being in the universe "falls" in the sin of man.' *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that 'Harmony with creation is broken: visible creation has become alien and hostile to man. Because of man, creation is now subject "to its bondage to decay"' (n.400). Calvin would doubtless agree because he says 'There cannot be a doubt that

creation bears part of the punishment deserved by man,' (*Institutes* 2.1.5.) But not all the disasters which happen are evil. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and floods are not evil of themselves. It is otherwise with hatred, torture, war and all those things stemming from our selfishness and pride which come out of us and which defile us (cf. Matt. 15:11). It is also possible that the upheaval caused by Original Sin results in the prevalence of chronic systemic diseases. It would surely apply to those addictions such as drugs, sexual desire, alcoholism, gambling and pornography. Creation was not meant to be like this.

### 'Creation subjected to futility'

But there is the mysterious phrase in Romans where St Paul says 'For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God' (Rom. 8:20-21). Certainly the Son entered as heir into his Father's vineyard, but not as in a victory parade, instead he took the royal road of the Cross. In the body which he bore for our salvation he was able to bear the iniquity of us all (Isa. 56:6); and when he shed his blood for us, he gave us to drink the new wine of the kingdom.

Yes, we have a first Adam, but we also have a second, and what was lost in the first has been restored in the second. There will not be that progressive and ever-glorious journey to Omega Point, which Teilhard de Chardin outlined, but instead that laborious struggle through pain and sorrow. But that should be no reason to give up on our journey. If it is true that 'in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, the Church' (Col. 1:24), then we should strive to imitate Christ by confronting our weaknesses, and drinking the chalice of the love of the Lord. 'Sweet is their pain, yet deep, till perfect love is born', as the hymn goes.

### 'O happy fault...'

We should also not give up on society, but believe in our collaboration with Christ's work of redemption, for he lives in us and we in him. We must never become disheartened, 'knowing that in the Lord, our labour is not in vain' (I Cor. 15:58). While we do not underestimate the devastating impact of Original Sin, we should always remember that God has shown us in Mary the Mother of God, both a life without Original Sin and the promise of final victory. It is because of her that we can repeat the words of the *Exultet*, 'O happy fault that earned for us, that great and glorious Redeemer.'

---

*Fr. Tolhurst was Spiritual Director of the English College in Spain and is author of a book on prayer, Climbing the Mountain (Gracewing)*

# Depression and Evolution

G. F. FARRELLY

Blessed John Henry Newman was so influenced by the emerging theory of human evolution by Darwin that he used the metaphysics of an evolutionary principle in his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845), offering a profound insight into the organic development in the doctrine and life of the church. There is a dearth of orthodox modern theology that contains a similar metaphysical principle of evolution. The *Faith* movement, of course, does offer such a theology.



About a quarter of the population will experience some kind of mental health problem in the course of a year, with mixed anxiety and depression the most common mental

*The human biochemical response to pathogens is linked with avoidance and alarm response mechanisms in the face of predators and other perceived dangers or stress.*

disorder in Britain. In the early stages of human evolution, biochemical 'inflammatory' responses developed to give an evolutionary advantage in coping with 'attack' from microbes, etc. In an interesting, though dense, article in *Nature Reviews Immunology*, (The role of inflammation in depression: from evolutionary imperative to modern treatment target, Andrew H. Miller & Charles L. Raison, *Nature Reviews Immunology*, 16, 22–34 (2016), doi:10.1038/nri.2015.5, published online: 29 December 2015: <http://www.nature.com/nri/journal/v16/n1/full/nri.2015.5.html>) which I have attempted to summarise, the authors detail how inflammatory responses can account for some of the stresses associated with depression and other anxiety disorders. The human biochemical response to pathogens is linked with avoidance and alarm response mechanisms in the face of predators and other perceived dangers or stress. The release of inflammatory chemicals called 'cytokines' (proteins secreted by specific cells involved in immunity and inflammation) leads to biochemical reactions involving neurotransmitters. This shows itself at a higher level in disordered human behaviours, implying psychological illness. '...Interactions between inflammation and the brain appear to drive the development of depression and may contribute to non-responsiveness to current antidepressant therapies...[The] inevitability of our evolutionary past is apparent in the high rates of depression that are seen in society today.' (ibid).

## An evolutionary adaptive mechanism

When volunteer subjects were chosen to give a speech to a panel of 'behavioural experts' – a 'stressor' – they experienced 'fight or flight' responses characterised by increases in heart rate and blood pressure. The stressor also activates key inflammatory pathways in peripheral blood cells and increases in levels of pro-inflammatory cytokines. Patients with depression exhibit the main features of an inflammatory response, including increased expression of cytokines and their receptors. Administration of inflammatory cytokines to otherwise non-depressed individuals causes symptoms of depression, whereas the blocking of cytokines has been shown to reduce depressive symptoms. Interestingly, exposure to pro-inflammatory cytokines produces a sickness syndrome with symptoms that overlap with those seen in depression and that respond to treatment with antidepressants. Also, symptoms associated with infections are often mistaken with those occurring at the onset of depression. Inflammation has also been associated with antidepressant non-responsiveness. In a recent study, 45% of patients with non-response to conventional antidepressants exhibited a high CRP (*C-reactive protein*: CRP is produced by the liver. A high concentration of CRP indicates inflammation). A higher percentage of patients with depression and treatment resistance, childhood maltreatment, medical illnesses and metabolic syndrome have high CRP. Indeed, I can vouch for this personally. During a long stay in hospital I had very high CRP levels and also became depressed and anxious.

## Immune response

'In essence, the body mounts an immune response not against a pathogen, but against a threat to the subject's self-esteem' (ibid.). This is further indicated by the fact that those at high risk of developing depression show increased inflammatory responses to such laboratory stressors. The greater the inflammatory response to a psychosocial stressor, the more probable the subject is to develop depression over the ensuing months.

The question arises as to why a stimulus involving no biological pathogen should induce an inflammatory response, and why this response should promote the development of depression. The authors state that there is no coherent answer if immunity is viewed as merely another physiological system within the body

---

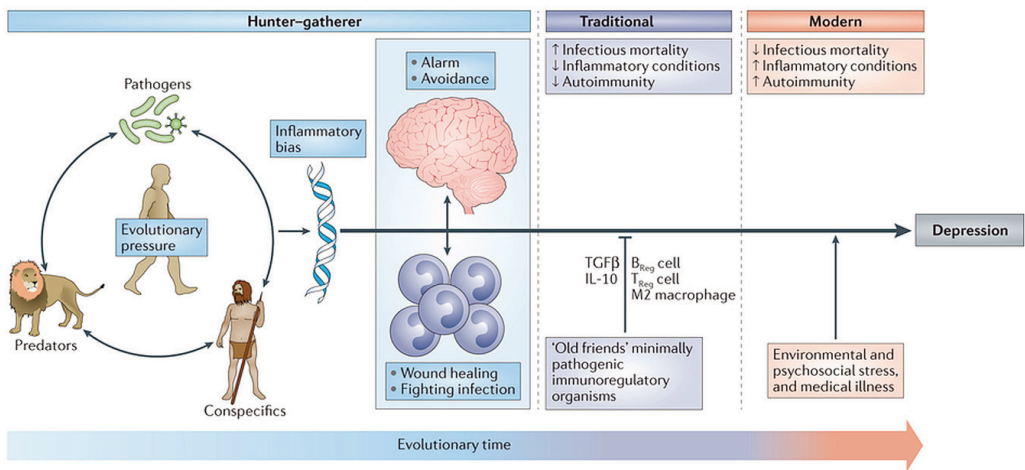
*Why are the genetic alleles that are most frequently associated with depression so common in the modern gene pool?*

---

but, when considered against the background of millions of years of co-evolution between mammals and microorganisms, the 'inflammatory bias', reflected

in the association between immune activation and depression, makes sense as an evolutionary adaptive mechanism and also provides insight into another question concerning 'alleles'. Some genes have a variety of different forms, which are located at the same position on a chromosome; an allele is such a variant form of a gene. Until recently, half of the human race died from infectious causes before adulthood, providing strong selective pressure for genetic alleles that enhance host defence but why are the genetic alleles that are most frequently associated with depression so common in the modern gene pool?

### Evolutionary legacy of an inflammatory bias



Nature Reviews | Immunology

The answer may well be that modern humans have inherited a genetic bias towards inflammation because this response, with its associated depressive symptoms, enhanced survival and reproduction in the highly pathogenic environments present in our human evolution. In this view, at least some of our vulnerability to depression evolved out of a behaviour that promoted survival in the face of infection. The social avoidance and anhedonia (the inability to feel pleasure in normally pleasurable activities) characteristic of depression move energy resources to fighting infection, and the hypervigilance characteristic of anxiety disorders is linked to protection from attack and subsequent pathogen exposure. Inflammatory activation associated with depression promotes survival in highly pathogenic environments but increases mortality in modern sanitary conditions. Psychological stress can be understood from this perspective, given that the vast majority of stressors were due to risks inherent in hunting, being hunted or competing for reproductive access or status. Here, the risk of pathogen invasion, and subsequent death from infection, was greatly increased as a result of wounding. In early environments, the association between

stress perception and risk of subsequent wounding was such that evolution favoured organisms that preferentially activated inflammatory systems.

The link between depression and the immune system has been shown using positron emission tomography using a tracer for the translocator protein (TSPO) showing increased immune activation in the brains of patients with major depressive disorder compared with control subjects. Peripheral inflammatory responses may, then, serve as biomarkers and thus serve as targets of immune-based therapies for depression.

Evolution occurs at the microscopic level by changes in genes as a result of the survival of the most adapted organisms for the environment in which they live. Since such organisms preferentially survive, the 'survival of the fittest', the genetic structure of these groups is the one inherited. The article notes that "the association of childhood trauma with increased inflammation is linked to stress-induced epigenetic changes in FKBP5, a gene implicated in the development of depression and anxiety' (ibid).

Nearly a third of all patients with depression fail to respond to conventional antidepressant therapies but there is considerable hope for the treatment of such illnesses. An improved understanding of the inflammatory response biochemical mechanisms in patients with depression may lead to the development of new antidepressants, although anti-inflammatory therapies are unlikely to be all-purpose antidepressants. The importance of inflammatory biomarkers such as CRP as predictors of symptoms may be the most positive development in the quest to understand how the immune system might be harnessed to improve the treatment of depression.

This article uses the mechanism of biological evolution to develop a theory of depression/anxiety disorders. The *Faith* philosophy uses a metaphysics that draws on the scientific theory of evolution to elucidate the relationship between created matter and spirit. In this vision, 'matter' is inherently related to 'mind', the power that controls and directs 'matter'. Towards the peak of evolution, just before the first human being,

nature itself required the creation of an individual 'mind' with its own, non-material, 'spiritual' control, a quite startling and beautiful philosophical and theological statement. Thus the first human being, a living person,

---

*The Faith philosophy uses a metaphysics that draws on the scientific theory of evolution to elucidate the relationship between created matter and spirit.*

---

uniting spiritual and material natures as body and soul, came into being, a being intrinsically related to other humans materially and spiritually and intrinsically in relationship with the supreme, perfect principle of its own spiritual being, God.

---

*Gregory Farrelly has a PhD in Nuclear Structure Physics and an MTh in Modern Systematic Theology and is a member of the Institute of Physics.*



# St John Paul's biographer

JOANNA BOGLE

*FAITH magazine's editor talks to American writer George Weigel*

Catholic writer, lecturer and papal biographer George Weigel is a difficult man to pin down. He's in America, he's in Rome, he's in Poland . . . We caught him just as he was leaving a meeting of The Keys, the Catholic Writers' Guild, in London, where he had been guest speaker. Would he be willing to give an interview to FAITH magazine? Yes, of course . . . but he was hurrying off . . . would we email?



Once contact is made, he unwinds. He knows London well, and often stays at St Patrick's, Soho, where he spoke at the Day of Faith organised by the Faith Movement in the summer of the Year of Faith in 2013.

*'Anyone who spent any serious amount of time with Karol Wojtyla knew that he was a man of*

He will always be identified as the biographer of St John Paul II – *Witness to Hope* was published

*"heroic virtue" which is what the Church asks of those whom it proposes as saints'.*

in 1999 and there was a follow-up volume in 2010. Inevitably the first question must link to that subject. Did he imagine, when he was working on the project that he might one day be at John Paul's canonisation?

'Anyone who spent any serious amount of time with Karol Wojtyla knew that he was a man of "heroic virtue" which is what the Church asks of those whom it proposes as saints. I think John Paul's sanctity became even more luminous as he grew older and more seriously ill and seemed completely "unheroic" as the world typically understands heroism. By emptying himself completely of himself in fulfilment of the mission he had been given, he reminded the world that there are no "disposable" human beings, and he reminded the Church that St Paul taught about weakness being a vessel for the revelation of God's strength.'

## Relevance

When asked about the relevance of St John Paul for today's world – after the collapse of Communism, and with fresh threats from militant Islam etc. – Weigel is convinced.

'John Paul II never lived in a mature democracy, yet he had a keen insight into the moral and cultural prerequisites for a successful democracy. He laid them out in some detail in his 1991 encyclical, *Centesimus Annus*, and he revisited the subject in his 2003 apostolic letter, *Ecclesia in Europa*. Anyone interested in the roots of the current western crisis of civilisational confidence would be well-advised to study those texts carefully.' And he sees a continuing enthusiasm among young Catholics for the JP II approach to the Faith: 'John Paul understood that the young want to be challenged to lead lives of heroism. That challenge remains quite attractive today, as all successful Catholic youth organizations understand.'

## Spiritual plight

Weigel is also among a number of Catholic writers who have explored the spiritual plight of modern Europe. Asked for a wish-list of what might help to arrest the decline of the Church in its former heartlands, he is emphatic and seems to relish making a list...one which rather chimes with what many other thinking Catholics would offer: '1)

*'John Paul understood that the young want to be challenged to lead lives of heroism. That challenge remains quite attractive today, as all successful Catholic youth organisations understand.'*

Strong, evangelically assertive bishops who know how to handle the media and can call the people of the Church to live out their vocation as missionary disciples. 2) Catholic intellectuals and writers, both lay and clergy, who can get beyond the usual progressive/

traditionalist polarities and explain Vatican II in John Paul II's terms, as a call to the "New Evangelization". 3) Downsizing local diocesan bureaucracies and episcopal conference bureaucracies and putting increased resources into evangelization, especially among young people. 4) Compelling, beautiful liturgy: the *Novus Ordo* done as it can and should be done. 5) Intellectual centres and small magazine that build cadres of Catholics committed to the New Evangelization and that work hard to evangelize the culture.'

## America

For a long while, Catholics in Britain have tended to think that trends in the American Church are all in a dreary

*Weigel among others has explored the spiritual plight of modern Europe.*

direction, too, but there is increasing evidence that this is not the case, and Weigel – a strong critic of much the American Church over the years – now sees many signs of hope. 'The American episcopate has been strong in its defence of the liberty of the Church against the attacks of the Obama administration, and a healthy majority of

our bishops now think of themselves as evangelists as well as administrators. The vast majority of the priests under 45 years old take John Paul II as their vocational model. The seminaries have, with one or two exceptions, been thoroughly and appropriately reformed for the New Evangelization, and some are more full than they've been in forty years. The growing communities of men and women religious are those that take the life of the vows seriously and that live their consecrated life in a distinctive way. There are many strong and vibrant parishes.

'There is an active, articulate Catholic intelligentsia that is both orthodox and forward-looking. There is enormous generosity in supporting the Church's educational, health care and social service facilities. The pro-life movement is getting larger and younger. There are remnants of "the revolution that never was", but their "demographics" are not such that they can anticipate a bright future ahead. We've got lots of problems, including a residual sense in some quarters that the Church will do just fine if we just keep the sacramental machinery ticking over, but compared to the Church in the rest of the developed world, we're in rather good shape.'

---

*"A model has been set for the future, and  
it's a John Paul II model."*

---

## Legacy

Wiegel believes that the John Paul legacy will be a lasting one: 'His teaching is so vast, so comprehensive, and so deep that the Church will be wrestling with it for centuries to come. Moreover, any fair-minded person will recognise that much of what Pope Francis has been (rightly) applauded for was made possible by John Paul II doing precisely the same things: so a model has been set for the future, and it's a John Paul II model.'

### FAITH MOVEMENT

## Summer Session 2016

**Monday 1st – Friday 5th August 2016**

**talks – prayer – social time**

**An opportunity to explore the riches of the Catholic Faith**

**more information at [www.faith.org.uk](http://www.faith.org.uk)**

# A Distinctive Way of Looking at Things

SISTER THOMAS MORE STEPNOWSKI

*The 'graced imagination' enables us to understand that we are truly heirs to the Kingdom. Sister Thomas More Stepnowski explores this in the light of Pope Francis' recent encyclical.*

**L***audato Si'*, Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical, considers the connection between contemplation and the sacraments and attests that man's stewardship of creation is not only a material responsibility but also a spiritual responsibility.<sup>1</sup> Mid-point in the encyclical Pope Francis suggests that 'There needs to be a distinctive way of looking at things, a way of thinking, policies and education program, a lifestyle and a spirituality which together generate resistance to the assault of the technocratic paradigm' (111). Conrad Pepler, O.P., an English Dominican friar who wrote in the mid-twentieth century, also recognised these concerns, and he proposed that a 'distinctive way of looking at things' necessarily includes the use of the imagination. A closer look at Pepler's writings may be 'a distinctive way' of looking at things, especially since he proposes that the imagination that is cultivated by grace is able to maintain the connections between creation and the sacraments against a background of increased industrialisation, technology and activism.<sup>2</sup>



## The imagination is the link

Pepler identifies the imagination as the link between the physical senses and the intellect and will, according to the anthropology of St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>3</sup> The data received from the physical senses is filtered through the imagination and into the intellect; therefore, the types of experiences that engage the physical senses are significant because these will affect the content that enters into the intellect. Pepler directly addresses the manner in which experiences in the natural world forms the imagination:

In theory it might seem to be a matter of indifference whether the imagination were formed by natural things like seeds sown and growing into plants—lilies—and sparrows flying or falling. Closer investigation, however, shows that imagination

cannot be altogether rationalized and treated as a meter instrument of human thought and willing. It is the bridge to the whole universe, with the rhythm of the heavenly bodies, the movements of creatures of every description coming over that bridge into man and so reaching up to God in this new world of intellect. It is this natural world which provides the sacraments and the sacraments gain entry into man's spirit through this inner faculty where poetry is created and understood.<sup>4</sup>

## Natural things

Therefore, natural things, such as lilies and sparrows, affect the imagination because they bring the natural images and the 'rhythm of the cosmos' into the imagination and the intellect. The natural world is important for two reasons. First, without the natural world, the imagination would be barren and lifeless, stocked with artificial or secular images. Second, the materials used for the sacraments, such as water, bread, wine, are derived from the natural world. If the imagination and intellect are impoverished of experiences and images from the natural world, the sacramental experience itself would be diminished. The formation of the imagination activates the bridge from the natural to the supernatural by linking the senses to the intellect. Pepler explains the interaction of the senses, the imagination and the intellect:

For man has a faculty that can identify itself with the natures of all things, but first of all with the natures of the physical things of the universe. Within this one faculty he can gather together an infinite number of things, de-materializing them, co-ordinating them, watching their interconnections and relation one to the other, expressing truths about them and about their reference to the rest of reality. . . . The mind has an infinite capacity and can know all things. But man does not get to know them in their material isolation, for his mind sees how they dovetail into each other, how the lower is included in the higher, how material succession does not break identity of form.<sup>5</sup>

## Intellect and imagination

This capacity of the intellect to work with the imagination becomes the place of creativity as beneficial experiences enter, and become the creative responses. Accordingly, the unassuming skylark becomes the inspiration for George Meredith's poem and Ralph Vaughan Williams' orchestral piece while engineers and architects adopt the industrious bee's honeycomb structure for multiple uses. These examples highlight the natural world's influence upon the imagination and the production of artistic works or concrete products, but Catholics straddle both the natural and the supernatural worlds. Therefore, we need to consider the effects of grace upon the imagination.

Grace is the primary source of all activity and creativity, and Pope Francis pointedly notes that technical solutions to the environmental crisis are powerless without a

person's openness to God's grace (200). Pepler defines grace in personal terms as 'fundamentally the touch of God's triune, personal love upon a human person, and holiness is the full response of that person who can thus give love for love.'<sup>6</sup> In this personal relationship with God, the life of grace protects and perfects 'each human power,' including the imagination, so 'as to be able to function in this "higher" life of the "above-the-natural" life. The inclination is controlled and directed by grace, so that . . . it is the supernatural condition of being grace-controlled and therefore God controlled.'<sup>7</sup>

---

*The formation of the imagination  
activates the bridge from the natural to  
the supernatural by linking the senses  
to the intellect.*

---

## The influence of grace on the imagination

The perfection of the imagination, therefore, allows man to be drawn 'into a new world, giving him new terms of reference, widening and deepening the powers of his mind to penetrate into the infinite realms of the divinity.'<sup>8</sup> C.S. Lewis' *The Great Divorce* provides a poignant example of the influence of grace upon the imagination and its creative response. In a conversation between a Spirit who resides in heaven, and a Ghost, who was an artist on earth, the Spirit explains to the Ghost, 'When you painted on earth—at least in your earlier days—it was because you caught glimpses of Heaven in the earthly landscape. The success of your painting was that it enabled others to see the glimpses too.'<sup>9</sup> This 'new world' of grace permits man to peer into the 'infinite realms of the divinity' so as to envision and participate in the renewal of culture, which is no longer aligned to secular standards, and he is able to transcend into the supernatural Reality, a gift of sacramental grace.

## Interior and exterior harmony

'Sacramental Signs and the Celebration of Rest,' the last chapter of *Laudato Si*, concludes that sacramental grace is vital in maintaining not only the interior harmony within each person but also the exterior harmony present in the cosmos. Therefore, Pope Francis teaches that the 'Sacraments are a privileged way in which nature is taken up by God to become a means of mediating supernatural life' (235). Yet, above all, he reminds us that 'The Eucharist joins heaven and earth; it embraces and penetrates all creation' (236). The sacramental life offers an entry into the supernatural reality

---

*Laudate Si: 'The Eucharist joins heaven  
and earth; it embraces and penetrates all  
creation'.*

---

which assists in forming the imagination. Pepler further develops this premise by proposing that: 'Life must gradually be informed by creative worship if we are to furnish the imagination with sensations



that are not constantly militating against religion and making it an unnatural and unsocial effort to remain religious at all.”<sup>10</sup> His argument becomes clearer when he identifies the liturgy and the sacraments as the most efficacious way of formation of the imagination:

Yet the moments when he is occupied actively with mind or will on an object other than (though ordered to) God may make the constant prayer seem rather remote unless his imagination has been so trained that in all the interstices of the mind the sights and sounds of worship flood in from the imagination. If the liturgical drama of the Mass has exercised its influence well, it will have stamped not only on the soul, but also on the bodily faculty of the imagination the form of the Victim of Calvary which is there represented. Hence, at off moments the imagination will be coloured by the Mass drama, and connect the passing sights and sounds of the day with that.<sup>11</sup>

### Sights, sounds and senses

Creative worship in its greatest manifestation encourages full participation in the liturgy by appealing to all the senses. In a liturgical celebration, the possibilities include but are not limited to the following: hearing the spoken word as well as polyphonic cadences of liturgical chant; seeing liturgical colours or depictions of the Christian mysteries in sacred art; smelling incense, beeswax or fresh flowers; tasting the Eucharist in the forms of bread and wine; touching the holy water or being anointed with chrism as well as kinesthetic movement in kneeling or processing. The imagination is attuned to the sounds, sights, scents, that is, physical sensations, so that the interstices or the spacelets of the imagination can be formed by the drama of the Mass.<sup>12</sup> Participating in the liturgy and the sacraments imprints upon the imagination beneficial experiences which influence the intellect and will and, subsequently, generate responses and actions that flow into culture.

Some might think that the graced imagination is ‘product oriented’, that is, that the graced imagination is ‘expected’ to churn out artistic works, time-saving inventions, and the like; however, this notion is contrary to Pepler’s consideration of the graced imagination. Rather, he coined the term ‘poet-apostle’ to describe a person with a graced imagination who is able to ‘see’ the supernatural.<sup>13</sup> The poet-apostle does not encounter anything ‘that is “purely natural”’ because he ‘sees all things in relation to the Redemption; he understands that Christ is the head of all men and of the whole universe so that everything speaks to him of Christ and of the work of Christ.’<sup>14</sup> Grace elevates nature and so the poet-apostle is able to perceive all creation as ‘the heartbeat of Christ.’<sup>15</sup>

### Renewed vision

This renewed vision, the ability to see the cosmos in the light of the Resurrection is the great difference between the natural vision and the supernatural vision. The graced

imagination is not about the ability to create images *ex nihilo*, but the graced imagination elevates, heals and perfects the imagination to be a better receptor and retainer of images and to influence the intellect's contributions to culture. Grace's influence on the formation of the imagination is more than an analysis of causes and consequences or the expectation that grace will work as an antibiotic. The integration of the supernatural and natural worlds suggests to Pepler that 'the whole universe' is seen 'from the divine angle' so that 'a unified view in which everything that is created forms a single whole.'<sup>16</sup>

## Heirs to the Kingdom

For the ordinary Catholic, grand artistic, literary, scientific or political achievements may be beyond their realm, that is, the graced imagination and its effects may not have the same degree of influence as with someone who has great natural gifts in sculpture or musical composition. Nonetheless, ordinary Catholics within a state of grace are heirs to the Kingdom of God, and the graced imagination's new ideas and solutions to difficult problems, are evident in the daily course of events that occur in school, work, families or, as Pope Francis hopes, creative solutions to the environmental crises.

In this article, we have considered Pope Francis' recommendation that should 'be a distinctive way of looking at things, a way of thinking,' which could also be supported by education, how we live and a spirituality. Adopting Conrad Pepler's formation of the imagination is one way in which we can unite creation and the sacramental life in order to 'generate resistance to the assault of the technocratic paradigm' so that we may join the chorus in singing *Laudato Si, mi' Signore* with full voice and heart (1).

---

*Sr. Thomas More Stepnowski, O.P., is a member of St. Cecilia Congregation, Nashville, Tennessee, and recently completed a PhD at the Maryvale Institute.*

- 1 Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015). The numbers following the quotations indicate the paragraph numbers of the encyclical.
- 2 Conrad Pepler (1908-1993) was raised in Ditchling, Sussex, and his father, a printer, was a member of the Guild of St. Joseph and St. Dominic. As a Dominican friar, Pepler edited *Blackfriars* and *The Life of the Spirit*, and he was warden of the Dominican Conference Center, Spode House, Staffordshire, from 1953-1981.
- 3 Conrad Pepler, *Riches Despised*, (St. Louis: Herder, 1957), 99.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 69-70.
- 5 Pepler, "Cosmic Praise," *Blackfriars* 21, no 238 (1940): 38-39.
- 6 Pepler, *Riches Despised*, 8.
- 7 Pepler, *Riches Despised*, 19-20.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 173.
- 9 *The Great Divorce* (New York Simon & Schuster, 1996), 78-79.
- 10 Pepler, *Riches Despised*, 117.
- 11 Pepler, *Sacramental Prayer*, (St. Louis: Herder, 1959), 19.
- 12
- 13 Conrad Pepler, "The Apostle as Poet," *The Life of the Spirit*, 9 no. 106 (1955), 459.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 464.
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 Conrad Pepler, *The Three Degrees* (St. Louis: Herder, 1957), 33.

# A Crucial Philosophical Debate

*The Evidence for God: The Case for the Spiritual Dimension*

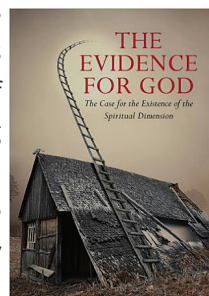
by Keith Ward, DLT, 142pp, £9.99

*Reviewed by Hugh Mackenzie*

Keith Ward is attempting something in this book which is important for the rebuilding of western civilization. He aims to synthesise prominent aspects of contemporary philosophies of perception and science in a way that supports a realm transcending the sensed physical realm. He edges towards creating room for those twin doctrines of Christian natural philosophy, the transcendent Creator with Man in his image. Deepening such key beliefs through taking seriously the profound impact of modern scientific method upon Greco-scholastic epistemology is highly unusual, yet in tune with the goals of the Faith Movement.

Ward's succinct prose and his deft use of western philosophy, from the latest insights into Plato up to the current state of post-Kantian epistemological debate, might have justified the subtitle 'An engaging primer for the history of western natural philosophy' – omissions from contemporary thinkers mentioned below notwithstanding. His actual subtitle captures the fact that he is just trying to suggest that the balance of evidence is in favour of a non-material realm.

Ward presents a range of good evidence that the 'felt' perception of 'values' is of a reality which to some extent transcends the perceiver. The experience of personal benefit, harm or duty such as 'dangerousness' and 'goodness' is evidence of the non-physical for Ward. This is because he assumes that the objective physical, conceptualised, for instance as 'lion-shape' or 'lion-ness', is value-less. This is indeed a prominent assumption in the post-Humean philosophy of science, with roots in Greco-Scholastic hylomorphism. Ward is not alone in making the 'fact-value' distinction one concerning two metaphysical realms. But he fails even to allude to the radical challenges to this which emerged in the 20th century from some Pragmatists and from Ludwig Wittgenstein, with their "collapse of the fact-value system", a view now prominent in contemporary philosophy of science. For myself, using mind-matter realism of Edward Holloway, founder of the Faith Movement, the failure to see physical things and their values as aspects of one dynamic metaphysical order undermines his laudable project. For he falls short of central tenets of Christian



tradition in these ways:

- He self-consciously prescinds from claiming his evidence conclusively supports the spiritual realm, as it is second class to the scientific evidence of value-free facts.
- His Creator is decidedly not transcendent of values – that is the goodness of a person, the beauty of art and even the dangerousness of a lion.
- The line between something having a spiritual dimension and not seems to be sentience.
- Intentional freedom seems to be, for him, increasingly present in increasingly sophisticated life forms, not just a human thing.
- This in turn means that he loses the Judaeo-Christian revelation of moral evil as metaphysically secondary and radically unnecessary relative to the intrinsic goodness of creation, and as resulting from the human abuse of his unique spiritual freedom. Indeed he virtually subsumes moral evil under natural evil, and sees Eastern answers to the problem of evil as essentially compatible with the Christian one.

The false assumption then is that it is manifest in our experience that concepts such as 'lion-shape' and 'lion-ness' do not intrinsically impact upon the well-being of (i.e. have value for) the perceiver in the way that felt predicates such as 'dangerousness', 'health', 'beauty', 'justice' and 'good' do.

Yet Pragmatism has effectively questioned the intrinsic lack of something beneficial in coherently conceptualised information – and so should really be discussed in a book like this. More importantly, I could find no clear-cut criteria for affirming the value-neutral character of Ward's 'physical' forms. For instance, public verifiability (e.g. through experiment-like activity) is acknowledged by Ward as applying clearly to some values, and to a limited degree to most values. The only possible exceptions I can see are but briefly adduced by Ward, namely the measurability and reducibility of physical objects of the sense, which would seem not to apply to values. Yet post-Wittgensteinian philosophy challenges the use of measurement for this purpose and the very reality of ontological reducibility. Furthermore, assuming the non-reducibility of a value, having purportedly established the reducibility of value-less predicates like lion-ness, rather begs the question.

So this question remains unanswered by the end of this book: how do we know that value neutrality is intrinsic to first order mental conceptualisation of sensation? To paraphrase his subtitle, if we call the realm of value spiritual, what is 'the case for the existence of the non-spiritual dimension'?

For Edward Holloway, all the physical is in intrinsic relationship with intelligent, active, spiritual perception. All known things are defined in reference to being known by mind. All things are, to some degree, in unison with each other and do something meaningful, and so valuable, for the perceiver. The degree to which this is constructive,

and the degree of its unison with other objects of perception, constitutes the degree of positive value.

Value-laden functionality is a necessary dimension of all experience of any sentient being with a dynamic, seeking nature, which engages constructively, and often according to manifest desires, with its dynamic environment. Indeed, actuality and potentiality, value, universality and objectivity are intrinsically interdefined in any ecosystem. Ward is right that all value must be perceived by mind and such perception terminates for intelligibility in the perception of another mind. But for us this is true, in varying degrees, of all perception whatsoever.

All of the thinkers I have mentioned, Ward included, acknowledge a further cognitive dimension in humans, namely that of knowledge. For most this involves most or all of these: discursive reasoning, intentional reference (thinking 'of'), propositional inference, judgement of relative values across a range of ('modal') possibilities, and positive intentions leading to action.

Ward briefly mentions intentional reference as being increasingly recognised today as irreducible to the categories of physical causation. For Edward Holloway the ability to form intentions is at the heart of the spiritual. He therefore makes a much clearer and consistent distinction between animals and humans than Ward. Such spiritual mind immediately controls and directs the material body and therefore the material environment. The distinction between spirit and matter is ultimately that between freedom and determinism, between that which can form and enact intelligent intentions, and that which is simply the value-laden object of that free action according to the categories of physical, deterministic causation.

So material, deterministic things are easier to understand and measure than free spiritual persons, but all meaningful experience, including sense-concepts, intellectual judgment, moral evaluation and personal communion, is rooted in common, social engagement with our environment. Nothing we know could be known without it. To exist, as far as we can know, is to be part of such meaningful engagement. It is not values per se but intentionality, and its fruition in free intelligent intentions, which indicate the spiritual dimension and offer the heart of the analogy to absolute, creative mind.

Ward has made his good knowledge of the state of secular and Christian scholarship on this debate accessible to a wide range of readers. His is an important contribution to a crucial debate. In my view he inadvertently highlights the need to follow the post-Kantian momentum to a realism that relates matter and mind immediately and as a primary reality.

---

*Fr Hugh MacKenzie is a Westminster diocesan hospital chaplain who is studying for a PhD in the history of the philosophy of science at UCL.*

# Derrida And Inter-Faith Dialogue

*Facing Up To Real Doctrinal Difference*

*by Robert Magliola, 2014, Angelico Press, 224 pp, £10.95*

*Reviewed by John Walsh*

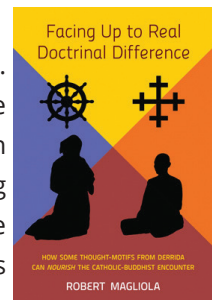
This is a challenging book. The author is a professor of philosophy and religious studies at the Assumption University in Thailand. He is a Carmelite lay tertiary and is affiliated to a Buddhist centre in New York. The book has received praise from Christian and Buddhist writers and figures.

The book is an attempt to see how some thought motifs from the philosopher Jacques Derrida 'can nourish the Catholic-Buddhist Encounter.' This encounter-dialogue is a rich one and is associated with great names such as Fr. William Johnston SJ. I did not find this an easy book to read, and this review will touch on three areas that come from my encounter with the writing. I will bracket them with the words: the positive, the negative and the uncertain.

The positive. The author has a knowledge which is deep and wide. It is also joined to practice and life which is great to see. There are interesting explanations of what Catholicism and Buddhism both are in their teaching and understanding. There is a chapter looking at the Hellenization of Catholic theology and how this touches the dialogue. There is a good summary of what leading Buddhist figures such as the present Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hahn see as the place of Christian faith and presence in the world. There are also some lovely quotes such as the great Jesuit dialogist Fr Yves Raguin SJ on page 134 and Fr Michael Barnes SJ on page 133. There is much in this book to help us learn and see aspects of the two great faiths and their modern encounter.

The Negative. The Foreword is key to this book. It looks at pertinent Derridean concepts. This helps set the aim for the work. The problem is that the writing is very academic and people will struggle to read and understand it. An example of one such sentence is on page 29 where the author writes:

'The diachronic incessancy of (negative-) time thwarts any spatial "fixation"; the synchronic demands of (negative-) spatial measurements thwart incessant temporal flux'. I appreciate the book may be aimed at academia and philosophy and theology departments primarily. However, the back of the book claims it as a resource for



interfaith directors and lay participants. The book does not continue in this vein, but this approach does hamper its message, and in my amateur opinion makes it more difficult to understand. I can't help thinking of Jesus the Master sitting with fisherman, talking to women involved in prostitution and sharing with tax collectors in a language simple, deep and engaging. I wonder if the best language in the world of inter-religious dialogue has that same feature.

The Uncertain. Robert Magliola presents the case that the work of Jacques Derrida nurtures the Catholic-Buddhist understanding and exchange. He uses Derridean themes like 'Overlap-in-the-obverse' to express possibilities for the dialogue. This thought motif is where on common ground one party is in possession and one is in default. This does not lead to synthesis or merger. The author argues that in the Catholic-Buddhist dialogue this can lead to the discovery in ourselves of parts of our own tradition that lie dormant and untapped. This can lead to the discovery and activation of what we encounter in our own tradition analogous to the other. I am not certain if the Derridean approach can support and nourish the dialogue in the ways we all hope.

This book I would recommend to understand the dialogue and encounter, to think through the world view of Catholicism and Buddhism and to start to think how modern philosophy can support the work. The real deep nourishing of the Catholic-Buddhist encounter I think may well come from other places.

---

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

## EVENINGS OF FAITH: LONDON

**Crypt Hall, 24 Golden Square, London W1**

**(nearest tube: Piccadilly Circus)**



faith.org.uk

**Tue 5 April 2016**  
**Tue 19 April 2016**  
**Tue 3 May 2016**

Baptism: Is it necessary for salvation?  
Confession: How to make use of the sacrament  
The Eucharist: Source and summit of Christian life



faith.org.uk

*Fr Dylan James*  
*Sr Andrea Fraile*  
*Fr Mark Higgins*

**Keep up to date with FAITH Movement events: [www.faith.org.uk](http://www.faith.org.uk)**



# Nuns Who Saved Jews

*Courage and Conviction: Pius XII, the Bridgettine nuns, and the rescue of the Jews – Mother Riccarda Hambrough and Mother Katherine Flanagan*

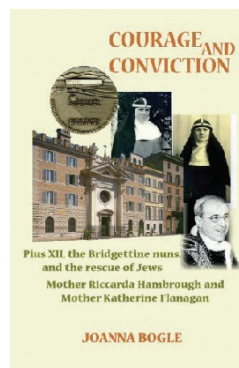
*by Joanna Bogle, Gracewing, 86pp, £6.99*

*Reviewed by Richard Marsden*

Three afternoons a week, two or three students at the Venerable English College in Rome turn left out of the seminary door and take a short walk to serve Benediction for their neighbours at the Bridgettine convent. Afterwards, the sisters provide tea and cake, an added incentive for the seminarians to put their name on the rota. But perhaps not all trainee priests realise they go to a place where two holy Englishwomen helped hide Jews during World War II and were key players in the post-war relief effort. The causes for their Beatification are open, and one day they may join the majority of the 44 martyrs of the seminary as Beati or even in the communion of saints. Via di Monserrato and Piazza Farnese truly is a little English corner of Rome.

Joanna Bogle's book follows the story of these two Englishwomen – Mother Riccarda Hambrough and Mother Katherine Flanagan. The reader has to wait for the main subject of the title until the last two chapters as the middle part focusses comprehensively on the earlier life of the two figures. In fairness, the author points out the difficulties of providing a detailed account of the assistance to the Jews because, after all, it was conducted in secrecy. The more general story of Catholics helping Jews in Rome and Italy as a whole is outlined in the first chapter. Several examples are given of how Pope Pius XII was instrumental in ordering the protection of Jews in the Vatican, religious houses and any other place possible. These concrete reports dispel any modern day theories which accuse the pontiff of collaborating with the Nazis. Some interesting facts and figures are presented. Italy had one of the highest rates of Jews that were saved in any one country – 35,000 to be precise. Between 4,000 and 7,000 Jews were hidden in Vatican City alone. The Church saved 700,000 Jewish lives as a whole during World War II.

The story then switches to the early life of Catherine Hambrough. Her family difficulties are documented as well as her baptism into the Catholic Church in Brighton under the name of Madeleine. She was sent to boarding school but shortly after the death of her father was inspired by a Swedish noblewoman and mystic of



the 13th century – St Bridget (or Birgitta).

A chapter is devoted to introducing the Bridgettine order and the enthusiasm of Fr Benedict Williamson in restoring it to England through his parish of St Gregory's Mission in Earlsfield, Wimbledon. This became a centre of religious life based on Mass, Benediction, confessions and nightly compline. 'Kitty' Flanagan is introduced as someone who went there regularly for Compline and, under Fr Benedict's influence, discerned a vocation to the Bridgettines. She travelled with the priest and another local girl to begin as novices at the Mother House in Rome where St Bridget herself lived.

The story now gathers pace with the toing and froing of the order between a number of premises in Rome and the arrival Madeline Hambrough, who takes the name of the English Bridgettine martyr Richard (Riccarda) Reynolds (canonised later in 1970). The outbreak of World War I puts the English sisters on the other side of battle lines from their families. When a massive earthquake struck the country a year later, the sisters took in orphans. A charism of the order responding to immediate needs was emerging, as was a practice of daily sung offices. Bogle gives a detailed description of the order's expansion, such as the founding of a house at Uxbridge by Katherine Flanagan, of which she became mother superior before moving to Vadstena, Sweden, the birthplace of St Bridget.

In Chapter 7, Bogle reaches the main thrust of her work. In the 1930s, the sisters in Rome finally settled at the original Casa di Santa Brigida in Piazza Farnese. What was initially a guest house became a secret hiding place, particularly after German troops entered Rome in 1943. The story of the Piperno family forms the main illustration of how the Bridgettines played their part. An account of one of the children, Piero, talks about the discreetness of the sisters, and the difference in nature between them. The German authorities generally left the convent alone, particularly when the nuns declared it, probably unofficially, to be Swedish territory. When French forces arrived on 4 June 1945, the relief work of the Bridgettines was not over. They were instrumental in the post-war effort, with long queues of people emerging at their door for food and clothing.

Bogle's short book marks out Mothers Katherine and Riccarda as great heroes in dangerous times, motivated by their deep love of Christ and devotion to St Bridget. It expresses enthusiasm for their causes and the mind-matter hope that one day, they might join their Mother Superior, Elizabeth, in being declared beatified by the Church. For now, Mother Riccarda is most publically commemorated by having a number 7 bus, which ends up at Brighton Marina, named after her.

---

*Richard Marsden is a seminarian for the Diocese of Middlesbrough, studying at the English College, Rome.*

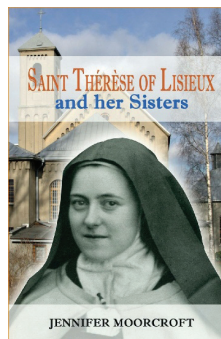
# Closer to St Thérèse's World

*Saint Thérèse of Lisieux and her Sisters*

by Jennifer Moorcroft, Gracewing, 201pp, £9.99

*Reviewed by Clare Anderson*

With an avalanche of books about Thérèse, do we really need another? The author addresses this in her introduction, stressing that this work will focus instead on 'those around her who would describe themselves as "lesser souls" compared to Thérèse, but who nevertheless put into practice her "Little Way", those who were part of her life, both in her family and in the monastery. In biographies of Thérèse they appear almost like bit-players in her life, in the periphery ... But these people are interesting in their own right' (p.vii).



Indeed they are. Jennifer Moorcroft, a lay Carmelite, brings a deep understanding of the Carmelite tradition, combined with sensitivity and insight into human nature to introduce the reader to the 'bit players'. Beginning with Thérèse's four sisters, each with a chapter of her own, we first meet Marie, later Sister Marie of the Sacred Heart. Born in 1860, she was the first child born to Zélie and Louis Martin whose story is briefly described in the first pages. Both Louis and Zélie had wanted to enter religious life but been turned down. Nine children were born to them but only five daughters survived, all of whom were to become nuns.

Many people already know the story of Thérèse and her siblings, but for this reader, much of the information was new. After Marie came Pauline, Sister Agnes of Jesus, who would become Prioress and whose natural leadership would help to heal a dysfunctional community. Léonie, the only sister who did not become a Carmelite, entered a Salesian convent as Sister Francoise-Thérèse. Regarded as 'the cuckoo', Léonie never quite fitted in; plain and asocial, she found it impossible to conform to the expected image of a late nineteenth century woman. It is possible that Léonie may have suffered from a form of autism. Misunderstood and frustrated, she made three attempts at entering religious life before finally settling down and finding peace of mind in her vocation. More recently, Léonie's cause has been opened in Rome and she is increasingly regarded as the patron of people for whom life is not easy.

Céline Martin, Sister Genevieve of the Holy Face, also had her own struggles. Left alone to care for their father who had begun to suffer from mental troubles, she needed every ounce of her remarkable strength. Eventually she, too, was able to

enter the Carmel, where her scholarly nature found fulfilment as the monastery archivist.

The rest of this absorbing book deals with Thérèse's sisters in religion, some more endearing than others, but all described with understanding and compassion. Among them we meet the redoubtable Prioress, Mother Marie de Gonzague, whose vanity, volatility and desire for control caused serious friction in the community. Undoubtedly, she possessed spiritual gifts and sincerely sought God's will, but it is gently noted that when Thérèse entered, the Lisieux Carmel seemed far from happy. 'It could be true to say that she had rarely met malice, jealousy, spitefulness, except at school. So was she aware beforehand of the various and often difficult characters of the sisters in the Community?' (p.173)

Spiritually, the convent harboured traces of Jansenism: a dour and joyless God never fully appeased. This was not Thérèse's view at all. As assistant novice mistress, she was able to form the young postulant nuns in her own Little Way, encouraging them to respond to God's infinite love for each of us. She was also a passionate believer in frequent Holy Communion, and her writings on this were brought to Pope St Pius X, as they conformed so closely to his own. It is also as much through her love and the little sacrifices that she made, in particular, in favouring the sisters she found least congenial, that helped the community to change. 'Gradually, the sense of God's judgement that needed to be appeased gave way to living in the good God's infinite love. They saw the value of demonstrating their love for God by being faithful in the little things; a community that was so dysfunctional became one that was a true "school for saints". The renowned Lisieux Carmel was truly one of Thérèse's greatest miracles...' (p.186).

Although we only see Thérèse through the eyes of those who knew her, she still manages to shine through. The author does assume a prior knowledge of Thérèse, and some instances of her life are mentioned with little explanation, but this is not off-putting; rather it makes the reader want to learn more.

There is so much of value in this delightful book that it is difficult to be brief, yet it is not a long book. It could be said that almost all of human nature is here, yet the writer tackles her subject with charity, attempting to be fair to everybody, while being honest about the problems. It's a good read but contains much that can be used for private reflection: the meaning of suffering, relationships, how they help and hinder our search for God. Jennifer Moorcroft brings her great understanding and knowledge of the spiritual life to produce a work that not only brings Thérèse's world closer to us, but makes us also glimpse longingly at the effects of grace on the human soul.

---

*Clare Anderson is a Catholic writer and broadcaster and mother of four.*

# faith

magazine

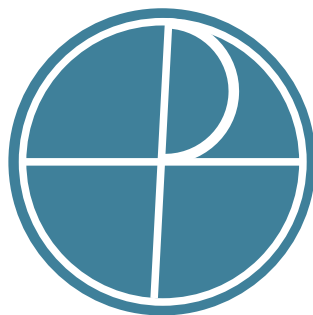
**£4.50p per copy**

## ***Subscriptions & Enquiries:***

Sister Andrea Fraile  
104 Albert Road  
Glasgow G42 8DR

***or subscribe on-line at***

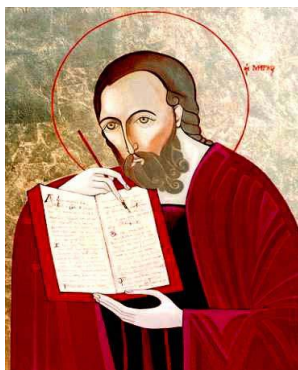
[www.faith.org.uk](http://www.faith.org.uk)  
[subscriptions@faith.org.uk](mailto:subscriptions@faith.org.uk)



## **School of the Annunciation** Centre for the New Evangelisation

### **Online Diploma in *the* New Evangelisation**

Discover 'a joy ever new, a joy which is shared' *Pope Francis*



By kind permission of Michael D. O'Brien

### **Accessible formation programme in the New Evangelisation**

Learn essential knowledge, understanding, and skills

Two year part-time online programme

Dedicated personal academic tutors

**Residentials at our beautiful campus at Buckfast Abbey, Devon**

Single en-suite accommodation, restaurant, Wi-Fi access

Grow in insight and creativity that only comes from obedience to God's revelation safeguarded and taught by the Church's Magisterium

**For further details:**

See website: [www.schooloftheannunciation.com](http://www.schooloftheannunciation.com)  
or email: [enquiries@schooloftheannunciation.com](mailto:enquiries@schooloftheannunciation.com)  
or phone: 01364 645660