

faith

A close-up portrait of Cardinal Gerhard Müller, an elderly man with white hair, wearing an orange zucchetto and a black cassock with orange trim. He is looking slightly to the left with a serious expression.

Promoting A New Synthesis Of Faith And Reason

Rome and the rest
Editorial

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Donal Anthony Foley

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Rome and the rest

FAITH magazine is honoured to have an interview, in this issue, with Cardinal Gerhard Müller, who until recently was Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, a position he held with great distinction and with courage.

The next years are not going to be easy ones for the Church, especially here in the West. Concluding his interview, Cardinal Müller was right to reiterate the message of the great Saint John Paul: "Do not be afraid!"

Cardinal Müller gave superb service to the Church at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and has much to offer the Church in the years ahead. He deserves our full support and prayers as those years unfold.

We commend the book *The Cardinal Müller Report* (Ignatius Press) as an excellent read. We need good, positive, well-informed teaching and inspiration of this kind. We hope to hear more from this Cardinal who merits more public gratitude than perhaps he has been given.

We, for our part, as faithful Catholics, are not just listeners and readers: we too have an active role to play in evangelism and in building up the Church.

The FAITH Movement has always understood that real renewal in the Church comes through the Holy Spirit working "from below", from within the People of God. New religious orders – from St Francis' Friars to Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity – spring up in response to the Holy Spirit's call, a call that requires courage and faith. And it is the same with smaller initiatives. Groups that are sometimes not noticed – the network of Padre Pio prayer groups is one such example – foster faith and good works and keep up the numbers at weekday Mass. Groups that may receive sneers – charismatic prayer groups dismissed as "happy clappies", or Rosary groups that are seen as old-fashioned – bring new people into the Church in unexpected ways, offering hope and healing to the lonely, the disaffected, the confused.

The ordinary faithful are no longer remote from events in Rome and from the controversies and debates and arguments and tensions there. The internet brings instant news, gossip, and comment to anyone and everyone. And keeping up to date with that can be addictive, especially when adding comments to the com-box or gleefully putting a link to a popular blog to spread the latest gossip: this is not always useful.

Communication has a part to play. In the 19th century, news of the visions and miracles at Lourdes were spread by newspapers, and pilgrims travelled by the new routes carved out by road and rail. The 20th century saw its share of "radio priests"

and then TV brought Archbishop Fulton Sheen to popularity – and then came the splendid Mother Angelica and EWTN.

But the voice of the Holy Spirit is often a gentle one, heard quietly. And sometimes the communication that is central to renewal has a more personal quality. The Faith Movement has large youth gatherings – but much of the real work is done more personally – the eager questions asked after a formal talk, the sacramental encounter in the confessional, the one-on-one conversations that run on late and tackle some of the great issues of faith and of life's purpose.

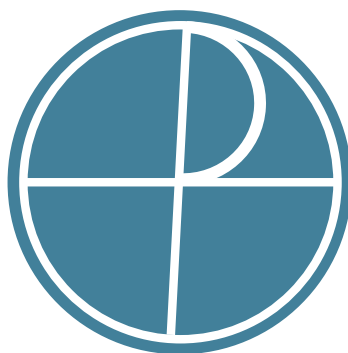
The way in which “Rome” connects with the rest of us should be seen as pastoral service. One of the greatest achievements of the modern era has been the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It came from Rome, carrying the signature of Pope St John Paul, and was the work of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, then of the CDF. And it chimed with what the faithful wanted and needed.

How do we help to renew the Church? All must be based on prayer – and this issue of FAITH has a special feature on that most glorious of prayers, the Rosary. Studying the Faith for our own edification – literally building-up – is important and we have a feature on the role of the Angels in God's plan of creation. Nourishing a contemplative spirit matters, and we have a feature tackling that.

And on the controversial issues of the day, we must ask that Rome gives a clear message. One of the most notable issues our day is what Pope Francis has described as “gender ideology”. Father Edward Holloway saw it coming, and his message about it was prophetic. We need clear leadership on this from the Church. In this, as in so much else, the Church speaks for human dignity and human values. In this, the authoritative voice of the Church chimes with what ordinary people know and understand in their heads and hearts.

We cannot but regret that Cardinal Müller is no longer at the helm of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, even as we wish his successor well. The Church needs clear and strong guidance as we face tough times.

Pray for the Pope and the Bishops.



October: month of the Rosary in this Fatima Anniversary Year

Donal Anthony Foley



In this, the Centenary year of the Fatima apparitions, which took place between May and October 1917, it is good to remind ourselves of the essential points which Our Lady spoke of to the young seers, Jacinta and Francisco Marto, and Lucia dos Santos. One of the most important of these was the particular focus she had on the rosary, and in fact, on every one of her six apparitions she specifically asked for the rosary to be said. This aspect of her message could not have been more emphatic.

May 1917

On 13 May 1917 she said, "Pray the rosary every day to obtain peace for the world and an end to the war," and these twin themes were repeated by her over the summer, culminating in her 13 October apparition when she said, "I am the Lady of the rosary. Continue always to pray the rosary every day."

Why this focus on the rosary? For her to emphasize it in this way must mean it has an extraordinary power with God, and this is just what history tells us. We could cite incidents from centuries ago, such as the defeat of the Albigensian heresy by St. Dominic through the power of the rosary, or the victory gained at the battle of Lepanto in 1571, again through the power of the rosary.

Austria 1955

But we don't have to go back so far to see its great efficacy. In fact this was demonstrated very effectively as recently as 1955, when, following World War II, the occupying Soviet Army voluntarily left the Eastern zone of Austria. Fr Petrus Pavilcek, a Franciscan, had organized a rosary Crusade from 1946 onwards, which eventually had ten percent of the population of 7 million praying five decades of the rosary daily for peace in the country. He also organized candlelit processions in Vienna with a pilgrim Virgin statue of Our Lady from Fatima.

Why this focus on the rosary? For her to emphasize it in this way must mean it has an extraordinary power with God, and this is just what history tells us

On 13 May 1955, it was announced that the Soviets were willing to withdraw from Austria and sign a peace treaty. This was the only time in the history of the Soviet Union that the Red Army voluntarily withdrew from a European country it had occupied without firing a shot. And it happened on the anniversary of the first Fatima apparition. In contrast, though, the attempted revolutions in Hungary, in 1956, and Czechoslovakia, in 1968, were brutally put down.

And even more recently, in Brazil in the 1960s and Portugal in the 1970s, the power of the rosary was again demonstrated when incipient communist coups in both countries were thwarted, when large numbers of women in both countries prayed the rosary publicly as a protest against the threats their countries faced.

These historical incidents show that while it is good to pray the rosary as an individual, it is much more powerful if we pray it as part of a group.

St Louis de Montfort

This was the teaching of St Louis de Montfort, who said that if we pray the rosary in a group, then we multiply its effectiveness. That is, if a person says a rosary, that is just one rosary, but if, for example, ten people pray it together, that is the same as if each of them has said ten rosaries each – and this multiplying effect becomes even more powerful with larger numbers, and hence the explanation for the power of all those rosaries said in Austria.

In fact, what is really needed in Britain and in countries around the world generally, are National Rosary Pledge campaigns, like the one organized by Fr Pavlicek in Austria.

*If believers started to pray the rosary regularly
for the moral regeneration of our country,
then we would start to see real changes*

If believers started to pray the rosary regularly for the moral regeneration of our country, then we would start to see real changes. This is because such prayer would call down graces

of conversion that would lead to lapsed Catholics returning to the practice of their faith, and to a general revitalization of the Church.

But at the same time we have to live the Message of Fatima as fully as we can, in line with the teaching of recent Popes.

It should also be remembered that the devil is terrified of the power of the rosary. In his book, *The Last Exorcist*, Fr. Gabriel Amorth reports how "During an exorcism, Satan told me, through the possessed person, 'Every Hail Mary of the rosary is a blow to the head for me; if Christians knew the power of the rosary, it would be the end of me!'"

So that is another good reason to say the rosary!

Saint John Paul

During his 1982 visit to Fatima, a year after the failed attempt on his life on 13 May 1981, Pope John Paul II said, "If the Church has accepted the message of Fatima, it is above all because that message contains a truth and a call whose basic content is the truth and call of the Gospel itself." He further stated that the, "appeal of the Lady of the message of Fatima is so deeply rooted in the Gospel and the whole of Tradition that the Church feels that the message imposes a commitment on her."

These are very powerful words and indicate just how important the Fatima message really is. We can understand this more fully if we reflect on the Collegial Consecration carried out by the Pope and the bishops of the world in March 1984, which led to the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The unexpected peaceful outcome of John Paul II's consecration of 1984 averted the threat of another war in Europe

Following this consecration, Sr. Lucia was visited by the Apostolic Nuncio, and she confirmed that the consecration of Russia had indeed been accomplished, and that God had accepted it. In Russia, on the death of Chernenko, on 11 March 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the Communist Party. He became President in 1988, and that was the beginning of the unravelling of the Soviet colossus.

The unexpected peaceful outcome of John Paul II's consecration of 1984 averted the threat of another war in Europe, and validates Sr Lucia's plea just before the outbreak of the second World War, on 20 March 1939. She said then that, "World War or world peace depends on the practice of the devotion of the first Saturdays as well as the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary; that is why I wish for its propagation and most of all because that is Our God's will and also our dearest Heavenly Mother's."

The First Saturdays

The First Saturdays devotion referred to above prompted a further apparition to Lucia in 1925. By this time she was a postulant with the Sisters of St. Dorothy at Pontevedra in Spain. On Thursday 10 December, the Blessed Virgin, accompanied by the Child Jesus on a little cloud, appeared to her in her cell. Lucia recounted that Mary rested her hand on her shoulder, while showing her a heart encircled by thorns in her other hand.

The Child Jesus spoke first. "Have pity on the Heart of your Most Holy Mother. It is covered with the thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment, and there is no one to remove them with an act of reparation."

Then Mary said, "My daughter, look at My Heart surrounded with thorns with which ungrateful men pierce it at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. You, at least, try to console me, and say that I promise to assist at the hour of death, with all the graces necessary for salvation, all those who, on the first Saturday of five consecutive months go to confession and receive Holy Communion, recite five decades of the rosary and keep me company for a quarter of an hour while meditating on the mysteries of the rosary, with the intention of making reparation to me."

From this it seems appropriate to say that the First Saturdays devotion is an "extension" of the rosary, since it is based around its prayerful recitation. This again shows the importance of the rosary as a core element of the Fatima message.

The above facts have important consequences for the Church. If Catholics are saying the rosary regularly with devotion then that in itself brings down important heavenly graces on them and their families – and at the same time, as Our Lady said, it is the means she gives us to bring about peace in the world.

Regarding the Five First Saturdays devotion, this, if implemented on a sufficiently wide enough scale, would be an excellent form of re-evangelisation, one that would bring people to live their faith more fully through regular reception of the Church's sacramental sources of grace, with the assurance of Our Lady's promise to assist them at the hour of death "with all the graces necessary for salvation".

This means that it is important that both rosary groups and the Five First Saturdays are started in as many parishes as possible. This will further devotion to Our Lady and Fatima, and ultimately, also bring about the conversion of Russia and the renewal of the Church.

Recent Popes have been urging the Church to take the Message of Fatima seriously. For example, at the Mass in St Peter's on 13th May 2006, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the attempt on the life of Pope Saint John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI expressed the hope that "the message of Fatima will be increasingly accepted, understood and lived in every community." And in Fatima, on 13 May 2010, he said: "We would be mistaken to think that the prophetic mission of Fatima is complete."

Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary

John Paul II was responsible for the promulgation of the Luminous Mysteries of the rosary in 2002, in an attempt to broaden its appeal by focusing on aspects of Christ's public ministry. These new mysteries were introduced in the Pope's encyclical letter, *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, in which he emphasised the importance of praying the rosary for Catholics, saying:



"The rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer. In the sobriety of its elements, it has all the depth of the Gospel message in its entirety, of which it can be said to be a compendium. It is an echo of the prayer of Mary, her perennial Magnificat for the work of the redemptive Incarnation which began in her virginal womb. With the rosary, the Christian people sits at the school of Mary and is led to contemplate the beauty on the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love. Through the rosary the faithful receive

abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer."

Pope Francis

Pope Francis, too, has taken Fatima seriously, ensuring that his pontificate was consecrated to Our Lady of Fatima on 13 May 2013, by the Cardinal of Lisbon.

And during the Marian celebrations held in Rome on 12th and 13th October 2013, the Pope entrusted the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Pope Francis is maintaining the close links between the Papacy and Fatima

All of the above are very significant events, and they show that Pope Francis is maintaining the close links between the Papacy and Fatima. And now, just a few months ago, Jacinta and Francisco were canonized by him in Fatima, on 13 May 2017. The centenary year of Fatima is a renewed call for us all to accept the Message given by Our Lady at Fatima, and in particular to do what we can to live and promote the rosary and the Five First Saturdays devotion.

Donal Anthony Foley is the secretary of the World Apostolate of Fatima England and Wales The National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima and Relics of Saints Jacinta and Francisco are currently visiting Cathedrals and churches around the country – details can be seen here:<http://www.worldfatima-englandwales.org.uk/visitation.html>

FROM THE AIMS AND IDEALS OF FAITH MOVEMENT

Faith Movement offers a new synthesis of faith and reason, explaining the Catholic faith in the evolutionary perspective of modern science.

Reflecting on the unity of the cosmos, we can show the transcendent existence of God and the essential distinction between matter and spirit. We offer a vision of God as the true Environment of men in whom “we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28) and of his unfolding purpose in the relationship of word and grace through the prophets which is brought to its true head in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Lord of Creation, centre of history and fulfilment of our humanity.

Our redemption through the death and resurrection of the Lord, following the tragedy of original sin, is also thereby seen in its crucial and central focus. Our life in his Holy Spirit through the church and the sacraments and the necessity of an infallible magisterium likewise flow naturally from this presentation of Christ and his work through the ages.

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

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Creation, the Catechism, Evolution and Angels



Philip Trower examines an important aspect of the Creation

My purpose in writing this article is twofold; in the first place to look at what the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) has to say on the subject, and secondly too see whether it is possible to throw any light on why there has been suffering and disorder in nature not only since the fall of Adam and Eve, as was once thought, but seemingly since the creation of the first living beings.

As St Paul puts it in his Epistle to the Romans: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail until now; and not only the creation but we ourselves." As for the reason he only makes the mysterious statement: "for the creation was subjected to futility not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope." Meanwhile "it waits with eager longing for the adoption of the sons of God," when "it will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Romans 8: 19-23) In other words at the end of time and the Second Coming.

Nature

The apostle does not, here or anywhere else, tell us when he thought nature began to groan, but as a man of his time, he would presumably have believed in a creation lasting six 24 hour days and attributed any suffering in nature outside the Garden of Eden, like everything else that had gone wrong, to our first parent's sin. They were expelled from the garden into a world that had only just begun to groan. Before that, like the rest of his Christian and Jewish contemporaries he would presumably have believed that it had been, if not in a paradisaal state (it needed in some way "subduing" or tilling) at least in a state that excluded "groaning" and suffering.

However, all this, as we know, has had to be reconsidered by Christians, Mother Church included, once the geological and palaeontological sciences began to reveal the apparently immense age of the earth and the evidence that the biological species did not all come into existence at once exactly as they are today but by some kind of transformism.

Not only had there been suffering and imperfection for aeons before the Fall. Some degree of suffering and imperfection seems to have accompanied the very process by which all the marvels and beauties of the natural order came successively into existence.

Theories

As we all know, the Church's task has not been made any easier by most of the evolutionary or transformative theories put forward to explain all these new facts, with Darwin's in the forefront. To use the words of the Anglo-German theologian, Dom Anscar Vonier, only too often these theories "are designed to exclude divine oversight and direction."⁽¹⁾ However, he continues, provided they do not do that "the Catholic is free to speculate and think as he likes on the question of the immediate causes of the world's variety," or, as he could have put it, "the origin of species."

Prior to the CCC, the most significant magisterial statement on the subject of evolution or the origin of man was Pius XII's encyclical *Humanae Generis*.

Here is the relevant passage. "The Magisterium of the Church, does not forbid that in the present state of the human sciences and sacred theology, research and discussion, on the part of men experienced in both fields, take place with regard to the doctrine of 'evolutionism' in so far as it inquires into the origin of the human body as coming from pre-existent and living matter – for the Catholic faith obliges us to hold that souls are immediately created by God." (HG36) In other words, for Adam's body God could have used some kind of already existing anthropoid. At the same time the Pope pleads for moderation all round.

Suffering

What the existence of suffering and death before the fall does throw light on is why the creation and fall of our first parents took place in a special enclave, the Garden of Eden. Outside it, death and disorder already tarnished the marvels of biological nature.

What is difficult to see is how, if they hadn't sinned, they could they have fulfilled the command to "fill the earth and subdue it" without at the same time meeting death and disorder in the process? This was no problem for our forbears for whom the world outside the Garden would presumably have been seen as not all that different to the world inside it.



The Catechism

In relation to all this the CCC adopts what we could call a mild form of theistic evolutionism.

Here are the most significant passages.

“Creation has its own goodness and proper perfection, but it did not spring forth complete from the hands of the Creator. The universe was created ‘in a state of journeying’ (in statu viae) towards an ultimate perfection yet to be attained, to which God has destined it. We call ‘divine providence’ the dispositions by which God guides his creation towards this perfection.”

To this, quoting Vatican I and the books of Wisdom and Hebrews, the same text adds, “For all things are open and laid bare to his eyes, even those which are yet to come into existence through the free action of creatures.” (302)

Then on the problem of evil it says: “But why did God not create a world so perfect that no evil could exist in it? With infinite power God could always create something better. But with infinite wisdom and goodness God freely willed to create a world

In relation to all this the CCC adopts what we could call a mild form of theistic evolutionism. ‘in a state of journeying’ towards ultimate perfection. In God’s plan this process of becoming involves the appearance of certain beings and the disappearance of others, the existence of the more perfect alongside the less perfect, both constructive and destructive forces of nature..... With physical good there also exists physical evil as long as creation has not reached perfection.” (310)

Vatican II

This last clause introduces an idea still unknown to the great majority of Catholics, although foreshadowed in the Vatican II documents: namely that in carrying out his command to “till the earth and subdue it”, which includes the arts and sciences, we are helping God complete his creation. “God enables men” says the relevant text “to be intelligent free causes in order to complete the work of creation, to perfect its

in carrying out his command to “till the earth and subdue it”, which includes the arts and sciences, we are helping God complete his creation harmony for their own good and that of their neighbours.” (307) It is like a mother letting her child help her decorate the Christmas cake after she has mixed and baked it. Creation is not something that came to an end or its climax with Adam and Eve. It is still going on.

On the subject of the fall, the authors of the Catechism tend to be more traditional, or less innovative and developmental. “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'..... Death makes its entrance into human history." (sic) (400)

With all respect I would suggest that this sentence needs clarifying. Death enters human history because of man, Yes. But one can hardly say that about nature as a whole. Nature has been "groaning" since the first appearance of biological species unless we suppose it was allowed for some reason in anticipation of the fall.

Idea

It is here that I would like to offer an idea which might throw some light on this relatively recent problem of a biological world apparently 'groaning' from the outset and with suffering and death seemingly built into the process by which it developed. Why did God chose this particular mode of creation for living beings; this "state of journeying" from imperfection to perfection which will only be complete on the Last Day. What we are really confronting is the "problem of evil" set in a new philosophical and cultural context. Holy Mother Church has never had any doubts about the ultimate origin of evil, so it is here, in this new context that we must look for a possible reason why, as we now know, some degree of "groaning" was built into God's chosen method of creation from the start.

Angels

To quote theologian John Saward: "before the fall of man, there had been another fall," i.e. the fall of the angels. Can we then, or should we leave them out of our attempts to explain the history of creation as the CCC now presents it; that is in the light of the genuine scientific knowledge available today?

Can we make a case for seeing the angels in God's initial plan of creation not just as messengers but as in some way active agents with a specific role in the development of the evolutionary process, a role which he did not withdraw from those who rebelled, in the same way that he does not always or instantly remove bad rulers who affect the development of the historical process ?

For this it will be necessary to say something about what the Church actually teaches about the angels

rather than the little that most people think it does. In addition to the CCC, I shall rely on the Anglo-German theological writer and thinker Dom Anscar Vonier or rather his chapter on Angels in the 2 volume compendium of Catholic doctrine which I have relied on for many years. (2)

Most practising Christians, I would suggest, think of angels as supernatural beings who from all eternity have existed to sing God's praises in heaven

God's messengers

Most practising Christians, I would suggest, think of angels as supernatural beings who from all eternity have existed to sing God's praises in heaven. This was and still is their main role. Then, since the creation of the universe, they have had the added work of acting as God's messengers to individual members of the human race from time to time or as their personal guardians. As for the rebel angels, their fall occurred some time long before God thought of creating "a universe". This indeed is more or less what I myself thought until I looked into the matter more closely.

Here in contrast is what the CCC tells us, quoting Lateran Council 1V. "God, from the beginning of time made at once (simul) out of nothing both orders of creatures, the spiritual and corporeal, that is the angelic and earthly, and then the human creature, who as it were shares in both orders, being composed of body and spirit." (327).

A single system

The word simul suggests that the angels were made simultaneously with the big bang, if that is indeed the way everything began. Then confirming this we are told that "angels have been present since creation and throughout the history of salvation."

"Christ is the centre of the angelic world. They are his angels... they belong to him because they were created through him and for him." (332) And "as intelligent and free creatures," they "have to journey toward their ultimate destinies by their free choice and preferential love. They can therefore go astray.... Thus has moral evilentered the world." (311) "Christ is the centre of the angelic world. They are his angels... they belong to him because they were created through him and for him." (331)

In the light of this it seems to me we can say the angels and the universe have from the start been part and parcel of a single system.

I now turn to Dom Anscar.

"Christian thought is not satisfied with the merely ministerial role of the heavenly spirits; the angels are more than ministers and messengers; they are above all, a portion of the universe (created being); they are its noblest portion, and very early in the history of Christian thought we find them occupying a most important cosmic position."

Furthermore, they are not supernatural beings. They are natural beings "elevated to the supernatural order, the state of grace." pp.258, 259. "It is a favourite theme with St Thomas Aquinas to represent the whole physical world as being entrusted by God to the keeping of the angels." p.268

"The angelic guardianship of man by angels is only the last instance of the mighty tutelage of the spirit world over the material world, with this difference... that free

will comes into play where man is concerned." p.269 "This angelic guardianship is something natural, something normal, as normal as the great powers of the physical cosmos." p.271 When created "the angels did not find themselves in heaven with God (what the theologians call caelum sanctae Trinitatis); they found themselves in that other 'heaven' which may be called the highest part of the natural cosmos." p.274

What these passages seem to suggest, above all, is that in God's original plan of creation, as the CCC describes it, the angels were to have much more than a supervisory role, and that when some of them fell he did not remove their power to influence the evolutionary or transformative creative process, anymore than when we act badly he removes our power to affect the historical process.

None of this would involve violating the laws of nature. Who today, with global warming and all that, could say that free beings cannot seriously damage or alter nature without altering its laws.

1. Dom Anscar Vonier (1875-1938). In addition to being a gifted writer and thinker he was responsible for rebuilding the abbey of Buckfast in Devon, England, of which he was for many years abbot.
2. The Teaching of the Catholic Church, 2 Vols. London, Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1948.

Philip Trower is a writer whose books include Turmoil and Truth and a novel A Danger to the State, published by Ignatius Press. A version of this feature has also appeared in The Wanderer newspaper.



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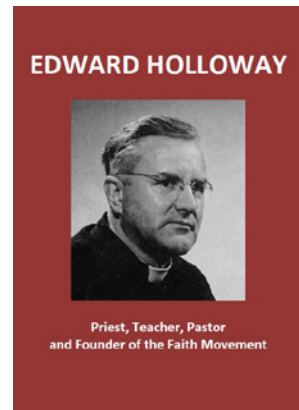
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Social Media and the Anti-Contemplative Spirit



Lizzie Ashfield looks at the omnipresent social media

In his acclaimed new book *The Power of Silence* Cardinal Sarah states that contemplative silence is a silence of Adoration and listening by a person who stands in the presence of God.

As someone who spent three years in a contemplative novitiate in France, I can testify to the strength of this experience. This standing in the presence of God (the loving Father who is constantly seeking us out) has immense power to order and soothe our lives.

Putting together the modern world with this silence is highly challenging. The unease we feel around our slavery to social media is constant and has been written about over the past few years by Christians and secular people alike. Those without faith have clearly understood just as well as we have that there is something stifling about this technological slavery.

In the video *Millennials in the Workplace* Simon Sinek speaks passionately about the deadening effect that technology is having on young people. They are addicted, as are many older people too, to the constant stream of information, entertainment and commentary that flows out like effluent over their lives.

But what truth has Sinek discovered that merits 6.8 million views on YouTube? Surely at its base it is that reality gives life, where the virtual sucks life out of us. If Catholics believe Jesus is the Way the Truth and the Life, then surely there is a need to battle strongly for the space He occupies in our lives. The space that the virtual is filling with frightening speed.

Replacing God?

I believe that if we look at the ways we use and interact with social media we will see the subtle signs that it is in fact replacing God for us. Usurping the contemplative basis of a truly fruitful spiritual life and becoming that which we turn to in all our needs.

Let's take the classic example of Facebook. I joined this network a couple of years after leaving the novitiate, and was at first, like many, simultaneously baffled and delighted by its complexity. Here I could connect with friends on the other side of the

*As one friend wrote on my page
not long after I had signed up;
“Welcome to the great time-waster!”*

world from my student days, read articles on many subjects and join groups for various interests. All the while fighting the inherent narcissism and feeling spied-on by others. As one friend wrote on my page not

long after I had signed up; “Welcome to the great time-waster!”

Many of us engage with Facebook as we might with God. Facebook is always there. Always open, always happy to see us (Welcome! What’s on your mind? How was your day?) It’s almost a mockery, a caricature of the thirsting Jesus, whose heart aches for our attention.

Many people give their first moments of the day to Facebook. When I was a novice the training in a life of prayer included the basic rule of a morning Act of Adoration. Before anything else we would prostrate ourselves and give our first moments to God, in whom we live and breathe and have our being. This discipline was encouraged throughout the day as well, with another significant act of Adoration at 3 o’clock in the afternoon to mark the moment Jesus died. I’ll always remember the sight of four novices washing the floor only to stop and curl up amid the dust for a minute or two, giving thanks for that ultimate sacrifice. Many sisters would bow their heads too while waiting for a class to begin. This discipline was hard to continue in the world, but I still battle for that first moment, knowing as I do that my smartphone is now only an arms stretch away from me.

I’m astonished too by the essential need we appear to have to validate ourselves on social media. A couple of years ago a colleague of mine asked about my latest dating relationship. “It’s not official until it’s on Facebook” she said. Another friend commented on an eventual Facebook admission on my part that I was now ‘taken’; “No photos and it didn’t happen”, he said. And there was I happily getting to know somebody whom I had been speaking to God about for several months. Nobody knew! Apart from the most important person of all of course. The One who had overseen all my stages of discernment so far, and proven Himself faithful. The one who was intensely and intimately interested in my heart.

Illusion

That’s another thing. Surely social media is creating an illusion of faithfulness in our lives? Just today the site greeted me with a video of pictures from my profile arranged in such a way that the ‘Thanks for Being Here’ title gently attempted to manipulate me in to believing that my ‘online presence’ (a classic oxymoron in realistic philosophy!) has communicative value for them. It does not. We are made for communion, not for mere communication. Communion of the soul with God. The mystics speak of

this with raptured attempts to describe it. John of the Cross speaks of a wounding of the heart, shot through with the love of God, who is described as the 'beloved' of the soul, constantly sought and longed for.

One acquaintance of mine will update Facebook several times a day with extremely mundane anecdotes, from the type of bread she bought that morning, to the latest remark from her dentist on her molars. Why do we tell Facebook before we tell God? Do we imagine this black-hole of apparent 'communion' with the rest of the world is more interested than He is in the details of our lives? He, who is the true Beloved, waiting. Always waiting for our merest glances.

Answers

Facebook, rather like Google also carries answers to everything. It's the omnipotent, all knowing force with articles on every subject; How do de-stress with meditation, how to make the best pizza (the video is ten seconds long, you need to get on with your day after all!) or how to tone up for summer. It's as if we've forgotten that God the Father has all the answers and that He has very specific response to each and every personal need. Recently in prayer I heard God's voice in my heart clearly directing me to take up a forgotten and broken dream that He had planted there like a seed, years before. He knows us better than we know ourselves and beyond. He knows the real reasons we post one thing on social media and not another. He knows what we hide, and what we choose to show. He is the one with the real 'updates' on our soul, and our increasingly fractured human condition.

The origins of things are important. Facebook's motto used to be "Move Fast and Break Things". It sounded catchy but before long Mark Zuckerberg changed it to "Move fast with stable infrastructure", leaving behind the entrepreneurial approach of his youth for something more acceptable because as he said "You have to be stable in order to get to the next level". So perhaps there's an analogy here. What is the stability of our spiritual life? If there are 'levels' where are we? Have we slid down a level or two? Are we still close to Jesus? Are we put off by St Theresa of Avila's *Interior Castle*; the idea of contemplation alien to us?

Spiritual writers

All the best spiritual writers of the Church place the sacraments at the top of the list of a foundation for the contemplative way, but few of us build higher on this rock than we find convenient. The Eucharist is key. *The Eucharist is key. Jesus Himself. Jesus Himself. In Him alone our souls find rest. In Him alone our souls find rest*
A daily dose of this ultimate contemplative

feast (and a silent thanksgiving spent only with Him) is surely a good foundation. There were days in the convent when I missed my morning Oraison, arriving in haste for Lauds having failed to spend 45 minutes in silence with Him. Most of us in the novitiate experienced these mornings at some point and we all agreed: a day not begun in this way was never as peaceful, fruitful or blessed.

There are friends of mine who admit to spending a whole hour on Facebook before even getting up on a Saturday morning, and they do so long before saying any prayers. So, while I'm not suggesting we all take on the timetable and lifestyle of religious, I do think that we should be aware how pervasive this anti-contemplative spirit is in our lives. It's not a moral wrong in itself, but like many venial sins, it can become a norm which robs us of the chance to help virtue grow. It is like fertiliser to the weeds that grow up and choke the seed of the Word within us.

Permission

I stand in the presence of Facebook and I fester. I no longer stand in the presence of God and praise Him as I did when I wore the habit. But this tide of the anti-contemplative is not beyond our control. We still have the right to exercise will power, despite the tsunami of pressure to be slaves to the virtual. If we allow it to suck the lifeblood out of our communion with the Father, we effectively give it permission to own us, as only He must be allowed to do.

The fruits of the contemplative life are many: peace, freedom, charity, patience for starters. The fruits of Facebook are less attractive by far: anxiety, distraction, cheap laughs and self-centredness. My most disciplined friends (who only use the medium to promote good causes and share uplifting articles) do not fail to feel this. Even they may spend hours scanning through old photos and lurking on the pages of those they are curious about. We are being consumed by this black-hole, instead of seeking time with the Lord of Light.

Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* is often cited in Catholic journalism. One idea is that the elves represent something of the contemplative, withdrawn as they are from the world, living peacefully in hidden places like Rivendell, whose ambiance is described by the author with the love and awe of a person who has experienced the depth of retreat-like stillness.

But the elves are not passive. They are peaceful, but they also defend their borders. The treasures of Rivendell and Lothlorien are in the roots of the trees, the age of the elves themselves, the wisdom in their eyes. These resting spaces are defended with arrows and wit. No sleeping on guard for the elvish contemplatives. Theirs is a precious task; to withstand the darkness by preserving the life of the spiritual, which is a fortress against rising storms in the world of Middle Earth.

Contemplation

The heights of contemplation are not inaccessible to us. Mysticism has its roots in simple truths. We are created for God. We are precious in His sight. We are loved by Him. No matter what walk of life we take, or what vocation we have these truths remain. A fruitful apostolic life flows from the contemplative. It takes prayer to really know who we are; children of God with a mission. We need to waste time with God, before we truly waste it online. As the Cure of Ars spoke of Adoration *"I look at Him, and He looks at me"*. How much infinitely more fruitful than looking at the screen of an I-phone!

The late Mother Angelica used to say in her down-to-earth fashion; *"If we are too busy for God, we are too busy"*. It's simple. Our hearts really are restless until they rest in Him, no matter how worthy the things we pursue might be.

But it's not as if we check our updates in church, is it? Or in the confessional queue? Oh yes, there are those for whom it cannot wait, because they are addicted. Afraid to miss out on an update, but not afraid to receive the Lord without reverence. But why beat ourselves over the head about it? Social media is here. It's here to stay. We can't all take the habit and leave the world. But nobody has taken away our free will, our will power or our ability to ask for help if the virtual has taken over our life. We have a choice with this choking!

Healthy spiritual surroundings

There are certain things desirable for contemplative prayer. Most often these are silence and solitude. The contemplative life is like a delicate seedling, reared carefully in a certain type of soil. The soil of healthy spiritual surroundings. It is watered by a frequent reception of the sacraments. It needs protecting. It needs attention. It needs vigilant observation. Spiritual reading is like plant food to the seedling of contemplative life, boosting its chances of developing in to a robust plant that will bear fruit.

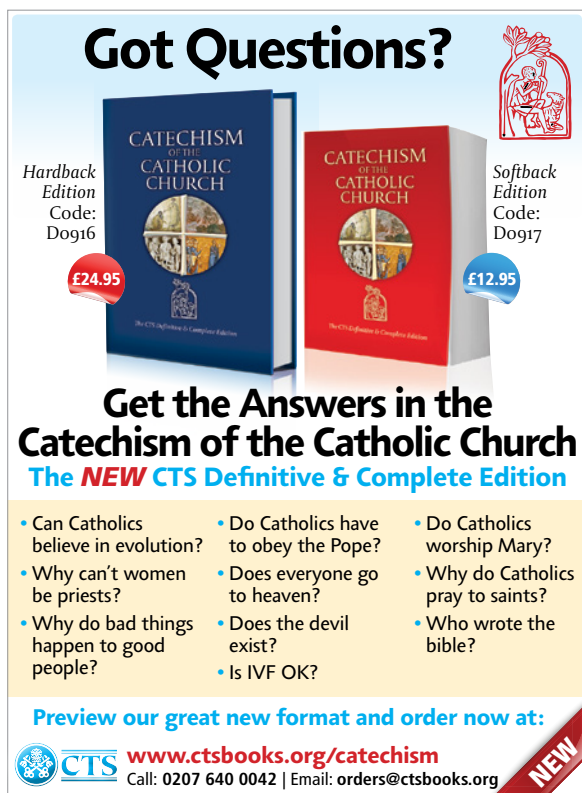
When we have found the "One whom our soul loves", we can never be satisfied with passive networking and meaningless consumption of pictures and memes. There needs to be a balance in our relationship with God. A relationship which is deeply spousal for the soul. We cannot receive if we fail to give to the Beloved. To reap the benefits of His presence without giving time to Him in which He can speak to us.

Over 33% of social network users admit to joining the networks because their friends were there already. But our search for community cannot firstly be online. We need the strength of real connection, not only with others but also with Him, the creator of all Unity from the beginning.

So, as I type up the notes I wrote on paper, and edit through a keyboard while *Spiritual reading is like plant food to the seedling of contemplative life, boosting its chances of developing in to a robust plant that will bear fruit.* trying to ignore the buzz of my Samsung, I smile sadly that spell checker is insisting on a capital F and a capital Y for Facebook and YouTube, while I myself correct the lower cases that refer to God the Father Himself! He is the Name above all Names, The King of Kings, The Lord of Lords, and the nurturer of our spiritual life; that parched land that cries out for the water of His Presence while we attempt to nourish it with the spiritually dead sprinklers of social media.

Lizzie Ashfield studied Philosophy and Theology, and writes poetry, prose and articles on faith subjects. When younger she won the Catholic Young Writer of the Year Award and the Robin McNair prize for her essay on euthanasia.

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NEW

Interview

"Man does not get his dignity from the State – it is given by God"

Joanna Bogle meets Cardinal Gerhard Müller, whose five-year term as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has now ended. There has been much discussion about all that. But what is the man like, beyond any headlines or controversy?



Rome in stifling heat, and St Peter's Square is sizzling in blinding sunshine. Buildings offer a relief: a sense of centuries of summer heat simply dissipating into thick walls.

Meeting the former Prefect of the CDF does have an agreeable sense of drama about it – the opening scenes of a film: a tall, rather imposing figure in a cassock with red piping. But the greeting is a warm and friendly one, the eyes are smiling, and somehow the conversation flows freely from the start.

Measured

Cardinal Gerhard Müller has a measured, thoughtful way of speaking, fluent English, soft fizzy accent, a friendly approach and a complete lack of any pomposity. When he talks about the Church, there is a warmth and a sense of commitment that is centred on something personal. We chatted a bit – about Britain and so on – and conversation was easy and congenial. I asked him about his own life, how he came to be a priest.

"In our village it was normal to be a Catholic – different from England - and we had a good parish priest and a good school that had a great influence on me. But when you sense a call from Jesus Christ to be a priest, it is not a call to some social organisation. The Church is the house of God and the temple of the Holy Spirit – Christ is the Word

But when you sense a call from Jesus Christ to be a priest, it is not a call to some social organisation. The Church is the house of God and the temple of the Holy Spirit – Christ is the Word made flesh.

made flesh. That was what became convincing for me."

Today's Europe is rapidly becoming de-Christianised, and even our ideas on what it

means to be human, as men and women, somehow seem dissociated from previous understanding. This is something with which the Church is grappling, although traditions of Christianity still linger. This is evidently a major issue for the Cardinal. He is forthright in describing the “nihilistic” understanding of life prevalent today and in the need to offer the truth about who we really are and our relationship with God.

“Christianity is not just a culture, it’s also essentially a belief in the eternal God and in the Church and the sacraments that Christ has given to us. Baptism for example

“Christianity is not just a culture, it’s also essentially a belief in the eternal God and in the Church and the sacraments that Christ has given to us.” is not just a sign of a family tradition – it means that we become a new creature with a personal relationship with

God. And the community of the faithful in the Church is in contact with God, with his Word and with sacramental grace...and this is a personal God, who became one of us, born as a baby, a participation in our destiny up to his death on the Cross for our sins. And his Resurrection is a sign of hope that cannot be destroyed – and this means that we can confide everything to God with confidence.”

Heritage

Growing up in the diocese of Mainz – where the Bishop was for centuries a major figure and Christianity taken for granted – Müller is conscious of heritage inherited, but above all on the need to focus on the centrality of truth. His language on this echoes that of the most famous of his recent predecessors, Joseph Ratzinger, in its emphasis on the importance of truth and of teaching it, rather than of seeing the Church as essentially resting on rules.

“It includes repeating documents of the past, but also of responding to new challenges, for example in bioethics and anthropology. Above all, it is understanding the revealed truth about us – that religion is an element of our being. The testimony of the faith is the work of God, not just of human feeling.

“The CDF must continue to fulfil the role that was shaped so well by Cardinal Ratzinger: not only to defend the Faith but to promote it, to carry it forward. The Faith is not just a treasure to be admired, as in a museum, but is actively present *Müller exudes an air of quiet authority – a man convinced not only of the truth of the Faith but of the Church’s responsibility to teach and uphold it. He is realistic about the difficulties of our era, and of tougher times ahead, especially with the increasing attempts to impose a secular ideology.* in the world. And the CDF and the Bishops must lead people into a dialogue with God, to understand human existence in the light of God in his real presence with us in the Church and her sacraments.”

Müller exudes an air of quiet authority – a man convinced not only of the truth of the Faith but of the Church’s responsibility to teach and uphold it. He is realistic about the difficulties of our era, and of tougher times ahead, especially with the increasing attempts to impose a secular ideology.

“Man does not get his dignity from the State – it is given by God. It is the natural law for man to have his religious faith and his moral understanding and practice. Everyone should respect that natural law.

In some places today there is a crushing of democracy in the name of democracy. So the Church defends freedom, not only of the Church but of liberals too. We are not seeking to control – but to allow true freedom to flourish”.

Human dignity

He sees the Church as the voice of truth and of human dignity and values. “We cannot let the State control and prescribe the religious beliefs of the community.”

We have been talking of serious things, but there is an underlying cheerfulness. This is a man convinced – a word he often uses – of the truth of Christ and of the Church, with a confidence in that truth and in its ability to conquer anew, and with a fresh vigour.

Müller lists St Anthony of Padua, St Bonaventure, and St Thomas More among his favourite saints – this last because of his integrity and courage and his loyalty to the Church in the face of so much pressure to concede to the demands of the king and government. “I well remember learning about him in school and discussing it all. He has a message for us today”.

Appointed Bishop of Regensburg

Appointed Bishop of Regensburg by Pope Saint John Paul, he chose *Dominus Jesus* – “Jesus is Lord” as his episcopal motto. Pope Benedict XVI appointed him Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 2012 in succession to Cardinal William Levada.

Has he got a message for us, for the FAITH Movement, and for the Church in Britain in general?

A warm smile and a thoughtful statement, made with a steady emphasis: “Remember John Paul: ‘Do not be afraid! Be afraid of no one. We have our hope in God who guarantees our dignity and our liberty.”.

Joanna Bogle is editor of FAITH magazine

Holloway on:

The Theology of Gender

EDWARD HOLLOWAY



The theology and the very life of the Catholic Church is built upon *nature*, and the concept of a nature is one of ministry and function. The very idea of a *nature* means that something is integrated into an environment, that through the laws of this environment it is *subject*, i.e., cannot do whatever it likes. The being or creature that does as it likes first breaks up the life of other things around, and then dies out itself. The idea of the nature means that we are interrelated, and inter-defined, in all that we do and are. Nothing can do as it likes. Pleasure, greed, and hedonism dominate the rich West. Nothing in our way of life is *of its nature* integrated into nature, into the concept of related meaningful function and ministry. In philosophy this would be called Nominalism: the denial of mutual inter-definition both to be at all, and to be fulfilled rightly and beautifully, and in true order, in one's being.

Feminism as a repudiation of nature

For the purposes of this article, Feminism is a case in point. Every heresy builds upon an unperceived or ignored truth. The discrimination against the woman not as the result of nature as such, but as the consequence of sin, is beautifully underlined in Genesis 3:16.

"I will multiply thy conceptions, but also thy sorrowing.

Thy love shall turn to thy husband, and he will lord it over thee".

This is the damage done to the *nature* of man and woman, and to the nature of marriage. The nature itself is good, and as nature, the law of fulfilment in both male and female. The work of God lies in the purification and restoration of nature, i.e. of the right ordering of human life and being. To deny the order of nature is an utter destruction, greater than the damage of coarseness and concupiscence caused by sin. The essence of the Feminist Movement is the denial of nature, and the denial, with contempt, of the family and its proper integration between man and woman. The modern argument goes: women from their function as childbearers have to lose the personal freedom and career mobility of males, of men. Not fair! So we will destroy womanhood as defined unto the male, the womb as defined *unto* the male genital,

the family as the priority of sexual activity and meaning. They would prefer to be second class men rather than be first class women. There should not be females; not fair! In so far as women have to bear the children for life to continue, they should be compensated for the inconvenience and injustice as all workers are compensated for "unsocial working conditions". The culture of humankind must become unisex. The fact that it is not so in any other form of advanced life is irrelevant.

The definition of Feminism as a philosophy lies in the refusal to recognise the "nature". That is to say the essential relationship of life to the environment within which it finds its law, and therefore the true joy and fulfilment of its being. The concept of their "nature" inter-defines both man and woman in terms of a mutual subjection to each other in the parental *role*: such is not servility but the core of all ministry. The recognition of role, of ministry, of function, ordered from the within of things, defines the cosmos from the first explosion of ordered energies with which all things began. If existence had been based on "I will do as I like", then nothing could have emerged from the "Kingdom of Chaos and Old Night". The very laws of physics, let alone the evolution of complex living creatures, are built upon the basis of *natural* order, of pre-definition of one form of life to another.

Such a "law" is obvious from the very fact that neither the male nor the female body is *intelligible* alone and in isolation. This *inter-definition* of "ministry" goes beyond biology; it includes every psychological and physical relationship of male and female, but most fully in the covenant of marriage and family life. The fruits of the breakdown of the acceptance of a human "nature" is manifest: the condom mentality, sexual union as a passing pleasure, the broken home, abortion, the unhappy, disturbed, and often criminal child, - for to be *loved* as primary, is part of the nature of childhood expectation. Then, homosexual "marriage", lesbianism, the infidelity which follows from the division of sexual union from spiritual and life-long love, etc. etc. The list is endless. It is written *God forgives always, men forgive sometimes, but Nature never forgives*. The state of Western society is the nemesis of Nature, which cannot forgive, because consequences follow automatically from obedience or disobedience to the nature of things.

The Church must build on natural order

The Church has always followed "the nature of things". She cannot build on "I will do as I like". She cannot build either on a "democratic process" which in effect means human opinion at its best, and the indoctrination of the masses by the media power of money, sex, commercial interests at its more usual. She must build on the *nature*, the environment which gives the law of life. This is the meaning of *natural law*, the way God has defined things one to another in the environment of Nature, and in Himself

as the Environer of mankind: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). In the realm of the soul and brain, because of the equality of both brain and spirit in the sexes, there will always be women who can rule and manage magnificently. But the natural order will dominate, and within that framework the woman has time, power, *loving attention*, the attention of psychological priority, of care for *and physically* love for the children of the marriage. In the career priority of modern women in the modern world, time and again this does not happen. The home and housework are a dreary, impoverishing bore. We know there are true reasons why so many women have to go out to work. We know there are so many self-deceiving reasons why they "must". Money and immediate acquisitions top the list. An "interesting" life is a close second. So you get the bitter remark made to me by a teenage boy sent to a psychologist for treatment: "She's out at work most of the day, and when she comes back, music groups and badminton come next. I just don't matter". The mother would doubtless protest with bitter tears "But *darling* you *know* that I love you." But she doesn't; actions speak louder than words. This is the modern West.

The analogy of "Father" in anthropology and theology

In at least the vast majority of cultures, maybe all, the *final* God figure is male: God is a father-figure. There are also many and powerful female god-figures. We know there is neither matter nor sexuality in God. Why then this preference? Because a mother-figure of *her* nature and the defining element of the womb, the vessel of life, bespeaks a determination, and a prompting from another, from one outside. The womb is by very primordial recognition, the vessel which while not merely passive, as the ancients thought, is the vessel of response to a determiner of its life. It is summed up most perfectly in the ultimate meaning of all human sexual mutual ministry in St. Luke (1:35): "*The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall cover thee with its shadow*". One has remarked elsewhere on the significance of the shekinah, the overshadowing of God, and also on the almost embarrassingly physical meaning of the Greek for "come upon thee". One could fairly call it a male-female relationship in the conception of Christ as Son of Man, who is already in his Eternity, Son of God. When one adds this to the role of "father" as protector, guardian, and provider of the family and the life of the womb, it is easy to see the preference for *father* as the proper anthropomorphism for the role of God to mankind in care and love, rather than for a mother figure.

The ultimate meaning of gender

We need to develop the theology of gender. First, it is much easier and much more coherent to do so on the Scotist, and one would say Greek, intuition of the reason

for the Incarnation. If we see the Incarnation as the predestined final crowning of all creation in Christ, Son of God and of Man, whose kingly destiny is changed, by the divine mercy, into a painful Redemption of his fallen inheritance, then we have a much more majestic vision of Christ, one much more in conformity with the vision of John and Paul, and one much more capable of development in the theology of gender. The clue is then in the vision of St. John, in the Book of Revelation, the *“Woman clothed with the sun, crowned with twelve stars, the moon under her feet, in the travail of birth”* (Rev. 12:1-2). For the “Woman” on our interpretation is first planet Earth, which is literally clothed with the sun, principle of life and fertility, *crowned* with the galaxies in the consummation of evolution unto Man, with the moon under her feet, “for times, for seasons, for days and for years” until the *fullness of the times*, the Incarnation of God; always Eternal Son of God, and now made Son of Man. It is a breath-taking perspective of which the fuller sense is of Mary, as “The Woman clothed with the sun”, the fullness of grace, Mediatrix indeed of all graces, whose womb is the vessel of life, offered to God “to come upon thee” for the crowning of the Earth and mankind with the Universal King, Heir of the Age all things visible and invisible.

Therefore we dare to state that the ultimate meaning of gender, i.e. sexual differentiation, is to be found in theology, *and is specific for the Incarnation of Christ*. It means that the material creation must and ought to offer what is of its own for the body of Christ: He is the Universal King, the Crown of his own creation. That is why the sexes are divided in “the deep sleep” of Adam. The Earth, in Mary, offers the active seed of her womb from its prompting into life, and life more abundant, of God the Word, now phrased for us as God the Son. Through Mary, God is made also Son, or Prince, Source, and Origin, of Mankind. Christ could not be born of the seed of man and wife, nor even of a unisexual human nature. Procreation is the *active*, and *causal* co-operation of human *persons* with God. Their seed of its nature calls for the response of God to create through the soul *another*, a created *person*, under God’s own law of mutual causality between God and mankind. To become Incarnate, God needs only, but must have, the vessel and seed of human life, but without that total *personal* operation which is the law of the being of “another”. God needs the vessel by which He can say of human nature, not human personality, *mine* and not “another”, for the Eternal Word is already “Me”, a Person. The womb, and the female body indeed, is so obviously *a vessel of reception* not of prompting or “lordship”. If the husband, in St. Paul’s teaching (Eph. 5:23-33) is the head of the “one flesh” of man and wife, it is only because of the lordship of God over the flesh’s vessel of reception unto life for the Incarnation. It is also in the physical order only as a ministry; for in personality *“there is no distinction of Jew or Greek, slave or free citizen; nor is there male or female. For you all are one in Christ Jesus”*. (Gal. 3:28)

If we could teach a theology of gender, we could, and would, be teaching again, and

vindicating anew the theology of gender within marriage. This subject seemed too vast to cover well in this article. Yet, the role of the man and the woman in marriage is not that of boss and underling “in all things”, but again the role of meaning and of service, of chivalry and sacrifice, as St. Paul teaches. In the modern world, the man is basically “redundant”, just a sperm bank. Even in marriage, a woman “has a right to do what she likes with her body” and obtain an abortion, however much her husband disagrees. This is of course a lie against the unity of marriage, and the meaning of “two in the one body”. We have to teach again the headship of a husband in the family as akin to the headship of Christ. It is a headship of love, and therefore contains also a certain subjection of role. It is not the arrogance of power that derives from Original Sin. Such a headship, being in the likeness of Christ to the Church, requires a submission to honest truth in the representations and arguments of one’s wife. There is no discord between Christ and the Church, for the truth begets charity, and charity, as pure love, bows to truth. We end an inadequate article with the primary perspective of our beginning. We come back to nature and the meaning of *nature* fulfilled in grace.

Gender in the theology of mankind

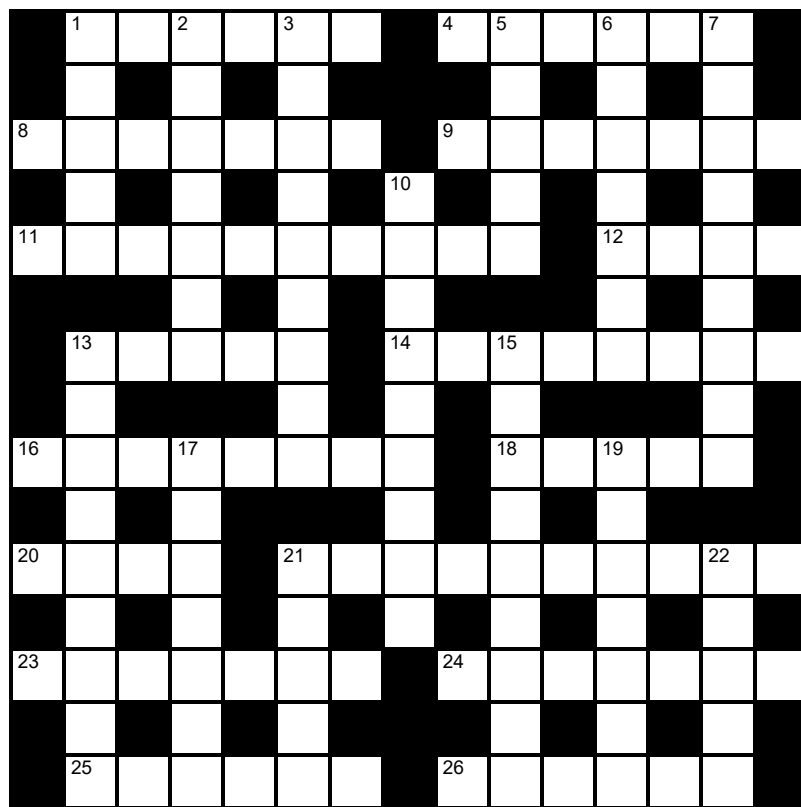
The whole teaching of the Church on marriage, its unity and indissolubility, the teaching of chivalry and purity to our boys and girls, rests on this theme of nature, finding its full meaning in Christ and for Christ. We see, and we proclaim, in our flesh as male and female, the glory of the Incarnation of God. We teach the *necessity* of two genders that, at the end of the ages, God may set aside the man as begetter of first instance. This God must do for his own *personal* relationship to the womb of Mary, for the necessity of His own “coming upon thee”. There shines out from this in the sacrament of marriage the beauty of sexual love and its ministry. In this ministry, physical pleasure is quite natural, but secondary to the spiritual and familial vocation. We do not define sex through the orgasm, but through the child.

Because we define sexuality through human dignity and ministry, we see beyond the family, the sign also of a yet fuller ministry of a fatherhood and a motherhood, and a motherhood defined in chastity for Kingdom of God’s sake. It follows from the meaning of sexuality, not in biology, *but in Christ*, the vision of a nature made for ministry, integrated and made anew in the likeness of the Son of Man, by the grace of God. This is the theology of gender which lies behind the majesty of the Enfleshing of God. This vision and this way is the meaning, the glory, and sheer happiness of the Midnight Mass: a child is born for us, and his name shall be Emmanuel: God with us.

Abridged from the Editorial in the November/December 1994 issue of Faith magazine.

CROSSWORD by Aurora Borealis

We invite you to complete this crossword: the clues in bold involve general religious knowledge; the others are cryptic clues with secular answers.



A copy of Pope Emeritus Benedict's *Last Testament*, will go to the sender of the first correct solution opened from all those received by 31st October 2017. Entries may be this original page or a photocopy and should be sent to:
FAITH CROSSWORD
No.7, 45 East St Helen Street, Abingdon OXON OX14 5EE. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR FULL NAME AND POSTAL ADDRESS.

Across

1. Furious, liberate capital (6)
4. Old man, favourite, rather a sweetie! (6)
- 8. The process of creating an identical copy of an organism (7)**
9. Does celebrity ram new enterprise? (5-2)
11. Drab as a fool, aloof as a bard – this works both ways (10)
12. This kind billet is usually private (4)
13. A note that is tied to end of umbrella says "Farewell!" (5)
14. A holy sign shows where to find honey (8)
16. Girl's place next to journalist is challenged (8)
18. Fish gets right into fight (5)
20. Give the command to leave and discover pudding (4)
21. 'Ave a really good butchers for this biased info (10)
- 23. One of the great Archangels (6)**
24. In March I very often find old things (6)
- 25. Court prophet of King David (6)**
26. Bill embraces Clio, say, and is entertained (6)

Down

1. **St Paul was shipwrecked here (5)**
2. Friend of Prince: daughter and I start to notice it (7)
3. Local ducks surround drake's head chaotically but quite certain (2,2,5)
5. Not in, out and about (5)
6. Endless procession with gold provides place to stay in Spain (7)
7. Sounds as though I borrowed a lorry from you, though unco-operative (9)
10. When in the ring, also on the river, take it in turns (3,3,3)
13. Film liveliness (9)
15. Favourite male animals make shared video (9)
- 17. For example, Ezekiel (7)**
19. Manages to get to stretches of river (7)
- 21. Deposition scene (5)**
- 22. Patron saint of Wales (5)**

The winners of the May/June crossword were J.C. and M.N. of London.



ETHICAL SEX

SEXUAL CHOICES AND THEIR NATURE AND MEANING

BY *Anthony McCarthy*

Is sex important? How concerned should we be about our sexual choices and their effects? Is sexual desire best understood in terms of pleasure, love, interpersonal union and/or procreation?

In an era of radical redefinition of marriage and rapidly changing views about the nature of sex, *Ethical Sex* seeks to bring some philosophical clarity to our thinking.

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Professor Alexander Pruss, Baylor University

"This splendidly and engagingly written book deserves wide attention and careful reading. It defends in an intelligent way...a number of important and, I believe, very true theses about human sexuality and sexual ethics."

Professor Josef Seifert

International Academy of Philosophy - Institute of Philosophy Edith Stein

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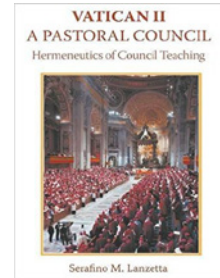
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How we should read Vatican II

Vatican II a Pastoral Council - Hermeneutics of Council Teaching
by Serafino Lanzetta, Gracewing, 494pp, £22.17.

reviewed by William Massie



It is unarguable that no decade in the 2000 year history of the Catholic Church saw more change than from 1960 to 1970. While politics, society and culture were changing rapidly during those years, the seismic event we call Vatican II is the single most important cause of the changes in the Catholic Church. Fr Lanzetta offers an in-depth interpretation of the Council, choosing some of its emblematic texts and teachings. He concludes that the Council has been “perhaps in a way never before seen in the history of the Church, the object of the most disparate hermeneutics and judgments of the most varied kind ... rupture with the Church... and with theology” (p.421). And yet bishop-theologians like Danneels and Kasper, as well as all the popes of these times, have insisted on the need to emphasise an overarching continuity. Pope Benedict XVI’s Address to the Curia from December 2005 is well known. Less often quoted is Blessed Paul VI from a catechesis given at a General Audience in 1966. *“The teachings of the*

Council do not constitute a complete, organic system of Catholic doctrine. // We must not separate the teachings of the Council from the doctrinal heritage of the Church. Instead we must take a good look at where they fit into it and how they are consistent with it and supply it with added testimony, growth, explanation and application.” (Introduction p. xxxvii)

A cause of this rupture is the interpretation of Vatican II as an ‘event’ rather than to focus on the 16 texts that resulted. This often follows on from paying too much attention to well-intended but loose and hard-to-define descriptions of the Council as a ‘New Pentecost’ or ‘*aggiornamento*’. Lanzetta describes this tendency as putting the Council ‘before’ the Church, which is an error. On the one hand, the Council was not a moment of new ‘divine revelation’; on the other, there would not have been any council had the Church not previously existed!

The ‘periti’

If the Council to be judged by its texts, its

decisions, rather than its 'spirit' (always harder to tie down) or an event marking a new starting point, then its texts must themselves be contextualised. This is Lanzetta's great achievement. He first provides a survey of the theological landscape of the Council in the form of those minds who either as bishops or advisers (the '*periti*') contributed so much to the preparation of the schema, their rejection, their re-writing the debates, the revisions, the final version. Some will be well known to students of 20th century Catholic theology – De Lubac, Rahner, Ratzinger, Laurentin, Kung; some perhaps less well known who nevertheless made significant contributions - Parente, Betti, Scheffczyk.

Pastoral vs. Dogmatic?

An important issue which Lanzetta highlights very early on but never really settles is the question of the meaning of Vatican II as a *pastoral* Council. The meaning of 'Pastoral' was never defined at the Council but assumed generally to express the *manner* of reaching out within the Church and beyond, to explain its teachings rather than to make new definitions or condemnations. In 1966 Paul VI would recall that the Council was about "*voice... style... approach*" in the teaching of doctrine rather than debate or apologetics (p.426). However, often 'pastoral' appears almost in juxtaposition to 'dogmatic'. Early on Lanzetta suggests that 'pastoral' is simply the 'manner' in which the dogmatic is passed on or

conveyed. So in the final chapter, Lanzetta questions post-Conciliar approaches to ecumenism where the 'dogmatic' (to do with knowing the truth) is juxtaposed to the 'pastoral' "which starts out from the historic and pragmatic fact, and on behalf of this aims at possible dialogue, without changing teaching, but de facto neither improving understanding of it, but even with the risk of altering its significance by virtue of the dialogue method chosen...".

Clearly, any opposition of dogmatic and pastoral is unacceptable. One fears that this lack of clarity at the time of the Council is responsible for countless situations since where doctrine has been over ridden by appealing to 'pastoral necessity'. Is this even a cause of the current divergent disciplines laid down by bishops with regard to giving communion to those in irregular situations, described as more 'pastoral' while in mutual contradiction? Lanzetta quotes Benedict XVI in the context of ecumenism, but valid in the wider context, "*Knowing the truth is a right of the conversation partner in every true dialogue. It is a requirement of love for one's brother or sister. In this sense, it is necessary to face controversial issues courageously, always in a spirit of brotherhood and in reciprocal respect*" (fn. 137, p. 415). This is truly pastoral.

Inconsistency

Lanzetta focusses above all on the constitutions, *Lumen gentium*, on the

Church, and *Dei verbum* on divine revelation and its transmission. Within them, he only looks at some of the major doctrinal issues: in *Lumen gentium* on the sacramentality of the episcopacy, collegiality, the question of membership of the Church; in *Dei verbum* on the relationship between scripture and tradition as the *loci* where divine revelation is to be found. The Council fathers preferred to leave disputed questions 'open', consistent with the 'pastoral' objective. However, Lanzetta points out that there was not always clarity about what constituted a 'disputed' question. For example, the 'material insufficiency of scripture' for dogmatic truth was generally assumed and taught since the Council of Trent, given the need for scripture and tradition to ground Catholic doctrine. However, after much debate *Dei verbum* avoided a formal statement to confirm this. Lanzetta does not accept that this was in dispute before the Council (p.432). The aim was consciously ecumenical, following the directive laid down by Pope John XXIII for the Church to make clear its teachings in those essential matters so as to make itself more understandable to the separated Churches of the Orthodox and the ecclesial communities of the Reformation. One problem in this lies in its inconsistency. In many other documents of the Council there are statements of Catholic truths which draw on traditions that very evidently are not found in the scriptures, for example the existence of seven sacraments,

the perpetual virginity of Mary. If this is not helpful then it is surely not 'pastoral' either. Lanzetta also points to abusive claims after the Council of "a material completeness of the Bible" by theologians such as Hans Kung.

The deep wound

In the last few pages of the book he speaks frankly about the "serious crisis" suffered by concept of '*Traditio*', the "deep wound which the Church is experiencing after Vatican II", owing to the refashioning of the understanding of Revelation from the conceptual, propositional approach of Vatican I and scholastic theology to the notion of Revelation as experience and encounter, leading to "a displacement of the dynamic aspect of revelation to the detriment of the noetic", "a gap between truth and love" and a "strong subjectivism". Lanzetta points out that this crisis has made *Traditio* appear in opposition to 'progressivism' whereas of course everything in the Church is *Traditio*, literally 'handed on', all the way back to Christ himself. Lanzetta would like clarification to these matters. In some fascinating paragraphs he wades into the controversy suggesting the "projection of Tradition over Scripture" so that it is clear that "there can only be one source, Revelation itself..." "Sacred scripture is the *regola* of the faith in so far as it is divinely inspired; Tradition itself divinely assisted... allows the scriptures to be always contemporary

for humanity” and for “faith to be able to have in itself a solid basis for those truths which it bears in itself...” (pp. 437-438). The Eucharist itself is an example of this. It ‘comes’ from Tradition, it is ‘expressed’ in the Scriptures.

Ecumenical sensitivity

In looking at the Council’s treatment of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the author criticises an excessive ecumenical sensitivity. In seeking to “return to the sources” there was a consequent and conscious neglect of recent Papal teaching about Mary, particularly with regard to her role of mediation. Lanzetta is not only concerned that the Mother of God not be denied due honour but also that an opportunity to shed light on an anthropological question was being neglected: the ability of humanity freely and actively, through grace to merit grace, resulting in “encouraging deep down a more pessimistic vision of human cooperation in salvation” (p. 399).

In the final pages of the book Lanzetta calls for new definitions of Mary as Mediatrix and Co-Redemptrix to rectify this negligence and provide an opportunity for the Church’s Magisterium to flex some under-used muscles in the ministry of Truth. Indeed, the author laments that “Between the sources and Vatican II there seems to us to be lie a vacuum, which, alas, robs the faith. The Second Vatican Council [is] part of the whole, a whole which is much greater: the Church” (p. 245).

Concern for integral truth

Lanzetta’s magnum opus is a passionate and well-argued and evidenced call for the Second Vatican Council to be read within a hermeneutic of continuity in the Church of the two millennia; and something more: for various questions consciously left open by the Fathers now to be addressed, from a pastoral concern for integral truth.

This is not an easy book and could probably not be recommended for general readership. There are many long passages of untranslated Latin texts from the various schemas and drafts and final versions as well as the letters and exchanges between theologians and Council Fathers. There are also some very long sentences and difficult syntax which may be accounted for by an over-literal translation from the Italian original. Classic works like Ralph Wiltgen’s *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber* and more recently Matthew Levering’s *The Reception of Vatican II* provide an easier and more complete overview of the Council. However, Fr Lanzetta writes carefully and in detail on contested matters. He makes use of records from the Vatican Archives only recently made available, some of them private correspondence between the various participants at the Council, which shed light on the intentions of Fathers and theologians. Vatican II continues to impact on the everyday life of Catholics. Accusations of betrayal of the aims of the Council continue to be

thrown at those called too conservative or too progressive. A careful re-reading of the texts within their context remains

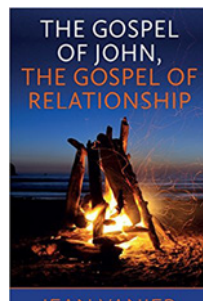
essential. Fr Lanzetta has performed a great service.

Rev. William Massie is the Catholic chaplain to Hull University.

The vulnerability, fragility, tenderness and absolute love of Jesus

The Gospel of John, the Gospel of Relationship,

by Jean Vanier, Darton, Longman and Todd, pp.129, £9.99.



reviewed by Pia Matthews

Jean Vanier's gentle book on the Gospel of John focuses on themes that Vanier holds dear to his heart. Vanier, the founder and inspirer of L'Arche communities, where people with and without intellectual disabilities share daily life together, is particularly interested in relationships, human vulnerability and fragility. It is perhaps of no surprise that he sees the Gospel of John as the Gospel of relationship. Vanier is a prolific author, and this slim volume is a transcript of videos that he put together on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The flavour of the book is very much to situate reflection on the flow of John's Gospel into the concrete reality of life and living together.

In exploring the richness of this gospel Vanier pulls on the threads of vulnerability, fear, welcoming others as beautiful, accepting brokenness, the spirituality of loss, dying to self, and the problems of power in relationships. Naturally he makes special reference to his own personal experience in the communities of L'Arche and the stories of the people who live there. However, perhaps most significantly and particularly since the Jesus of St John's Gospel is often portrayed as a strong figure who carries his own cross, from the beginning of the Gospel to its end, Vanier dwells on the vulnerability, fragility, tenderness and absolute love of Jesus.

Touchstones for our lives

Vanier explains that St John's method is to give an account of an event that is then over-laden with reference and symbolism. Similarly, as Vanier follows St John's Gospel he aligns events with parallel texts from the other gospels and the Old Testament, and he links in an array of personal reflections that spring to him from the text. These range from stories of the saints, to concerns of people today, to a look at his own personal experience as a child and with L'Arche, all the way to broader comment on resistance to the Nazis, the war in Rwanda, and the conflict in present day Israel and Palestine, and he sees in the Gospel many touchstones for our modern lives. With St John, Vanier aims to present a passionate Jesus who wants to liberate people and give them the fullness of life.

According to Vanier the significance of calling St John's Gospel the Gospel of Relationship lies in the fact that all relationships transform us, albeit imperfectly. However, through a personal relationship with Jesus we come to discover that we gradually need to be transformed by grace, body and soul, to enter into the fullness of love. From the beginning Vanier presents a very human Jesus who understands our human condition, the Logos who becomes a fragile human being, enabling each one of us to realise that we are all beautiful children of God no matter what our human condition or situation.

The sadness of Jesus

As the Gospel progresses Vanier shows that Jesus calls each one of us to be a witness to him and that in this witnessing the weak and rejected have a central place. As Jesus' action at the wedding at Cana reminds us we, like the water, need to be transformed into wine, and as the story of the Samaritan woman at the well shows we are all wounded people in need of healing and love. Vanier finds tenderness in Jesus the Good Shepherd who teaches us all to be both caring shepherds yet also sheep obedient to the Holy Spirit. Strikingly, Vanier calls attention to both the deep communion that Jesus offers us and Jesus' own vulnerability when he grieves for his dead friend Lazarus (who Vanier suggests may have had a learning disability since unusually for the time he lived with his two sisters), and when Jesus is personally wounded by broken communion and the betrayal of Judas.

In particular Vanier brings out the profound sadness of Jesus as, through fear and a closed mentality, people build up their own walls that destroy trust in him or put up their own barriers to shut out love: in his description of the washing of the feet, Vanier looks at Peter who does not understand weakness until he is filled with the Holy Spirit, Judas who cannot tolerate love and kindness, and John who eventually abandons himself to Jesus and knows he is loved by him. Vanier offers his experience of the L'Arche community where people live

by the heart rather than in fear to show that living without barriers and in trust is possible and to demonstrate that God loves us for who we are and not for what we can do.

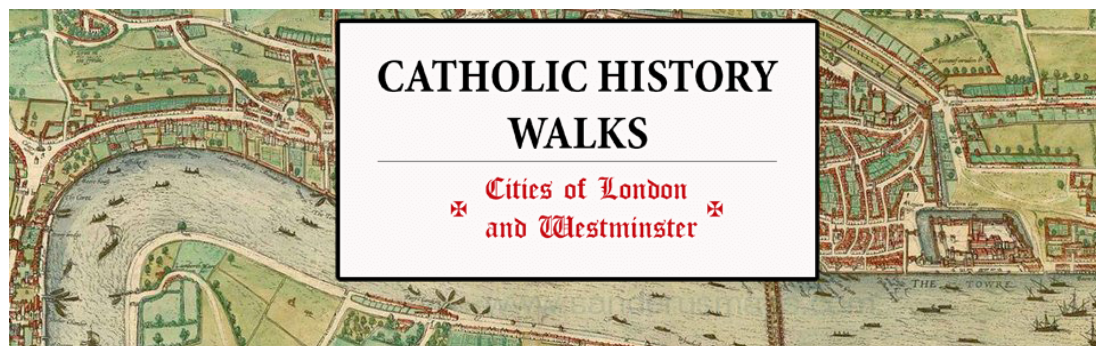
Being-with rather than doing-for

Vanier is a realist who understands that at times anguish cannot be removed, and he draws attention to the presence of Mary, Mother of Jesus standing at the foot of the cross as a sign of compassion and a profound being-with, rather than doing-for, that so often accompanies those who suffer alongside others. St John's account of the resurrection and encounter of Jesus with Mary of Magdala in the garden where Jesus calls Mary by name becomes for Vanier a sign of hope for us all, and when the disciples react

with disbelief and ridicule at Mary's good news Vanier is reminded of the tensions in all human communities that can only be transformed by living in the Spirit who is sent by Jesus as a sign of his undying love for his followers.

Vanier's book ends as does the Gospel of John with Jesus asking Peter about love and service, but the last comment rests on the beloved disciple, St John himself, whose gospel shows us that Jesus calls us to be his beloved friends. A simple yet deeply thought out and felt book, Vanier's *Gospel of John, the Gospel of Relationship* reminds us that we are all called to do the work of Jesus in revealing the God of goodness, compassion and forgiveness who leads us to a life of relationship.

Dr Pia Matthews lectures at St Mary's University, Twickenham and St John's Seminary, Womersley



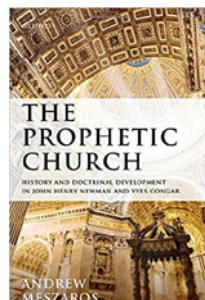
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Making Newman fit Congar

The Prophetic Church - History and Doctrinal Development in John Henry Newman and Yves Congar, by Andrew Meszaros, Oxford University Press, 268pp, £65.00.



reviewed by James Tolhurst

Fr. Aidan Nichols included the French Dominican Yves Congar when examining doctrinal development up to the present day in his *From Newman to Congar*, published in 1990. Andrew Meszaros now concentrates on Congar's writings to show how Congar's and Newman's ecclesiology intertwine. The book either emerged from a thesis or a special academic paper, as evidenced by all the technical apparatus. This means you will have to deal with jargon such as 'the progression-adaptation-plenitude side of tension' and 'the Ordinary Sign Enthymeme'. The author was a Fellow of Louvain and now is a Theology Lecturer in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth,

The 'sensus communis'

Yves Marie-Joseph Congar was born in 1904 in Sedan, North-West France. He became a Dominican and taught at Le Saulchoir, where he worked with Marie-Dominique Chenu. As a military chaplain he was interned in Colditz during the war and for a long time was under a cloud for his views until rehabilitated

at the time of Vatican II. He was made a Cardinal just before he died in 1995. Congar's work, which is identified with ecumenism as well as Church history, concentrated on aspects of ecclesiology: "The Church is in the world and the world is in the design of God."

Mezsaros highlights how Congar welcomed Newman's view of the *sensus fidei* of the individual believer being extended to the *sensus communis* of the faithful. This also helped him to see that the members of the Church preserved the faith intact by virtue of receiving the faith promulgated actively by the hierarchy, a faith continually preached. He argued that Newman's *Idea* possessed by the Church is "an essence, a structure, or a form, but incarnated in temporal matter" Does that mean the Church is endowed with a conscience? Can we say "history aided, prompted, or forced the Church to recognize what exactly constitutes the truth of a doctrine," and what about the prompting and directing role of the Holy Spirit?

Mezsaros explains how development as seen by Newman and Congar differs from the modernism of perennial evolution, resulting of its nature in a relativization of doctrine. (This is covered more comprehensively by Nichols.) He goes on to discuss how Newman is received by Congar - born just after the death of the Cardinal - who saw himself as the inheritor, or perhaps interpreter, of his thoughts. Interestingly, Congar admitted, "I love Newman - I cannot say that I am an expert or that I know him very well." Mezsaros now seeks to project Congar back on to Newman and show that his thoughts can be seen in symmetry with those of Newman.

Blurred boundaries

The author argues that there is "a substantive case for the exercise and legitimacy of an infallible teaching authority in both the ancient and the Roman Catholic Church" (p.67.) But that is all we get except for a reference to Vatican I. Congar, for most of his life, saw the papacy as ultimately derived from the College of bishops as successors of the apostles and was reluctant to use the term Vicar of Christ. Newman, however, had noted in 1866: "What a Bishop is to his Church - such is the Pope to all Bishops and the whole Church. A Bishop of Bishops." This, we should remember was prior to the decree of Vatican I. Later,

he referred in his 1877 preface to *Via Media* to the Pope being "the Ecumenical Bishop and one Pastor of Christ's flock." Mezsaros says that future development "must be extracted by the mediation of the Christian believer who is in touch with the divine realities transmitted by the doctrinal tradition and sacramental life of the Church ... with ambiguity and struggle." This is very much Anglican comprehensiveness or the Orthodox theory of economy, which tend to leave the boundaries rather blurred.

A concept to be parsed

As such, the book is a good introduction to Congar's thoughts (it has an excellent index), but it does not enter into the depths of Newman's theology and extenuates the role of the papacy. This makes Newman's development of doctrine a philosophical concept to be parsed - even if a model of felicitous wisdom. It does provide Mezsaros with a platform to display Congar's own views which he does with skill. The Dominican theologian spent most of his life struggling with the concept of the role of the Pope as Pastor of the universal Church and head of the College of bishops. For Newman, however, it played an essential part in his own journey from shadows and empty forms into the abiding reality of the Catholic Church - *ex umbris et imaginibus in veritate*.

Fr James Tolhurst has written The Church, A Communion in the Preaching and Thought of Cardinal John Henry Newman, published by Gracewing

The unrelenting foe of Nazism

Catholics Confronting Hitler - The Catholic Church and the Nazis by Peter Bartley, Ignatius Press, 291 pp, £14.34.



reviewed by Pravin Thevathasan

In much of the secular media, the Catholic Church is said to have remained silent in the face of Nazi atrocities. Not so, says Bartley in this well-researched work. And the resistance began with the condemnation of the race laws in pre-war Germany and only ended with the demise of Nazi Germany. Those many Catholics who protected the Jews - bishops, clergy and laity alike - did so knowing full well that they were putting their own lives at risk.

Bartley documents the repeated condemnations of the Nazi euthanasia programmes and antisemitism by the German bishops. Blessed Clemens Von Galen was the Bishop of Munster who led Catholic protests against the Nazi euthanasia programmes and who courageously condemned Gestapo lawlessness, the Nazi persecution of the Church and the Nazi worship of race. Cardinal Michael Von Faulhaber, the Archbishop of Munich, was jeeringly referred to as "the Jewish Cardinal" by the Nazis because of his consistent condemnation of antisemitism. When the Nazis claimed that the pre-Christian

German tribes were of a superior race, Faulhaber responded: "It is an historic fact that this swarm of tribes were first wielded together into stable unity as one nation in consequence of their conversion to Christianity ... the greatest perversion would be a relapse into the paganism of ancient Germany." Mention is also made of Sophie Schall, a Lutheran anti-Nazi political activist who was executed by the Nazis at the age of twenty-one.

Of the Croatian Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac's condemnation of the Ustashe regime, Bartley writes: "Official German reports testify to Stepinac's intercession on behalf of both Serbs and Jews, which by May 1943 he had made on thirty-four occasions."

Rescue operations

In Rome, Archbishop Montini "directed the Vatican rescue operations from inside the Vatican, with the roving assistance of an indefatigable Irishman, Monsignor O'Flaherty." All the safe places in Rome were known to O'Flaherty and "he and his associates have been credited with

saving more than six thousand Jews and political refugees from the clutches of the Gestapo." The Pontifical Relief Commission distributed food and clothing to displaced and hungry people, saving countless lives. It was created by Pope Pius XII.

In France, it was the underground papers written by French Jesuits that exposed Nazi racism. The pope knew of this and approved. The majority of France's Jews that survived the war had received direct help from Catholics.

Papal nuncios in Slovakia, Hungary and elsewhere condemned the Nazi arrest of the Jews and they got their orders from the pope. The future St John XXIII saved the lives of thousands of Jews by issuing them with baptismal certificates while he was apostolic delegate to Turkey and Greece.

Nazi retaliation

Bartley documents the Nazi response to the statement condemning Nazism by the Dutch bishops read out in all the churches of the nation on July 1942. The Nazis retaliated by arresting all Jews who were baptized Catholics. They were deported east from Westerbork transit camp to Auschwitz. Among them was Edith Stein who like the others deported died in Auschwitz. How much greater would the Nazi retaliation been had such a direct condemnation come from the pope?

Some of the Christian heroes appear more heroic than Christian: Oskar

Schindler was a German Catholic businessman of "somewhat shady business dealings" whose Cracow factory became an asylum for Jews. As the war drew to a close, he effected the removal of more than a thousand Jews, the so-called 'Schindler's List', to Moravia and safety.

The Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, also mentioned by Bartley, saved tens of thousands of Jews in Nazi occupied Hungary from the Holocaust by sheltering them in buildings designated as Swedish territory and by issuing them with protective passports.

Hitler's Pope?

Even those who condemn Pope Pius XII for his alleged silence over Nazi atrocities increasingly accept that he was not "Hitler's Pope." But did he keep silent? Bartley has amassed a wealth of evidence to demonstrate that the pope did not keep silent. He spoke out against Nazi atrocities on many occasions and most notably in his Christmas message of 1942. Even though the Nazis were not mentioned by name, they certainly knew that the attack was aimed at them and they reacted with fury.

What, then, of the Reich Concordat of 1933? Bartley writes that although Cardinal Pacelli had few illusions about Hitler, he hoped that at least some of the provisions of the concordat would be honoured. He was proved right: pulpit denunciations of Nazism went generally unpunished and churches were allowed

to remain open throughout Hitler's rule. A prudential decision had been made on behalf of the German Catholics. However, they did not regard the concordat as in any way approving of Nazism: resistance to Hitler was at its highest in the Catholic parts of Germany.

Bartley writes: "Pius XII made no distinction between the respective ideologies and practices of Communism and Nazism. Both were Godless, and both persecuted religion. He thought Hitler more to be feared than Stalin but that Communist Russia presented the greater long-term threat to religion

... the pope did not share Roosevelt's sanguine opinion regarding the future of religion in Soviet Russia." The myth of "Hitler's Pope" is surely being laid to rest.

Bartley has had access to the relevant public diaries, letters, Church documents and works by other scholars. He concludes that "two reigning popes and three future popes in significant ways offered resistance to Hitler ... wherever Nazism held sway, it found an unrelenting foe in the pope and the Catholic Church." In this fine work, he has given us plenty of evidence to prove this.

Dr Pravin Thevathasan is a consultant psychiatrist. He is editor of the Catholic Medical Quarterly.

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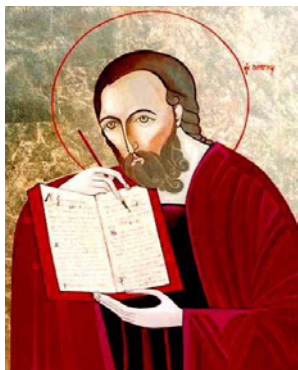
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