

# THE Newman

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Inter-Faith Relations  
Katharina Smith-Müller

Figures in the Holocaust Landscape  
Canon Albert Radcliffe

The Association and the CDF  
Gerald Williams

How Genesis Supports Darwin  
Joe Fitzpatrick

Newman across the generations  
Modern Art conference report

Spirituality Pages  
Book Review

# Contents

Comment .....	1
Inter-Faith Dialogue .....	2
Figures in the Holocaust Landscape .....	8
Modern Visual Art – An Expression of Faith? .....	16
Difficulties in Edinburgh .....	19
How Genesis Supports Darwin: A New Interpretation of Genesis 3 .....	22
The Newman Connection.....	29
Study Day – March 21st: Catholic Perspectives on Poverty.....	31
Book Review .....	32
London Newman Lecture 2015 .....	33
Spirituality Pages.....	34
Concerning Circles .....	36
Manchester Newman Lecture .....	36

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Cover picture: *The first page of Genesis in the Jerusalem Bible*

# Comment

Last September there was coverage in the Press – in The Tablet and elsewhere – of problems experienced by the Association's Edinburgh Circle last summer. Archbishop Leo Cushley, of the Diocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh, had responded in July to a complaint from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), in Rome, by sending a letter criticising the Circle for hosting a talk by Joe Fitzpatrick in June. Further, he blocked a planned talk by the theologian Tina Beattie in September on aspects of St Thomas Aquinas. He explained that the Fitzpatrick talk "called into question" the Church's dogma on Original Sin while Professor Beattie was "known to have frequently called into question the Church's teaching". It was not acceptable, he said, for such meetings to be held on Church property.

The CDF has criticised the Newman Association before although talks have not been banned previously. The Newman has never been an aggressive, campaigning body – some of the more dissident members went off to start the separate Catholic Renewal Movement in the late 1960s – but it was founded in 1942 by representatives of the growing numbers of graduates amongst the laity who wished to develop an intellectual approach to their Faith. Amongst that group there were, for the first time, many Catholics who wished to apply their intellect and knowledge to their religion and to debate as well as to listen. They were inspired by John Henry Newman who had said in 1852, for example, in *The Idea of a University*: "Nature and grace, reason and revelation, come from the same Divine Author, whose works cannot contradict each other".

For the hierarchy, however, an educated laity can pose challenges, especially if the faithful show signs of division into traditionalist and progressive factions (which is currently apparent within the Catholic Church). Some Church members may be offended by new approaches to doctrines or by meetings which feature controversial speakers. It is possible that only one person in Edinburgh 'delated' the Circle to the CDF, a body which traditionally shields the identities and numbers of its informants. But Bishops may, understandably, feel under pressure to protect the sensitivities of their conservatively-minded faithful.

This journal is not in any way censored but The Newman does claim a clear and public link to the Catholic Church and so it is important to avoid content which might unduly offend some members and could possibly affect the standing of the Association. We always state that the views of speakers or authors are not necessarily those of the Association. Relations with the hierarchy have always been cordial, although not close.

After due consideration we have decided to print a shortened text of Joe Fitzpatrick's talk, the original cause of the objection. We have already published a review of Joe Fitzpatrick's book, *The Fall and the Ascent of Man: How Genesis supports Darwin*, in the September 2012 issue. Now members will have an opportunity to consider whether this learned discussion of creation, original sin and evolution was really worthy of an offensive from the Vatican. If they have views the CDF provides an email address: [cdf@cfaith.va](mailto:cdf@cfaith.va) Confidentiality is assured. Preferably, members should write to this journal, for publication.

Barry Riley

# Inter-Faith Dialogue

by Katharina Smith-Müller

"You are a monk?" – a question I hear, spoken in a soft German accent, only because I am standing so very near – I do not think that either the person speaking it, or the person it is addressed to, are aware that there is anyone else listening in. To me, this question has more depth than it implies on first reading – it is asked by someone who is open, and is opening this conversation, to true encounter, in the way that the German Jewish philosopher Martin Buber defines it, as a meeting between two people who perceive each other in the fullness of their being, rather than focusing on the qualities or categories associated with the other. Such an encounter, Buber asserts, will not leave those who are involved in it unchanged.

Underlying this question, I hear another, deeper one: What is your spirituality? How does your belief that this life is not everything, that there is something beyond it, shape your life here, now? How does it change your relationships with others? And, as a leading question that runs throughout



*Katharina Smith-Müller*

this day, how does the fact that you live your life as you do, ordered towards something that holds more permanence and more importance than many human aims do, change the society you live in?

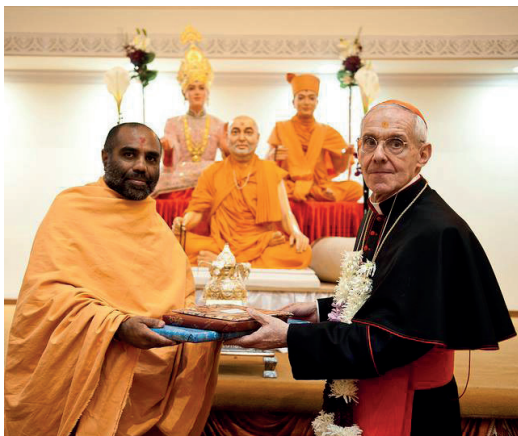
The day being shaped by this question was September 17th 2010 and the person asking it, not only of the Buddhist monk I overheard him speaking to, was a Christian German thinker – Professor Joseph Ratzinger, or, as he was better, and globally, known on this day, Pope Benedict XVI. He was spending a portion of his visit to the United Kingdom with representatives of the nine major religions to be found here, shaking hands, asking questions, giving a well-thought-out, inspiring address – but mostly, maybe surprisingly to some, who were expecting an academic led by the head – exuding true human warmth and interest in those he was enjoying this encounter with.

## **Visitors to England**

In the last few years, England in particular has been blessed with the visits of a number of very senior Catholic figures who come, at least in part, because of their interest in the relationships and the dialogue between the religions which live side by side, in a situation that is unique in Europe. Benedict XVI was followed, fittingly, by the person who first informed the world of the election of his successor, Pope Francis.



When Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran came to England in June 2013 he spent a busy three days visiting a Sikh, a Jain and a Hindu place of worship; at each he led a dialogue on the commonalities between these religions and Christianity. Colourful and insightful though these occasions may have been the arguable highlight was still the “Together in Prayer for Peace” event which he hosted at Westminster Cathedral Hall. There, he shared the stage with representatives of each of the nine religions, all of whom took



*Cardinal Tauran heads East*

to the microphone in turn, praying for peace in the words their tradition has given them, witnessed by the large and diverse audience of invited guests and of people of goodwill. In the shared silence following these prayers, the room was resounding with the unspoken prayer of them all.

The question that arises from those two landmark visits is twofold – why is there such interest in the interreligious dialogue as we live it in the United Kingdom specifically; and, arguably the more complex, and foundational, one, why has interreligious dialogue become so important within the Church that its most senior figures raise their voices in its support? It is hardly a coincidence, too, that Cardinal Tauran chose to quote in the final sermon of his visit the very person whose election he announced from the balcony in St. Peter’s Square: “[the Church urges all Catholics] to promote interreligious dialogue as a catalyst for efforts to build peace... to build bridges connecting all people, in such a way that everyone can see in the other not an enemy, not a rival but a brother or sister”<sup>1</sup>. These words echoed his predecessor’s address to the Roman Curia on the last Christmas before his resignation: “In man’s present situation, the dialogue of religions is a necessary condition for peace in the world and it is therefore a duty for Christians as well as other religious communities”<sup>2</sup>.

### **A multi-faceted answer**

Why, then, are all these senior figures stressing the importance of interreligious dialogue? The answer is a multi-faceted one, which has been addressed in a number of important Church documents, and in its fullness particularly in the document on interreligious dialogue that emerged from the Second Vatican Council, *Nostra Aetate* (“In our time”). English-speaking Catholics also have an excellent and succinct summary of the teaching of the Church on interreligious dialogue at their fingertips, in the teaching document “Meeting God in Friend and Stranger. Fostering respect and mutual understanding between the religions”, launched by the bishops of England and Wales in 2010, which is available for free download, and also as a booklet published by the Catholic Truth Society. It can be ordered online or bought in specialist bookshops.

From this summary of teaching, three main foci emerge on why every Catholic is

called, by baptism, to engage in interreligious dialogue. It goes without saying that, in our time, there is a need for interreligious dialogue that emerges quite naturally from the situation we find ourselves in, particularly in such a richly-diverse country as ours, simply by going about our daily lives. We find ourselves in closer contacts with believers who follow a religion different from ours simply by living in a world where people are more mobile, and where physical divisions are easily bridged by digital means – in many ways, our world has become smaller. It is no coincidence, too, that alliances between the religions form precisely in the most personal spheres, as evidenced by a recent study day at Heythrop College that dealt with Catholic-Muslim marriage, organised between the College, the Bishops' Conference, and the Christian-Muslim Forum. While these practicalities of our linked lives are important and interesting, it is interesting, too, to view this situation as a spiritually challenging one. If we follow what our bishops urge in their teaching document, *Meeting God in Friend and Stranger* (MGFS), namely trying "to discern something of the meaning and purposes of God within contemporary events and circumstances" it is by no means too far-fetched to conclude that God calls us contemporary Catholics to dialogue with members and structures of other religions in a way that no generation before us has been.

One focus of interreligious dialogue is, certainly, the creation of an atmosphere of peace and cooperation, a labour of love that leads us to be co-workers in the same vineyard, united in our determination to contribute to the common good in the unique manner that comes with our shared rootedness in a transcendental dimension to our lives.

Or, as Benedict XVI put

it at Twickenham: "As followers of different religious traditions working together for the good of the community at large, we attach great importance to this 'side by side' dimension of our cooperation, which complements the 'face to face' aspect of our continuing dialogue".

This is not by any means the only motivation. In fact, delving deeper into the heart of the motivation of the Church, it is precisely in dialogue that the Church shows what is at the very core of her mission. By its very nature, our Church is a Church that is in dialogue – the dialogue that brings us ever closer to fulfilling God's will for His Church, which Pope Paul VI called the "dialogue of salvation" in *Ecclesiam Suam*, his encyclical on the Church: "The whole history of man's salvation is one long, varied



*Inter-faith dialogue in action*

dialogue, which marvellously begins with God and which He prolongs with men in so many different ways.” The “call by the Church [to interreligious dialogue and engagement] is also a response to the God who calls to the Church” (MGFS). The very nature of the God whom we proclaim, who is Three and One, implies relationship and dialogue; accordingly, when we enter into dialogue with followers of religions not our own, we also enter into the heart of our own faith and our own calling.

### **Spiritually enriching**

The third focus, beside the fact that we are seeking to work towards shared goals with people of goodwill, and the fact that we are called to continue the dialogue into which God has entered with us, is the one on interreligious dialogue as spiritually enriching. A Catholic engaging in this dialogue truly follows in the footsteps of Jesus, who sought truth and holiness through very personal encounters, and in places many of his contemporaries were not prepared to look, so that they missed out on the fullness of God’s engagement with the whole of humanity. The way in which Jesus behaves in these encounters, fully engaging, and taking seriously, the person He meets and their circumstances, and bearing witness to His closeness to the Father in a way that speaks to them without forcing any conclusions on those he is in dialogue with, shows a truly Christian way of encounter – for “a Christian, interreligious dialogue is a profoundly Christ-like work” (MGFS).

“Sharing our spiritual riches” in interreligious dialogue, as Pope Benedict XVI put it in his Twickenham speech, will also mean that each participant comes out of the conversation with a richer understanding of their own faith. Taking only a few examples from a meditation on the spiritual riches of other religions that is available on the website of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, all of the following can, from the observation of followers of religion not our own, lead us back to an enhanced appreciation of our own spirituality: The importance that Islam assigns to a prayer life that sanctifies each day and re-orientes the believer towards God and His will five times a day, the deep respect that our Jewish sisters and brothers show towards the word of God in its physical, written form, by placing it at the entrance of their homes, and the Sikh engagement for justice and peace that is symbolised by the carrying of a ceremonial dagger, the kirpan.



The most fruitful of the spiritual exercises that emerge from interreligious dialogue is, however, arguably the engagement with the Other as a sister or a brother, without giving in to the temptation of either the extreme of constructing them as strangers, or trying to deny their

difference, pretending that all religions are the same, and that everyone following them has identical beliefs. This being able to be with difference is something that can and should be rooted in Christian spirituality – after all, an active prayer life explores exactly this tension between being very close, and, at the same time, never being able to fully understand or define the partner in the dialogue of prayer.

Being with difference in interreligious dialogue can also have an eminently practical purpose: engaging with people that follow religions not our own can be an eye-opener, in that no religion is a monolithic structure without any differences within itself. It is easy to make the assumption that, while, from own experience, the denominations within Christianity vary by large degrees, other religions are one, non-varying unit. Practically, this can lead to confusion about identification and responsibilities. For example, it is often expected of British Muslims to apologise for acts of terror abroad with which they are not connected in the least. A useful parallel is to think about the actions of members of certain Christian churches – say, threats to burn the holy writing of other religions – and asking whether or not I as a Catholic should be held responsible for them, and whether an apology would be expected of me were such threats to be carried out. I suspect that most, if not all, Catholics would feel, quite strongly, that this would be an unfair expectation, and would not be willing to accept responsibility for hateful acts of a Christian minority.

This is not to say that work that prevents religious extremism within Britain is not important – quite the opposite. Both efforts must, and do, go hand-in-hand. It can be argued, quite convincingly, that all extremism is rooted in a readiness to see the other as precisely, and only, that: *other*. In dialogue, the other is always encountered in the fullness of individuality, and precisely not reduced to a label, positive or negative. Practising a mindset of dialogue, then, is a reliable and useful tool against extremism in all situations, and every religion. Very practically, it is hard to demonise a friendly neighbour, a colleague, or someone who has become part of one's own family by marriage: good relationships between the members of different religions prevent a "them and us" mindset which is the breeding ground for hatred and violence that seeks to sow divisions along the faultlines of religious belonging. In a dialogue that strikes the right balance between familiarity and respect for otherness, the distinct religious identities of each participant are not threatened, but strengthened.

### **Not conversion, but understanding**

Pope Benedict XVI summed this up as follows in one of his last addresses to the Roman Curia: "It is necessary to learn to accept the other in his otherness and the otherness of his thinking. [...] Dialogue does not aim at conversion, but at understanding. [...] Accordingly, both parties to the dialogue remain consciously within their identity, which the dialogue does not place in question either for themselves or for the other."<sup>2</sup> This sentiment becomes particularly pertinent in the light of the current situation in the Middle East, where conflict in the name of religions is ripe, and many, including Christians, suffer violence and persecution because of their religious belonging. Into this situation Pope Francis recently echoed the words of his predecessor on his visit to Turkey: "Fanaticism and fundamentalism, as well as irrational fears which foster misunderstanding and discrimination, need to be countered by the solidarity of all believers"<sup>3</sup>.



It also becomes all the more significant in a situation here in the UK, where statistics about immigration and the presence of members of non-Christian religions are increasingly used to create an atmosphere of fear and distrust. Muslims in particular suffer from this attempt at “othering”, and of overstating the numbers of followers of their faiths with unpeaceful intent: recent statistics show that, while 5% of the population in Great Britain is Muslim, the average person polled by the Ipsos Mori Social Research Institute assumed it was as much as 21%. At the same time, the closeness of Christianity and Islam – the prayer life, the deep respect for Mary (who has a whole chapter dedicated to her in the Qur’an), and the belief in one all-knowing and all-powerful God – go woefully un- or at least under-reported. Interreligious dialogue makes sure that such divisive reporting holds no sway, and helps prevent the atmosphere of fear and all its fruits that can follow on from the unethical editing of news.

It lies in our power, as Catholic Christians, to contribute to peace and understanding in small, seemingly insignificant, acts and gestures that can turn out to be stepping stones towards a more peaceful society for us to live in locally, but also globally, when good relations in our streets and cities reach the ears and hearts of people in areas where peace is more threatened, or broken. We are called to inform ourselves about the faith of others, to show our good will towards them, and to share “our spiritual riches, speaking of our experience of prayer and contemplation, and expressing to one another the joy of our encounter with divine love”, as Benedict XVI went on to say in his formal address that followed the encounter described at the beginning of this article.

### **Some of the steps that can be taken**

This is something we can do today, at very little cost to ourselves, remembering that we are walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Looking up the dates of the next religious festivals that people around you will celebrate and making a note to send a card, letting someone from a different religion know that you are praying for them, and using the links provided with this article to learn about the religions whose members you encounter on a regular basis, are just some of the steps that can be taken by any Catholic, even amongst the bustle and business that has come to shape our lives. In this, we are encouraged by successive popes, and by the power of the God who is One and Three in our lives: “In dialogue we must not be surprised, but actually expect to find that God is already there, and that Christ has gone before us [...]. It is in dialogue that we meet and are moved to collaborate with the same Holy Spirit we have received ourselves.” (MGFS)

<sup>1</sup> Audience with the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, March 22nd 2013

<sup>2</sup> Address of his Holiness Benedict XVI on the occasion of Christmas greetings to the Roman Curia, December 21st 2012

<sup>3</sup> Pope Francis’ address to the President of Religious Affairs in Ankara, November 28th 2014

*This article is based on a talk given to the Coventry Circle during 2014. Katharina Smith-Müller is the Inter-Religious Adviser for the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.*

# Figures in the Holocaust Landscape

by Canon Albert Radcliffe

## Perpetrators and victims

I have borrowed my title, *Figures in the Holocaust Landscape*, from the world of art and paintings like Thomas Gainsborough's National Gallery portrait, *Mr and Mrs Andrews*, in which the two are shown against the background of the land they own. In a parallel way I want to paint the portraits of some key figures – perpetrators and victims – in the Nazi attempt to murder Europe's entire Jewish population. *Holocaust* is a Greek word which translates the "whole burnt offering" or "sacrifice" of the temple in Jerusalem, while the preferred word in Hebrew is Shoah, which means "Catastrophe". The chief perpetrators of the Holocaust were every bit as proud of the evil they had done in the destruction of entire communities as the Andrews had been in the transformation of their land.

But first let us remind ourselves of how that final death toll of six million Jews was so cruelly achieved. Building on ancient Christian theological prejudice, between 1933 and 1941 the persecution of Jews grew by small but appreciable steps, beginning with boycotts of shops and business, then exclusion from education, social and professional life and, after Poland was invaded, the creation of Jewish ghettos.

From 1933, when the Nazis came to power, to the outbreak of war in 1939, there was also a slow escalation in violence with imprisonment in concentration camps; then, with the invasion of Russia on June 22nd 1941, the gloves came off; within two days the notorious killing squads, the *Einsatzgruppen*, began their systematic shooting of Jews. At the end of July Herman Goring [1893-1946] instructed Reinhard Heydrich [1904-42], the Chief of Reich Security, to plan for the "Final Solution"



*The gate of Auschwitz*

of the Jewish problem. On November 1st work began on Belzec, the first of six "extermination" or "death" camps. On December 8th the first Jews were murdered in mobile gas vans at Chelmo. Eventually, by the spring of 1945, six million Jews had been "eliminated" in this "Final Solution". The now widespread remembrance of the Holocaust in national commemoration days and Holocaust museums is important because of the nature of the event; it was the coldest, most calculated and most scientifically organised evil in the world's long list of genocides.

## Hitler's team

We turn now to some of the men responsible for it. The first figure in the Holocaust landscape must be **Adolf Hitler** [1889-1945], the failed Austrian artist in whose obsessional imagination the Third Reich largely originated. Hitler fought in the Bavarian army in WWI, was decorated twice for bravery and promoted to Corporal. War and the army were his ideal life. During WWI it looked, as late as March 1918, as

if the German Michael Offensive might break through the British 5th army and win the war. When that last great offensive failed, and in November Germany sued for peace, Hitler was devastated. How could the impossible have happened?

In his search for meaning and a role in life he became involved in the extreme right wing politics of what in 1920 became the National Socialist Workers, or Nazi Party.

The Nazi policies that attracted Hitler were:

- the revision of the peace Treaty of Versailles
- the unification of all ethnic Germans in a single Reich
- the exclusion of Jews from German citizenship.

In 1923, after the failure of the so-called Beer Hall Putsch, Hitler was imprisoned at Landsberg am Lech where he wrote the first volume of *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), which is both an autobiography and a political manifesto. In *Mein Kampf* he portrays himself as an idealist who only became an anti-Semite reluctantly when, on moving to Vienna, he came to believe that the Jews were plotting to take over the world.

In the 19th century the ancient, religious anti-Jewish hostility of the Christian Church – “*You crucified our Saviour*” – became the much more virulent, secular and racial, pseudo-scientific anti-Semitism that Hitler disastrously inherited. Hitler believed that humankind was locked in a struggle for world dominance between two races, the Aryan, the creators of culture, and the rest, the “inferior” races, of which the Jews, the destroyers of culture, were the most inferior and dangerous. For Hitler, civilisation’s only hope in a continuous struggle for survival was for Germany to create in the east, at Russia’s expense, *Lebensraum*, that is, living room for a greater Germany.

When he came to power in 1933 Hitler gathered around himself a group of like-minded and eager-to-serve confidants. Among these was Joseph Goebbels [1897-1945]. If Hitler was a failed artist, Goebbels was a failed writer who in 1933 became Germany’s Minister of Propaganda.

### **Control of the media**

With all the media under his control – press, radio and films – Goebbels set out to control the German imagination. He did this by portraying the Jews as Germany’s chief enemy and establishing Hitler as Fuhrer, or Leader, the all-knowing genius who sacrificed himself on Germany’s behalf. As an enthusiastic Nazi and anti-Semite Goebbels led the effort to rid Berlin of its Jews: he helped to launch the Kristallnacht pogrom and in 1944 was made the Third Reich’s plenipotentiary for total war.

With a nation’s imagination under control there’s not much a deluded and corrupt imagination like Goebbels’ cannot achieve. While Himmler, Hitler’s chief henchman in the persecution of the Jews, avoided speaking openly of the “Final Solution” to the “Jewish Problem”, Goebbels was so unguarded that it is often only through his public pronouncements that historians can best track what was happening behind the scenes.

For example, in an editorial in his newspaper *Das Reich* in November 1941, Goebbels quoted Hitler’s 1939 “prophecy” that the Jews would be the losers in the coming world war. ‘Now’, he said, Hitler’s prophecy was coming true: “Jewry is now suffering the gradual process of annihilation it intended for us”.

Between them Hitler and Goebbels had established the national myth of German racial and cultural supremacy with the Jews as Germany’s racial and cultural nemesis,

a myth so prevalent and powerful that it dominated all public life and thought. The young especially found it difficult to escape its seductive and false reality. The Holocaust alerts us to what evils can follow when our national myths are created at someone else's expense – as national myths often are.

Until 1943 Germany's military efforts had been based on its success in blitzkrieg and the belief that the war would be a short one. But that changed with Goebbels' Sportpalast speech of February 18th. "I ask you," he said, "Do you want Total War....a war more total and radical than anything we can even imagine today?" The idea of Total All-Out War, a war you can't lose because it simply overwhelms the enemy, is one on which the imagination can get drunk.

Goebbels' "Total War" was organised by our third figure, Hitler's favourite architect **Albert Speer** [1905-1981] who in February 1942 became Germany's 'Minister of Armaments and War Production'. Under Speer's reorganisation the production of tanks and planes doubled, neutralising the effect of the Allied bombing of German industries. Although Speer played no direct role in the Final Solution, other than in the brutal employment of Jews as slave labour, without his intervention the war would have ended much earlier with the saving of many lives.

If Hitler's delusions were the origin of the Holocaust, and if Goebbels' talent for propaganda prepared German minds for their acceptance, it was Speer's provision of resources for the death camps and his delaying of the end of the war that resulted in the number of Jewish victims being so high. Until the very end, when he realised that Hitler was determined to take all Germany down with him, Speer enjoyed his Fuhrer's full confidence, so that for a time he was even reckoned as his possible successor.

After the war Speer was tried at the Nuremberg Tribunal and although he was the only Nazi on trial to apologise he was found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. He served his full term. Speer is another example of the utter loyalty Hitler was able to inspire among key figures in the Third Reich as well as of how diffused responsibility for the organised slaughter of so many could be.

If Speer was the man who bought more time for the Final Solution it was Heinrich Himmler [1900-1945] who became its chief agent and made it a practical possibility. In 1928, Himmler was a poultry farmer and a loyal party member. Although he was a deceptively insignificant-looking man in 1929 Hitler made him head of the Schutzstaffel, the SS, his 300-strong bodyguard. By 1933, when Hitler became Chancellor, the SS had grown to a strength of 50,000. Behind his schoolteacher image Himmler was a ruthless man and like Goebbels utterly devoted to his Fuhrer.

The turning point in his life came in 1934 when, at Hitler's command, Himmler drew up a list of Nazi enemies and in the "Blood Purge" known as the "Night of the Long Knives", employed the SS in their "elimination". His rise to power was now unstoppable. The SS became an independent organisation with Himmler at its head. After the invasion of Russia it expanded from 3 to 35 divisions and, as the Final Solution took shape, Himmler and his SS were involved at every stage. It was the SS, for example, which guarded and ran the six death camps and oversaw their mass gassings.

Until he saw the war was lost Himmler was completely loyal to Hitler and his racial

vision of a Jew-free Europe. For example, he ordered the elimination of all Jews in the areas of the '*Generalgouvernement*' in Poland by the end of 1942. In June 1943 he arranged for the liquidation of all Jewish ghettos in Poland and the Soviet Union. But in 1945, when he was planning to surrender to Eisenhower, Hitler stripped him of his powers. Himmler fled, was captured by the British and committed suicide. Without the SS as Himmler's unquestioning, hands-on killing machine, the Holocaust would not have been possible. It was Himmler who made the dark side of Hitler's racist imagination a practical reality.

### **The plan for Kristalnacht**

If, however, there was one man whose very appearance could strike more terror than Himmler it was **Reinhard Heydrich** [1904-42], whom Hitler described as "the man with the iron heart". It was Heydrich who helped plan Kristalnacht, ordered the concentration of Polish Jews in ghettos, planned the deportation of Germany Jews, and organised the mobile killing units, the *Einsatzgruppen*, in conquered areas of Russia. He convened the infamous Wannsee Conference of top Nazi officials which finalised the plans for the Holocaust. It was his plan to round up and eventually exterminate all of Europe's Jews. In spite of strong rumours that he was of Jewish ancestry Heydrich had joined the SS and was appointed by Himmler as head of the new Reich Counter-Intelligence Service. Goering also made him head of the Gestapo, so that the whole apparatus of Nazi terror and intimidation was in his hands. Heydrich became one of the main organisers of the Holocaust. Then, in June 1942, while deputy head of the German protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Heydrich was assassinated by British-trained Czech resistance fighters.

By late 1941 the organisational abilities of men like Himmler and Heydrich had produced a gigantic killing machine directed not only against Slavs, especially Polish and Russian prisoners of war, Gypsies and homosexuals and others the Nazis loathed, but against every European Jew.

Goebbels, Himmler, Speer and Heydrich had in common a great desire to please Hitler. The desire to please is something we all have. It is a motivation that can work for good or ill and like our imagination it needs constant vigilance. Evil can be defined as the targeted destruction of fellow human beings. Evil men do not even have to get blood on their hands, as every Manchester gang leader knows: they only need to organise and direct others to do the killing. Hitler, Goebbels, Himmler, Speer and Heydrich were good at this.

Someone who was not afraid to be more hands-on in the murder of Jews was **Dr Joseph Mengele** [1911- 1979], nicknamed "The Angel of Death". As a student Mengele became persuaded by the racial ideology of Alfred Rosenberg [1893-1946]. As a doctor he developed a theory that human beings had pedigrees like dogs. Mengele joined the the SS in 1938. In 1943 he was appointed camp doctor at Auschwitz where he volunteered for the job of selecting on arrival those Jews or Gypsies who were well enough for slave labour and those, such as children, who were not. The latter went sent to the gas chambers which were cynically disguised as the camp showers.

Among the first group were identical twins selected for his "scientific" research intended to show the primacy of nature, or racial heredity, over nurture. Experiments



included sewing Gypsy children together to create Siamese twins. All these unnecessary, sadistic, experiments ended in fatal septicaemia or the gas chamber. In 1945 Mengele escaped to Argentina, then to Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil where he drowned accidentally, all attempts to have him extradited having failed. His son said that he never showed remorse.

These were just a few of the key executioners in the Holocaust landscape. Lack of time obliges me to pass over others like the zealous, SS bureaucrat **Adolf Eichmann** [1906-62] whose Gestapo office saw to the Holocaust's practical details. He too escaped to Argentina but was kidnapped by the Israeli Secret Service and tried and hanged in 1962 in Jerusalem.

The major figures in our Holocaust landscape, Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels and Co and their vast assembly of helpers, did an expert job in turning pretty well the whole of German life into a vast killing machine for Jews and others considered subhuman.



*The Garden of the Righteous Among the Nations at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem*

Their Total War involved Total Hatred and Total Commitment to their apparatus of destruction.

### **Righteous Among the Nations**

The marvel is that so many Germans nevertheless resisted such enlistment and even helped to rescue Jews. Across Europe over 25,000 such individuals have been identified and named as *Righteous Among the Nations*, an accolade awarded by the State of Israel to gentiles; many others worked anonymously, however, and are not listed at Israel's Holocaust Commemoration Centre at Yad Vashem.

- **Stanislawa Dawidziuk** was a poor, barely-educated pregnant factory worker in Warsaw crammed into a one-room flat with her husband, her brother and a waiter. A Polish policeman begged the husband to shelter, Irena, a Jewish woman for one night.

Stanislawa agreed. The one night turned into weeks. Everyone's life was in danger. When his wife would not put the woman out, the husband left. The Polish Policeman supplied them with what food he could. Incredibly they survived the 1944 Warsaw Uprising and the war. Irena emigrated to Israel and died in 1975.

Stanislawa stayed in Poland and in 1981 was declared Righteous Among the Nations. She could not explain why she had acted as she had done beyond saying that she felt she had to. Somehow, despite Polish anti-Semitism and the threat to her life this very ordinary woman retained her moral integrity and independence when so many across Europe had surrendered theirs.

- At the opposite end of the spectrum was the wealthy, privileged, Swedish architect and diplomat **Raoul Wallenberg** [1912-47] who in July 1944 became Sweden's special envoy to Budapest where the Germans were determined to extend the Final Solution to all of Hungary's 846,000 Jews. With the high-level involvement of the efficient Adolf Eichmann the chances of the Jews did not look good and through the co-operation of the Hungarian government and local authorities the deportation of Jews proceeded rapidly. What sabotaged the Nazi deportations was Eichmann's attempt to do deals with the allies to exchange "Jews for trucks" and other war materials. For this to work neutral states like Sweden and Switzerland were granted the power to issue a *Schutzpass*, a special passport, or letter of protection, to any Jew registered for emigration.

When Wallenberg arrived in Budapest Miklos Horthy [1868-1957], the President and Regent of Hungary, halted the deportations but the *Schutzpasses* remained valid. Some 300,000 Jews were left and Wallenberg granted

the passes by the thousand. Spain, Portugal and the Vatican did the same. In October, when Horthy announced a ceasefire, the Germans replaced him and recognised the anti-Semitic Arrow Cross as the new government. As the *Schutzpass* remained legal Wallenberg used the situation to shelter Jews in Swedish government property and with Carl Lutz, the Swiss consul, he helped to organise an "international ghetto" holding 33,000 Jews. Using bogus lists he was reckless in taking Jews off deportation trains under the very noses of the SS, buying trucks to take them to Budapest.

No one knows how many Jewish lives Wallenberg saved: thousands directly, tens of thousands indirectly. When Budapest fell to the Russians in January 1945, Wallenberg was arrested as an American spy and never heard of again. The official Russian explanation was that this remarkable man died of a heart attack in a Soviet jail in



*Hall of Names at Yad Vashem*

1947. Wallenberg's life is an inspiration and in 1981, Congressman Tom Lantos, one of the Budapest Jews he rescued, had him declared a US citizen, one of only three ever accorded the honour; the other two were Winston Churchill and the Marquis de Lafayette.

So far we have only looked at individual figures in our landscape but there are also entire communities there, for example the French village of **Le Chambon-sur-Lignon** which, after the Fall of France in 1940, found itself under the Vichy Government which co-operated with the German occupiers of France in its persecution of Jews. In the winter of 1940-41 a German-Jewish woman asked Magda Trocme, the wife of the village Huguenot pastor, Andre Trocme, for help. When she consulted the village mayor he told her to send the woman away as she was putting the village at risk. The Trocmes, however, decided to help, called the villagers together and told them that it was God's will and their Christian duty to help the Jewish refugees.

### **Ignoring the Vichy regime**

When the Vichy authorities got to hear they demanded that these activities stop. They were ignored. "I do not know what a Jew is", Trocme said. "I know only human beings." He and others were arrested but released when they agreed to obey government orders in the future. The pastor's brother, Daniel, was later betrayed, arrested and in 1944 died in Majdanek concentration camp. Eventually pastor Trocme was forced into hiding, but his wife and the villagers continued to shelter Jews so that, between 1941 and 1944, 3,000 to 5,000 Jews were saved. Le Chambon-sur-Lignon is one of only two villages recognised as *Righteous among the Nations*.

But not all figures in the Holocaust landscape are as straightforward as these; some are controversial, among whom are **St Edith Stein** [1891-1942] and the SS Officer **Kurt Gerstein**. Edith Stein was the youngest of 11 children in an observant Orthodox Jewish family. She was intellectually-gifted and, as a teenager, was an atheist. At Göttingen she did her doctorate under Edmund Husserl, one of the 20th century's greatest philosophers. She also worked with Martin Heidegger, another important philosopher. Then, after reading the writings of St Theresa at the age of 30, in 1922, she was baptised and became a teacher in a Roman Catholic school. In 1934, she became a Carmelite nun and then, in 1938, she and her sister, Rosa, who was also a convert, were sent to a convent in the Netherlands for safety.

Her writings as a Christian philosopher had such titles as, *On the Problem of Empathy and Finite and Eternal Being: An Attempt to an Ascent to the Meaning of Being*.

In August 1942 both sisters were arrested as Jews and sent to Auschwitz. "Come, let us go for our people", Edith said to her sister. They were gassed a week later. The controversy began in 1987 when Pope John Paul II beatified Edith as a martyr and then canonised her eleven years later as St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, saying that "the Church honoured her as a daughter of Israel who as a Catholic during the Nazi persecution remained faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ and, as a Jew, to her people in loving faithfulness".

Perhaps the strangest figure in this Holocaust landscape is **Kurt Gerstein** [1905-1945], an engineer and devout Christian who as a dedicated anti-Nazi knowingly and deliberately risked his immortal soul by joining the SS. As an engineer he found himself Head of "Disinfection" Services, a euphemism for the gassing of Jews. While

he claimed to have sabotaged and rejected supplies of Zyklon B he was nevertheless involved in mass murder and so morally compromised.

As a witness to the Holocaust, Gerstein succeeded in a number of attempts to alert foreign diplomats and the Papal Nuncio in Berlin to the horrors of what was happening in the death camps. In his attempt to do right Gerstein found himself obliged to commit the very evil he was trying to prevent. Nothing seemed to come of his efforts and after the war, in despair and psychologically destroyed by the moral contradictions he had so knowingly placed himself in, he committed suicide.

Gerstein's personal testimony given at great risk to himself is important testimony against those who deny that the Holocaust ever took place. Attempts to reinstate him posthumously and even have him declared Righteous Among the Nations have failed because of his involvement in the killing of Jews. Those judging his case have been unanimous in asserting that he should have left the SS. In the end the conflict destroyed Gerstein and confronted the rest of us with a moral maze from which we can find no exit.

And now a concluding thought about Hitler, without whose delusions and charismatic power to involve others the Holocaust could not have happened. Hitler is widely considered the world's most evil man; and yet he was a lazy fellow, staying in bed until midday, reading the papers and leaving the running of Germany and the murdering of Jews and others to hard-working figures like Himmler, Goebbels and Heydrich. I often like to provoke discussion by describing him as the 20th century's most spiritual man. How else can we explain his hold over Germany? If only there had been a good man or woman with his spiritual power, but there wasn't. We forget at our peril that evil, too, is a spiritual reality. Good people can easily be deceived when they are afraid. Hitler and Goebbels taught us that few things are easier than persuading good people to do bad things.

If studying the Holocaust does not make us wise to evil and give us the desire to be better human beings, then it is a wasted effort. Where evil is concerned we are all more vulnerable than we think.

*This talk was given to the Manchester/North Cheshire Circle on November 17th, 2014*

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## Conference Report

# Modern Visual Art – An Expression of Faith?

*This conference on October 4th, 2014, was jointly organised by the Newman Association and the St Albans Cathedral Study Centre. It was held at the Focolare Centre for Unity at Welwyn Garden City, Herts.*

### The Speakers

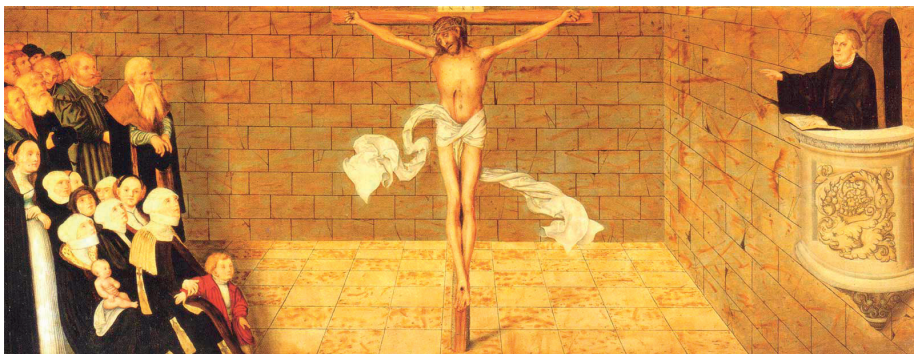
**Professor Tina Beattie** is Director of the Digby Stuart Research Centre for Religion, Society and Human Flourishing at the University of Roehampton. She is on the Board of Directors of The Tablet, the Catholic weekly publication.

**Canon Charles Pickstone** is vicar of the Anglican church of St Laurence, Catford, London. He is a trustee of the charity Art and Christianity Enquiry, and is on the editorial board of the magazine Art & Christianity.

**Paul Bayley** has worked for twenty years in contemporary visual arts. Currently he is Director of Florence Trust, which provides studio space for artists in London, and he has been Director of Projects for Art and Christian Enquiry.

**Professor Richard Harries** (Lord Harries of Pentregarth) retired as Bishop of Oxford in 2006. He is a Fellow and Honorary Professor of Theology at King's College, London, and has written 26 books including *The Image of Christ in Modern Art*.

Tina Beattie's talk was entitled *Insight Beyond Sight – Theology and Mystery in Modern Art*. Much of her discussion was devoted to a traditional example, the Isenheim altarpiece now on display in a museum at Colmar, in Alsace. It was painted by the 16th century German artist Matthias Grünewald. She also analysed the Wittenberg Altarpiece by Lucas Cranach the Elder, a post-Reformation work that brought Martin Luther and his congregation into the painted picture. Later she referred to 20th century artists such as Otto Dix and Francis Bacon, and also to a controversial work called *Sanctae* by the British mixed media artist Ione Rucquoi. She looked forward to the time when such works could find space in churches. Like the other speakers Tina Beattie provided a comprehensive slideshow to illustrate her comments.



*Martin Luther pictured on the altarpiece at Wittenberg*

Charles Pickstone spoke to the theme *Fragments of Being: Saying the Unsayable in Modern Art*. He focused in particular on Anselm Kiefer, the German artist who was the subject of the Royal Academy's recent autumn exhibition (it closed in December).

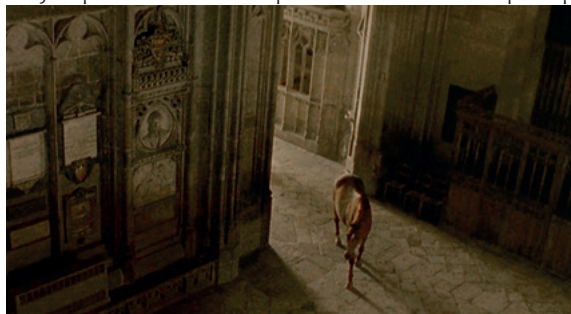


German art had been “poisoned” by the Nazis but Kiefer and others started afresh; Kiefer had produced several representations of the Trinity. Charles Pickstone also discussed the work of the slightly older German sculptor and installation artist Joseph Beuys (he died in 1986) whose celebrated olive oil tanks made of stone were part of an objective of creating “a higher level of perception”.



*Joseph Beuys' olive oil tanks*

Paul Bayley, in talking about *A Light Shines in the Darkness: working with film in sacred settings*, chose to focus on the theme of video as an artistic medium. He showed a number of clips, including one of a young girl praying in a church, and another of a ski jumper. Another example featured horses clip-clopping around inside Gloucester



*A horse in Gloucester Cathedral*

as the “break” between the Christian religion and culture generally in Europe. He pointed to the influence of modern artists such as the sculptors Jacob Epstein and Leon Underwood, and how the sufferings of the 20th century were captured by artists such as Otto Dix, Graham Sutherland, John Piper and Georges Rouault. He defined modernism: “The work exists in its own right, not as a representation of something.” But there was a big challenge, he said, in indicating the invisible and transcendent through the visible and bounded.

### **Questions from the floor**

The conference closed with a lively question-and-answer session, with Peter Brindley from the Hertfordshire Circle as chairman.

One question was: Has the decline in the knowledge of Biblical stories created a structural block for the current generation of religious artists? This was, agreed Richard Harries, a big difficulty. “You can’t count on a wider resonance. There’s no public vision and no public narrative.” Tina Beattie was more optimistic. “The early church had to break into a higher culture with a new meaning. It’s no bad thing to be in this position.” Could abstract art be effective as religious art? Charles Pickstone said it did not matter at all. “Subject matter is part of it. But there has to be a voice. Art has to create a response in the recipient. A painting seizes you for a reason you can’t understand.”

Richard Harries added: "All great works of art have a spiritual dimension."

How can churches maintain contact with the artistic world? Paul Bayley said there had been a rise in the number of art consultants. "And interesting artists themselves wish to get their art into churches. It is very important to get artists on board." Charles Pickstone said, however, that there was a generational problem: "The people who currently hold power in the art world are the people who resented the power held by the Church in their youth." A gap had developed. "Now religion is a wonderful field waiting to be explored. In the Middle Ages the Church had almost a monopoly of art. Now the Church has a much more humble role."

Tina Beattie also suggested that new approaches needed to be adopted. "There is great enthusiasm for artistic principles," she said, "but there is no such person any more as a traditional churchgoer." She went on to consider the institutional framework. "There is a creative tension between disciplinary systems and creative producers," she pointed out. "Creativity flourishes against a bit of resistance."

Another questioner from the audience wished to know: "Can a painting be inferior art and still convey religious meaning?" Charles Pickstone did not believe it was sensible to draw arbitrary distinctions between good and bad art. "The most embarrassing thing in the world is to read the art criticism of a hundred years ago," he lamented. He reflected on Anselm Kiefer, whose work he had praised in his earlier talk. "How will people see Kiefer in a hundred years' time? Who can say?" he observed philosophically.

On a similar theme Paul Bayley mentioned the reputation of Sister Corita Kent, the Los Angeles nun and art teacher who became famous as part of the 1960s pop art scene and who later created the world's largest art work, a mural on a gas tank in Boston. "Her early works were almost indistinguishable from Andy Warhol's, and she mixed in religion. For a while she was a cult figure but then she was forgotten."

Finally, the question of money was raised. "The problem is that good art is incredibly expensive," said Charles Pickstone, who as a vicar in charge of a church also seemed to be conscious of security questions when highly-priced artworks were on public display. Paul Bayley said that it was very important to get the artists on board. "Art can be expensive but it is possible to enter into dialogue with the artists. Works of art are constantly coming and going from churches."

Richard Harries pointed out that Tracey Emin was commissioned by Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral for artwork and produced *For you*, an illuminated pink neon sign. Subsequently she presented the work to the Cathedral as a donation. **Barry Riley**



Tina Beattie

Charles Pickstone

Paul Bayley

Richard Harries

# Difficulties in Edinburgh

On June 11th 2014 the Edinburgh Circle of the Newman Association received a talk by Joe Fitzpatrick entitled *A New Interpretation of Genesis chapter 3 (the story of Adam and Eve)*.

This talk, based on his own recent book ***The Fall and the Ascent of Man: How Genesis Supports Darwin***, had previously been given to the Glasgow Circle without demur from the Church hierarchy. In the case of Edinburgh the Archbishop appears to have been offended by a part of the advance publicity – note the advance publicity – which said that the speaker's argument called *"into question the traditional doctrine of Original Sin"*. Perhaps if *'called into question'* had been replaced by *'explored'* there might have been none of the subsequent furore.

Exactly a month after the talk was given the Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, The Most Revd Leo Cushley, wrote to the Chairman of the Edinburgh Circle, Arthur Skelton, saying that he had been advised about the talk by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith and pointed out that it is not acceptable that a dogma of the Church should be called into question at public meeting (sic) on Church property. He went further: he then asked the Circle to cancel a talk by Professor Tina Beattie as *"Professor Beattie is known to have frequently called into question the Church's teaching."* Professor Beattie had recently supported the right of Catholics to support 'gay marriage'. The sisters of the Convent where the Circle regularly holds its talks were told that the talk could not be held at the convent, and the Circle were told that the talk could not be advertised on any Church property.

On July 19th the officers of the Edinburgh Circle responded with a letter to the Archbishop explaining their *"bewilderment and incredulity"* at the ban, especially as the phrase *"called into question"* did not – in their view – imply *"any serious challenge to the centrality of the doctrine of Original Sin in the Church's teaching."* They were particularly aggrieved that the Archbishop's letter had been based on a complaint by an unnamed source to the CDF and that the complainant could not have been present at the talk as there had been an *"absence of dissent or controversy"*.

## The ban on Tina Beattie

They were further concerned about the *'diktat'* to cancel the proposed talk by Professor Beattie, especially as she had previously spoken in both Edinburgh and Glasgow where audiences had been impressed by her *"deep commitment to the Church, her adherence to the principles and processes of theological discourse, . . ."* They added that, notwithstanding previous calls by the Church hierarchy to cancel talks to be given by her, they were unaware of any blanket ban on her speaking in dioceses anywhere else.

Above all, the Edinburgh Circle sought an opportunity to meet the Archbishop to effect a reconciliation through dialogue. They specifically asked that they (the Circle) be allowed to deal with this matter and whilst grateful for the support of the national Association they preferred that there should not be an intervention by the Association's Council until all avenues leading to a possible rapprochement had been explored and exhausted.

On September 2nd Joe Fitzpatrick wrote to Archbishop Cushley explaining that his book (on which the talk had been based) was *"an attempt to help modern men and*

women by developing a new interpretation of the story told in Chapter 3 of the Book of Genesis". Inter alia, he invited the Archbishop to read his book and stated that if he, the Archbishop, were to *"find any inaccuracies in my argument or any lapse of logic or intellectual rigour, I would gladly amend and retract what I have said or written"*. The Newman Association has not been privy to the reply by the Archbishop as – we understand – Joe Fitzpatrick was required by the Archbishop to maintain the confidentiality of that reply.

On the same day Professor Tina Beattie also wrote to Archbishop Cushley and took issue with his assertion that *"Professor Beattie is known to have frequently called into question the Church's teaching"*. She asked if he was familiar with her work (as a theologian and Catholic woman in good standing). She also asked whether the approach from the CDF was part of a wider action against her sanctioned by Rome and, if so, on what grounds.

She referred to Pope Francis' document *'Evangelii Gaudium'* and its call for greater participation and collaboration (by the laity) at all levels of parish and diocesan life; the document also condemned a culture of clerical elitism and doctrinal authoritarianism and called for the recognition of the need for women to play a more significant role in the Church. She felt that the position she had been put into *"seems to violate all these principles"*. Again, the Association has not seen any reply from the Archbishop.

On September 12th Edinburgh Circle received a reply from the Archbishop delegating diocesan officials to meet officers of the Circle – it seems that there was not to be a dialogue but simply a statement by both sides of their position. On the 24th September *The Tablet* newspaper reported the events and the Archdiocese cancelled the proposed meeting referred to above. On October 3rd the Vice-Chancellor of the Archdiocese, Mrs Helen Gardner-Swift, wrote that in the light of the Press articles the requested meeting appeared inappropriate and a meeting to discuss the matter would *"not be helpful at this time"*. She continued by suggesting that the Circle *"address any concern or complaint to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which is entirely competent in this matter"*, which begs the question of the role the Archdiocese played.

On October 29th another letter was written to the Archbishop by the Edinburgh Circle explaining that the information sent to *The Tablet* was not their doing and that it was to



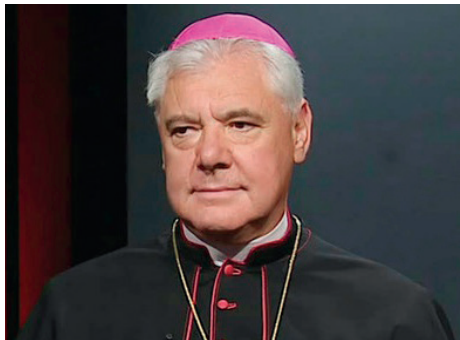
*Offices of the CDF in Rome*

avoid such a development that they had originally requested a meeting with him. They added that the action of the CDF had *"caused much unjustified hurt and anxiety which could have been avoided by means of informal contact and thorough and discreet enquiry"*.

The Newman Association has a proud record of 'educating the laity', the call for which, by Cardinal Newman,

inspired its foundation. Over 70 years it has done this through the talks given to its nationwide association of Circles; some of these talks have been contentious but none of them has, to the best of our knowledge, undermined the faith of the Catholics and others attending the talks. The Association must protect its autonomy and cannot countenance the possibility of blanket bans being put on its speakers.

Having read the transcript of Joe Fitzpatrick's talk, which was enlightening and very well researched – an altogether excellent lecture – I was enthused sufficiently to want to read the book on which it is based whilst continuing to give credence to the Book of Genesis, inspired as it is by the Holy Spirit.



*Cardinal Gerhard Müller, Prefect of the CDF*

**Gerald Williams**  
President, the Newman Association

## London Newman Lecture 2015

Thursday, March 12th



### Neuroscience and the Soul

This lecture is to be given by Dr James Le Fanu at Heythrop College, London. A GP, Dr Le Fanu is also a journalist and the author of books including *'Why Us? How Science Rediscovered the Mystery of Ourselves'*

**Bookings to Dr Chris Quirke** on 0161 941 1707, email [secretary@newman.org.uk](mailto:secretary@newman.org.uk)  
Tickets £10 (£15 for two if paid in advance), cheques payable to *The Newman Association*.

Please include s.a.e. OR leave a phone number or email address to confirm the booking and pick up your tickets at the door.

**6.00 for 6.30pm** at Heythrop College, Kensington Square, London W8 5HN



# How Genesis Supports Darwin: A New Interpretation of Genesis 3

by Joe Fitzpatrick

A few years ago I sat down at our kitchen table with my Revised Standard Bible and read again, for the first time in many years, chapter 3 of the book of Genesis, the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. I remember being very struck by the fact that there is no mention there of 'sin' or 'evil' or 'wrongdoing', no reference whatsoever to a 'fall', and no mention of 'rebellion' or 'disobedience' – all words widely used in the most popular theological interpretation of this story.

What I was struck by most of all was the concluding speech of the Lord God: "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, and lest he reach out his hand...." I knew that the most common understanding of this speech was to the effect that the man and the woman in the tale, in acquiring knowledge of good and evil, were in fact attempting **to play God**, attempting to *determine for themselves* what would be morally right and wrong, and that this was an act of rebellion by these creatures against their creator. That is how Aquinas, taking his lead from St Augustine, interpreted this passage in *Summa Theologiae* (2-2, 163, 2).<sup>1</sup> Aquinas's reading became regulative for Catholic theology over the centuries. However, the best way to understand an idiomatic Hebrew phrase like "to know good and evil" is to see what the phrase means in other parts of the bible.

In the Book of Kings chapter 3, verse 9 we find the young King Solomon in a dream being asked what he would like God to give him and in his answer he prays that he may be wise *so that he can discern good and evil*; and in 2 Samuel 14, there is a passage about King David being approached by a wise woman who presents him with a complicated problem she asks him to judge for her, and she adds that David has wisdom like the angel of God *to discern good and evil*. So here are two passages from the Hebrew bible which clearly see knowledge of good and evil as something good, something positive, as amounting to nothing less than wisdom.

This clearly did not fit with the traditional, Augustinian-Thomistic interpretation of this phrase, and this was a powerful motivator, causing me to look at the Genesis tale again. Not only did this tale make no mention of sin or a fall or of rebellion or disobedience, it seemed to be saying that in eating from the fruit of the tree of knowledge humans had acquired something akin to wisdom, had gained something good, something that differentiated them from the other animals mentioned in the two creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2, as well as from children; something that marked humans out as mature and grown up.

## Genesis 1 - 11

At this point let me remind you of the composition of the Book of Genesis. As you will recall, the first two chapters consist of two distinct accounts of creation – in chapter 1 there is the creation account from the Priestly tradition, and most of chapter 2 consists of the creation account from the Yahwist tradition. These traditions indicate the different authorships which scholars have worked out on the basis of certain stylistic or linguistic features – for example, the Yahwist tradition is so called because

in the stories stemming from this source God is referred to as Yahweh or as Yahweh Elohim, translated into English as 'the Lord God'. 'Yahweh' was the name reserved by the Hebrews for the God of Israel, as distinct from 'Elohim' which was a more generic term for God. In the first, Priestly, creation story in chapter 1, Man<sup>2</sup> is created last, he is creation's crowning glory, God's masterpiece, created in his own image. In the second, Yahwist, creation account in chapter 2, Man is created first; God forms Man from the dust of the ground and breathes his spirit into him – and Man becomes a living being, in Hebrew 'a living *nephesh*.' Following the two creation accounts is chapter 3, the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden eating from the forbidden tree of knowledge and being prevented by God from eating from the Tree of Life; this is continuous with the second creation account and is from the Yahwist tradition, reputed to be among the oldest stories that go to make up Genesis. After Genesis 3, there is the story of Cain and Abel in chapter 4, then a long list of conceiving and begettings in chapter 5 – the so-called generations of Adam - then the story of the Flood takes us up to chapter 9, then in chapter 11 there is the story of the tower of Babel.

Chapters 1-11, Genesis 1 to 11, constitute a distinct literary unit in the book of Genesis. These are the mythological chapters; they are not historical and they are not presented as history. With chapter 12 we encounter the story of Abraham and in the bible the story of Abraham and his successors is presented as history – although what passes in the early bible as history is probably what we would term legend; but there is a presumed relation to events in history. In this article my focus will be mainly on Genesis 1-11, the mythological section of Genesis; and especially on chapter 3, but I do not think you can separate chapter 3 or isolate it; it is an intrinsic part of the narrative that flows from the second creation account onwards.

In Western theology there have been a fair number of interpretations of Genesis 3 put forward – people sometimes forget that – but the interpretation that won out and gained ascendancy over all its rivals was that put forward by St Augustine of Hippo who lived in the fourth and fifth centuries AD (354-430 AD). Augustine was a great genius, an outstanding personality and a prolific writer and scholar. It is no exaggeration to say that, while in the East there was a proliferation of influential theologians, in the West no one was thought to come near Augustine in stature or reputation. The West built its theology on Augustine, and this included Augustine's interpretation of Genesis 3 and his doctrine of original sin. (The Eastern Church, by the way, never recognised Augustine as a doctor of the Church and does not accept his account of original sin.)

### **Who told you that you were naked?**

As I read and re-read the Genesis text, I became increasingly conscious of a very strange fact. At the end of chapter 2 the Yahwist author rather flamboyantly mentions that the man and his wife "were both naked, and were not ashamed", then in chapter 3 after they have eaten from the tree the couple go into hiding. The Lord God, represented in the story as a kind of Near Eastern landowner, walks in his garden in the cool of the evening and calls on the man and the woman (who are not yet named as Adam and Eve). He asks them why they are hiding and the man tells him that they hid because they were naked. But, as we have noted, at the end of chapter 2 we were told very clearly that "the man and his wife were both naked, and not ashamed" (Gen

2, 25). Here they are now, ashamed of being seen naked. A **before and after** situation in relation to human nakedness has been deliberately set up by the tale's author. Before they ate from the tree of knowledge they were unashamed of being naked; after eating from it they were ashamed. Something has happened. **My hypothesis is that they have become human, that this is a tale about a change that is wrought in the consciousness of this couple: the tale is about the breakthrough to human self-awareness.**

The proof of this hypothesis is to be found in the conversation that continues in the story between the Lord God and his two creatures. He asks them, "Who told you that you were naked?" That odd question jolts us into recognising that the Lord God is surprised that the couple know they are naked and that his assumption before speaking with them was that they were less than human. He then goes on, without waiting for an answer to his question, to ask a second question: "Have you been eating from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" Augustine focused on the second part of that question – "of which I commanded you not to eat" – finding that the couple disobeyed God's command. And he concluded that that act of disobedience was the first sin. But I maintain that the point of dramatic interest, the moment of confrontation between the Lord God and the couple concerns their knowledge that they were naked. It is the change that has come about in this couple that lies at the heart of this story.

That question put into the mouth of the Lord God, "Who told you that you were naked?" is the key, the "Columbo moment", when the penny drops. It shows that the Lord God assumed he was dealing with a pair of animals that were less than human; then he comes to the realisation that it is not someone else who has told them that they are naked, that *they* have changed, and the reason for the change is the fact that they have eaten from the tree of knowledge. They have become self-conscious human beings.

### **Theological Consequences**

I shall now move on to some of the theological consequences of this interpretation. There are, I believe, two negative consequences and several positive consequences. The first important negative consequence is that if the tale is about hominisation, about the breakthrough to human consciousness, then it is not about some primordial sinful act of disobedience or rebellion – and, as we have seen, none of these words occurs in the text. And if there was no original sin then humanity cannot be regarded, as it was by Augustine, as a "*massa damnata*"; the default setting of humanity is not damnation; and salvation cannot be regarded as something reserved for the predestined elite, the minority who are given the grace to be saved, as Augustine supposed.

Another important consequence is that this interpretation prevents Christianity from being set on a collision course with the scientific theory of evolution. The threat to Christianity from the theory of evolution is this: that Augustine insisted that death was a punishment for sin, original sin, and that initially human beings had been created immortal. Now you cannot subscribe to the belief that humans were created immortal and still insist that they evolved by means of natural selection. For natural selection entails the notion of development by means of death or elimination: unless certain species die out to be replaced by other species, natural selection cannot work. For

natural selection to work, three things are needed: time, random variations and death or elimination. As Arthur Peacocke, a theologian who was also a scientist, put it: "Biological death of the individual is the prerequisite of the creativity of the biological order....the statistical logic is inescapable: new forms of life arise only through the dissolution of the old: new life only through the death of the old."<sup>3</sup> My interpretation of the story told in Genesis 3 means that Christianity and evolution are not in conflict. The reason why Augustine made the claim that human beings were created immortal was because, in the story, God tells the couple "In the day that you eat of it (the tree of knowledge of good and evil) you will die" (Gen. 2, 17). Augustine accepts that when they ate from the tree the couple did not die and from this he concluded that God was not referring to the death of the couple but to death as a universal phenomenon of human life; he was saying that human beings would become mortal. However, James Barr disagrees with Augustine here, pointing out the urgency and immediacy conveyed by the words of the Lord God: "*in the day* that you eat of it, you will die". God is referring to death now, soon, and he is referring to the death of this couple – "*you* will die".<sup>4</sup> I have developed James Barr's point here and I argue that, in fact, the couple do die as soon as they eat from the tree of knowledge. They die to their old selves and are changed into something quite different, something entirely new.

### **A Rite of Passage**

I discern a pattern in the first nine chapters of Genesis, which belong to the mythological section of Genesis. These chapters, I maintain, conform to the pattern of a rite of passage. These chapters are about the emergence of human beings on the face of the earth and this emergence includes the passage of animal-like proto-humans to the status of human beings. According to the French anthropologist, Arnold van Gennep, rites of passage consist of three stages: first, the separation of the novices from their families and society; second, a stage of transition, a "betwixt and between" stage when the novices are placed outside normal societal controls, a stage often associated with lawlessness, disorder, disorientation and licence; and finally, a third stage, when the novices are reincorporated into society but as transformed, as mature adults capable of taking on adult roles and responsibilities.<sup>5</sup> The early chapters of Genesis conform to this three-stage pattern: in chapters 1 and 2 we have the age of innocence; then in chapter 3 this is ruptured, as the couple eat from the "forbidden" tree and are profoundly changed as a result, becoming separated from the rest of the animal kingdom; next comes the period of disorder and licence described in chapters 4 and 5, when Cain murders his brother Abel, violence fills the earth and we are told that God thinks about wiping humanity out and starting creation all over again.

Then Noah shows up, a noble and sinless man who "walks with God". (Gen 6, 9) With God's direction Noah and his family survive the Flood – and in myths floods are used to denote instruments of destruction and rebirth, rites of passage, and this is what we find in chapter 9 of Genesis, as the earth is reborn and Noah is commanded to be "fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth" (Gen 9, 1), a repetition of the words spoken to the original couple, denoting that what is taking place is a new creation, a totally new phase in the story of the emergence of humanity, and the beginning of history. It is at this point that God draws up the Covenant, a new alliance or a new deal that will help the new species to live lives that are pleasing to him and fulfilling for themselves.

## The basic human situation

Apart from the negative consequences I have pointed to, this interpretation also yields some important positive consequences for theology. To understand why, we have to deepen our understanding of the tree of knowledge and the tree of life. These are the two trees that stand at the centre of the garden, and the couple are told that they must not eat from the tree of knowledge. Now knowledge and life for the ancient Hebrews were attributes of God. The divine prohibition in the story serves to demarcate what is God's, the tree of knowledge and the tree of life, from what are simply parts of nature, the other trees in the garden which the couple are free to eat from. What this story reveals is that it is by transgressing the boundary separating the divine from the created order, indeed by partaking of the divine, that the couple become human.

At the end of chapter 3 of Genesis an important speech is made by the Lord God. He says: "Behold the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, but lest he put forth his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever...." And to prevent this happening we read that God banished the man and his wife from Eden and guarded the way to the tree of life with a revolving flaming sword. That, I believe, is what the story we have been discussing has been leading up to. The action of the Lord God at this point reveals to human beings what is the basic human situation. That is what myths do: they reveal to us the human way of being in the world, they communicate human self-understanding by locating us in relation to God, to other human beings, and, in the case of Genesis 3, to the other animals. Myths help us to understand ourselves, who we are. And what the myth in Genesis 3 shows is that human beings have emerged from nature by eating from the tree of knowledge but they have been prevented by God from eating also from the tree of life. Man has been left wanting.

Human beings are creatures *manqué*, incomplete, unfinished, deprived of the very thing their human status yearns for. If eating from the tree of knowledge made the animal human, the failure to eat also from the tree of life caused the human animal to be incomplete, in need of God to complete its humanity. The story in Genesis 3 reveals the human *existential situation*: humans achieved likeness to God by ascending to rational consciousness but failed to achieve the completion which such consciousness strives for; they have failed to eat from the tree of life and thereby to achieve union with God. Humans are broken off, unfinished, incomplete.

This is a theme of several of the Psalms:

*O God, you are my God, for you I long;  
For you my soul is thirsting  
My body pines for you  
Like a dry, weary land without water. (Ps 62)*

*Like the deer that yearns  
For running streams  
So my soul is yearning  
For you, my God. (Ps 41)*

Augustine made a similar point at the start of his *Confessions*: 'You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.'



## The Covenant

The Covenant was an alliance that God made with humanity, which we read of in Genesis chapter 9. The ancient Hebrews were nomadic when they wandered in the desert, and they entered into covenants with neighbouring tribes to avoid conflict and disputes. These covenants often related to access to water, pasture lands or other resources. The idea was that by means of the covenant members of the neighbouring tribe would enjoy the same rights and privileges as members of the Hebrew tribe; they would become honorary members of that racial group. So in forming a covenant with the ancient Hebrews under the leadership of Moses, which is described in the Book of Exodus, God was admitting them to his tribe. The Covenant is one of the foundations of the Hebrews' understanding of themselves as God's Chosen People. The terms of the Covenant are the ten commandments and the whole system of law that developed around it, whereby the Hebrews became people of the Law. It was the Covenant and the Law that made the Hebrews distinctive, and set them apart from other tribes and racial groups.

The rest of the Hebrew Bible is the story of the people's ups and downs with Yahweh, of their fidelity and infidelity to the Covenant. At various times they go off and copy the religious practices of other tribes, worshipping idols. For there were times when these neighbouring tribes were more successful – in battle, in life – than the Israelites and not unnaturally some of the Israelites thought that these neighbouring gods must be better or stronger than the Hebrew God, Yahweh, and so they took to worshipping these false gods. And when that happened the prophets and religious leaders would scold the people and ceremonies would be held in which the allegiance of the Hebrews to the Covenant and the terms of the covenant would be renewed. For the Covenant was seen as the instrument chosen by God to educate his people in how they should conduct their lives, and in so doing bring them into ever closer union with himself, making them more godlike.

Salvation as divinisation is the central positive theme or idea among the theological consequences I see as following from my interpretation of Genesis 3. Divinisation is also humanisation. That is the paradox of salvation: the more complete we become as divine the more complete we become as human. For the ancient Hebrews the essential attribute of God, what set him apart, was holiness; and holiness denoted integrity, unity and wholeness. So the more we grow in likeness to God the more we attain human wholeness and wellbeing.

## The Incarnation

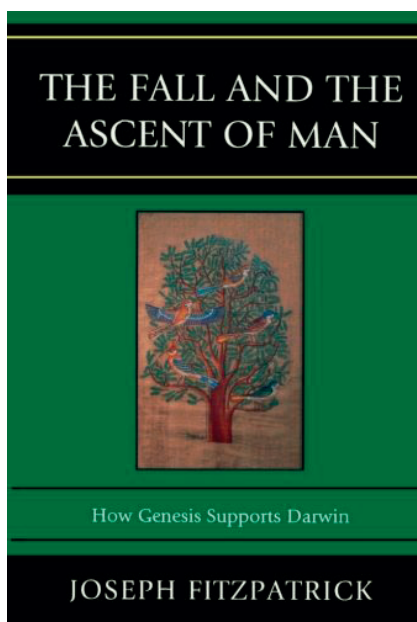
And this brings us rather neatly to the incarnation. I believe that the view I have expressed about how it was in becoming like God that the couple in the Garden of Eden become human – as the Lord God says in the concluding section of Genesis 3, "Behold the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil" – I believe this view helps us to overcome the tendency to see Jesus as either really only divine or really only human. If human beings are human in so far as they are also divine, the notion of someone who is at once divine and human, the notion of the Godman, begins to make sense. This view is strongly endorsed by some words of the great Flemish theologian, Edward Schillebeeckx, who said: *"We cannot approach God himself, except in Jesus, in all his humanity. We only need to look at him to know*

who God is. That is the meaning of what people call the incarnation of God in Jesus of Nazareth. We may have no conception of what God is, of what 'he' could be, but we do have some conception of who Jesus is. Therefore Jesus is God's countenance."<sup>6</sup>

### Salvation History and the Tree of Life

This takes me to my final point. The trajectory of what theologians call "salvation history" – the history of God's dealings with human beings told in scripture – is often traced from Adam to Christ. Salvation history is portrayed as "Adam sinned; Christ saved; we are redeemed". What I am suggesting is that the trajectory of salvation history ought to be traced from the incident of God's prevention of the human couple gaining access to the tree of life in Eden, as told in Genesis, to the passage in the Book of Revelation, the Apocalypse, the last book of the Christian scriptures where we read in the very last chapter of how human beings at last gain access to the tree of life. See Revelation 22, 14: *Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.*

Coming at the beginning and end of the Christian scriptures, the image of the tree of life provides a fitting framework for the history of salvation, the history of God's transformative gifting of himself to humankind over time. The tree of life stands for the possibility of humankind's union with God, of human beings becoming one with God, for in the story the act of eating from the tree of life symbolises our participation in the life of God himself. The tree of life is the commanding image at both the beginning and the end of the story of salvation told in the bible. That is why I have put the image of the tree of life on the front cover of my book.<sup>7</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Aquinas's words in Latin read, '*Ut scilicet per virtutem propriae naturae (primus homo) determinaret sibi quid esset bonum et quid malum ad agendum.*'

<sup>2</sup> To avoid the complications of saying 'him' or 'her' etc., I have used the generic term 'man' but to indicate that I am referring to the human being and not the male person I have capitalised the 'm' – hence 'Man'.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Jack Mahoney SJ, *Christianity in Evolution*, (Georgetown University Press, 2011), p. 63

<sup>4</sup> James Barr, op. cit., p. 11

<sup>5</sup> Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, (University of Chicago Press, 1960)

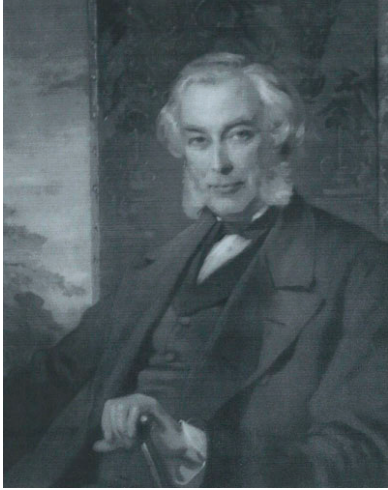
<sup>6</sup> Quoted in *Edward Schillebeeckx: Portrait of a Theologian* by John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1983) p. 86

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Fitzpatrick, *The Fall and the Ascent of Man: How Genesis Supports Darwin*, (University Press of America, 2012).

# The Newman Connection

by Barry Riley

Regular readers of *The Newman* will know Robert Williams as a former editor (and still a member of the Editorial Committee). He played a prominent role in the revival of the Association's journal from 1984 onwards. It is now interesting, however, to explore the story of another Robert Williams, his great-great-grandfather. This senior Williams



*Robert Williams Senior*

was at one time closely connected with the Blessed John Henry Newman himself.

The links can be traced back to Oxford in the late 1830s, a period when Newman had a prominent but controversial position in the Anglican Church. Robert Williams had graduated from Oriel College in 1833 and although he embarked on a career in London (studying at the Inner Temple, and succeeding his father as Conservative MP for Dorset in 1835) he became involved in the Tractarian (or Oxford) Movement. The *Tracts for the Times*, some 90 of them by various authors, including Newman, were published between 1833 and 1841; they explored, amongst other subjects, the relationship between the Anglican and Roman Churches.

Robert Williams is referred to in Newman's *Apologia pro Vita Sua*<sup>1</sup> as an unnamed "friend, an anxiously religious man, now, as then, very dear to me, a Protestant still". At this point, in 1839, Williams drew Newman's attention to an article in the *Dublin Review* by Bishop (later Cardinal) Nicholas Wiseman. This was about the possible application of Donatist theories to Anglicanism, an argument that did not impress Newman. The article did, however, also contain the words of St Augustine, "*Securus judicat orbis terrarum*" – the whole world is an unshakeable judge – this phrase being used in relation to the resolution of the dispute between the Donatists and the Church as a whole. With this realisation Newman came to his understanding that "the theory of the *Via Media* (the middle way of Anglicanism) was absolutely pulverised"<sup>1</sup>.

## The Roman Breviary

The main connection with Robert Williams, however, was over a plan to translate the Roman Breviary. Tract 75, published in July 1836, had discussed the Breviary. Early in 1838 Williams had joined forces with Samuel Wood, another of Newman's former pupils at Oriel College, in a project to translate the Breviary, the book of the main liturgical rites in Latin of the Roman Catholic Church. The plan was to publish the translation in monthly instalments. Newman himself had helped out with the translation of certain hymns. But this was a highly controversial area and according to Ian Ker's biography<sup>2</sup> Newman was warned by Thomas Keble that some Tractarians had become alarmed at such close associations with Rome. Soon afterwards Newman wrote to Keble to tell him that Wood and Williams had agreed, at some financial cost,

to abandon their project.

The story of the Breviary translation is dealt with at length in Donald Withey's book *John Henry Newman: the Liturgy and the Breviary*<sup>3</sup>. During the summer of 1838 there was a regular exchange of proofs between Williams and Newman. By November, however, the project was in deep trouble. Robert Williams wrote to Newman: "We shall want either the whole or the initial words of the hymn *Exultet orbis gaudiis*, on S. John's Day. We are anxiously looking for your answer, being wholly at a stand, till we receive it." But a letter from Newman to Thomas Keble was unenthusiastic. "W. and W.", as Keble described them, had made engagements with a printer and ordered new type, and they would incur a most considerable expense for nothing unless they printed immediately. "But the publication, of course, is absolutely suspended" Newman added.

When Williams and Wood realised, a few days later, the extent of the revision which Newman proposed to the translation they decided to abandon the project entirely. Samuel Wood wrote to John Henry Newman: "I should tell you why we do not (at first sight) like your suggested emendations; it is chiefly that they are not mere omissions, but substitutions."

### **Conversion to Rome**

By 1840 Robert Williams was seriously thinking about converting to Rome. But he was discouraged by Newman who wrote in a letter to him that he should only do so if he had "the clearest and most constraining view" that it was his "absolute duty". Otherwise Williams would be acting "against the advice of all you look up to". His judgment was that since Williams had been born into Anglicanism he had not chosen a state of error whereas he might be "choosing and changing into error" by joining the Roman Church. In the event Robert Williams remained an Anglican (although, of course, John Henry Newman himself converted to Rome in 1845).

According to Don Withey<sup>4</sup>, however, the Breviary project was not entirely dead. It was revived in 1841 by Robert Williams together with Samuel Wood and Frederick Oakeley. A letter by Williams dated June 1841 discussed a four-volume edition running to 750 copies for a maximum price of £2. But the religious objections persisted: there were references in the book to the *Hail Mary* and the invocation of saints. In any case, the Anglican Church had long since adopted the Book of Common Prayer so what status could be enjoyed by a translation of the Breviary?

In July Robert Williams wrote to Rev Bloxham, curate at Littlemore. "I feel it impossible to proceed with the Breviary without Newman's full concurrence, and so others feel – Ward, Oakeley and Wood. His judgement is worth all ours put together, and ought to be implicitly trusted." It was to be 1879 before an English translation of the Breviary (by the Marquis of Bute) was published. Eventually the Breviary was restructured by the Roman Church at the time of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s and replaced by *The Divine Office*, a shorter lay version of which is known as *Morning & Evening Prayer*. But ordained persons may use the 1962 edition of the Roman Breviary.

Robert Williams was barely 30 at the time of the Breviary project. He went on to pursue a career as a country gentleman and a London banker, with a seat at Bridehead in Dorset and a London home in Grosvenor Square and other places. He became committed to the evangelical wing of the Church of England, an allegiance apparently

strengthened after John Henry Newman wrote to him in 1845 disclosing his departure to the Roman Church. Evangelicals place an emphasis on Biblical traditions and in Anglican terms are Low Church rather than, like the Tractarians, High Church. Robert Williams died aged 79 in 1890, two months before Newman's death in Birmingham.

According to an article by Don Withey<sup>5</sup>, Williams' granddaughter Margaret Wallis remembered him affectionately in her memoir privately published in 1960. "The shock of his friend Newman's adhesion to Rome drove him back into himself and sometimes rather far to the other side of churchmanship," she observed.

<sup>1</sup> *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* by John Henry Newman, 1864; Penguin; £12.99 (paperback)

<sup>2</sup> *John Henry Newman: A Biography* by Ian Ker, 1988; Oxford University Press; £26.00 (paperback)

<sup>3</sup> *John Henry Newman: the Liturgy and the Breviary – Their Influence on His Life as an Anglican* by Donald A. Withey, 1992; Sheed & Ward, out of print

<sup>4</sup> A member of the Newman Association's Eastbourne and Bexhill Circle

<sup>5</sup> Newsletter "The Friends of Cardinal Newman" 1993

## Study Day – Saturday March 21st

### Catholic Perspectives on Poverty

Ushaw College, Durham, 10AM-5.30PM

#### Speakers

**Alison Gelder** (Housing Justice)

*Fighting poverty in an age of austerity – developing an effective Christian response*

**Dr Mark Hayes** (Durham)

*The economic dimensions of poverty*

**Dr Richard Finn OP** (Cambridge)

*Walking the tightrope: poverty in the Christian tradition*

**Sr Helen Alford OP** (Angelicum)

*What is enough?*

This study day will be held in association with the NBCW and the Centre for Catholic Studies in Durham.

Fee **£50 including a buffet lunch** (£40 without lunch)

Concessions available on request.

**For further details, and to book, please contact Theresa Phillips at [ccs.admin@durham.ac.uk](mailto:ccs.admin@durham.ac.uk) or call 0191 334 1656.**



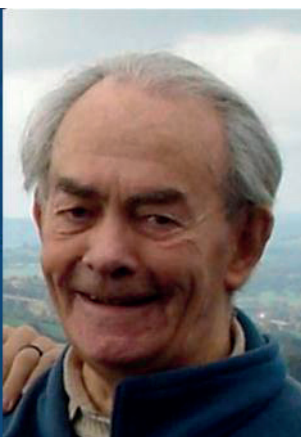
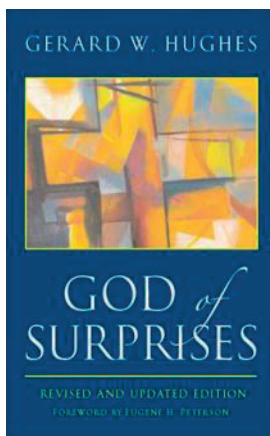
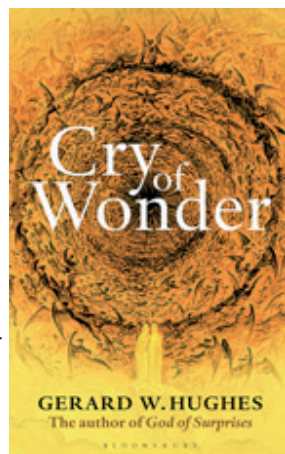
## Book Review

*Cry of Wonder: Our Own Real Identity*, Gerard W. Hughes  
Bloomsbury 2014, £12.99

This author, known to so many through *God of Surprises*, died in the same week in which this book was published. It gives the fascinating story of how he moved from obedience of a judgemental God, who had dealings only with of Roman Catholics, to the acceptance of an ever-loving, compassionate God who is closer to all of us, Catholics, Protestants and pagans, than we are to ourselves. As a teenager he took up actual praying instead of just "saying prayers", in the hope of winning a scholarship, and entered into a new relationship with God. He remarks that Christians are, on the whole, not good at real praying.

At Oxford, meeting non-Catholics for the first time was a revelation. Another was finding that ordinary lay people could study and discuss theology. Later he discovered real godliness in the lives of sincere, committed atheists and communists. He learned that St Ignatius' exercises had been intended for individuals, but that those in charge thought it safer to have the Church in control, so that past experience of Jesuit retreats was of a series of sermons delivered to congregations. With Fr. Michael Ivens, Gerry Hughes set up individual retreats for all manner of people at St Beuno's in North Wales. Valuing and reflecting on all his past feelings and experiences led him towards really knowing himself and perceiving how God had always been present in his life. He encourages people not to dwell on their sinfulness but to cry out in wonder and joy at the loving mercy of God.

To obtain real benefit from this book it is necessary to do the reflective exercises at the end of each chapter. Two which stand out are, first, composing our obituary, so as to discover the kind of person we should really like to have been, and secondly, making a list of all our desires, starting with the most trivial. Our deepest, but most feared, desire is to abandon ourselves and hurl ourselves unreservedly into the loving arms of



God. There are many things we would rather not think about: we can live oblivious of the many evils of our time about which we might be able to do something. We never take the Beatitudes seriously; Gerry Hughes' translation of the first reads; "Blissfully happy are the utterly destitute for they are in the life of God".

Over the last quarter-century Fr. Hughes has been engaged in peace-making. In this, as

in working for ecumenism (or unity as he prefers to call it) the essential is to eschew condemnation, which is of the Devil, and to live out of compassion for all. He exposes the tissue of lies under warmongering; George W. Bush could describe the invasion of Iraq as “peace work”, atom bombs were given pet names and the killing of thousands of civilians is discounted as “collateral damage”. To incite men to kill, it is necessary only to persuade them that they are under threat; (this goes for everything from declarations of war to the shooting to kill of unarmed men by UK and US police).

The enemy must be dehumanised; in Denmark during WW2 the Nazi invaders in WW2, after being kindly received by the Danish people, were no longer fit to be deployed anywhere else. How can we accept with equanimity the presence (and proposed renewal at great expense) under the beautiful waters of Holy Loch of a nuclear submarine, created to exterminate thousands of innocent people? But to be a pacifist is not to be passive; Gerry Hughes calls on us to resist violence unremittingly with courage and love. He gives the example of Sarah Hipperson, magistrate and mother of grown-up children, who endured for 19 years the squalor and antagonism which was the lot of those who lived in the Greenham women’s camp.

Fr. Hughes encourages us to live our lives as a treasure hunt to find our true self and our deepest desire to be united to God.

**Josephine Way**

## Responding to the Challenge of Climate Change

Robert Williams, following his review in the previous issue of *The Newman* of Sir John Houghton’s autobiography *In the Eye of the Storm*, would like to draw the attention of Newman members to a forthcoming conference, to be held at Redcliffe College, Gloucester on Saturday March 7th. Sir John will be at this conference to lead a Seminar on the theme *Recent developments in the science of climate change*.

### **The main speakers will be:**

**Mike Morecroft**, Natural England, Senior Research Associate at Oxford University  
*Climate Change and Biodiversity*

**Allan Findlay**, Professor of Population Studies at the University of St. Andrews  
*Climate Change and Human Migration*

**Michael Northcott**, Professor of Ethics at Edinburgh University and Episcopal Priest  
*The Political Theology of Climate Change*

Conference fee £45 (or £38 booked before 31st. January); To book and for further details of speakers and seminars: [www.redcliffe.org/environment-conference](http://www.redcliffe.org/environment-conference)  
Jointly hosted by Redcliffe College, The John Ray Initiative (JRI) and A Rocha (for further details of JRI and A Rocha see their websites: [www.jri.org.uk](http://www.jri.org.uk) and [www.arocha.org](http://www.arocha.org))

**Robert Williams, Convener of the Newman Association’s Environment Interest Group**

# Spirituality Pages

*In November Fr Hilary Crewe led a Day of Recollection for the South-East England Circles at Newman House, Gower Street, in Central London. He is a retired priest of the Westminster Diocese, now Chaplain of a residential care home in Brentford. He chose to focus on the theme of The Cross and the Resurrection.*

## At the heart of God's plan

The Cross, he said, was a huge part of our experience. It was at the heart of God's plan.

"Suffering is terrible," he said. "We dare not explain it away. But our crosses are meant, under God's Providence, to *make* us, not *break* us. Suffering can be a great power for Good, in the deepest sense. Suffering can get rid of all manner of selfishness."

Fr Hilary proceeded largely through quotations, commencing with the French novelist and poet Leon Bloy (1846-1917).

*We have places in our hearts  
That do not yet exist  
And into them enters suffering  
In order that they may have existence.*

He then discussed insights from Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (1926-2004), a Swiss American psychiatrist who pioneered methods in the support and counselling of personal trauma, grief and grieving associated with death and dying.

She wrote: "The most beautiful people we have known are those people who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, sensitivity and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen". (From *Death: The Final Stage of Growth*)\*.

And she offered a poetical version:

*People are like stained-glass windows.  
They sparkle and shine when the sun is out  
But, when the darkness sets in,  
Their true beauty is revealed  
Only if there is a light from within.*

There was no greater response to suffering, said Father Hilary, than in the example set by Archbishop Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador and a modern martyr who was assassinated in 1980. He knew the danger he was in. "I have been threatened with death," he said. "In advance, I forgive my killers – but I wish they would realise they are wasting their time because I will rise again in the people of El Salvador.....A bishop will die, but God's Church, which is the people, will never die."

\*Published by Simon & Shuster 1997; £7.99 (paperback)



*Fr Hilary Crewe*

Fr Hilary then drew upon the story of Jesus Christ himself as he faced death in Jerusalem. He quoted from the Gospel of John, 16:20-22. "Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain but your pain will turn into joy. When a woman is in labour, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. So you have pain now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you."

Suffering, he said, was terrible. There should be no playing it down. But having said that we could proceed to some very helpful and necessary insights, which show that suffering has precious blessings. "Suffering can put great wisdom into our life and death. But it is not automatic; we've got to co-operate with God's Grace. We all know of situations where people, suffering a lot, have become much more understanding towards others. They display a lack of self-pity which is an inspiration to those who indulge in self-pity even though we have many blessings to be grateful for."

With no exaggeration, Fr Hilary said, people who are suffering can play a huge part in helping the Saviour to save the world. He referred to Gerard Manley Hopkins' poem *As Kingfishers Catch Fire*

*Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is —  
Christ — for Christ plays in ten thousand places,  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not His  
To the Father through the features of men's faces.*

Fr Hilary produced many more quotations on the theme. But at the end of his three conference periods he suggested that his audience, being members of the Newman Association, should meditate on a text originally written by John Henry Newman in one of his books of sermons, but subsequently modified.

### **A prayer by John Henry Newman**

*God regards you personally whoever you are. He calls you by your name. He sees you and understands you as he made you.*

*He knows what is in you, all your individual feelings and thoughts, your inclinations and likings, your strength and your weakness.*

*He views you in your day of rejoicing and in your day of sorrow. He sympathises in your hopes and in your trials.*

*He concerns himself in all your anxieties and memories, all your risings and fallings of spirit.*

*He has numbered the very hairs of your head and the height of your stature. He encompasses you and bears you in his arms.*

*He takes you up and sets you down. He sees your face whether smiling or in tears, whether healthy or ill. He looks tenderly on your hands and feet.*

*He hears your voice and the beating of your heart and your breathing. You do not love yourself more than he loves you.*

*You cannot shrink from pain more than he dislikes your bearing it! And if He puts it on you, you will be wise to accept it for a greater good later.*

*You are not only His creature (though He cares for the very sparrows), you are also redeemed and sanctified, His adopted son or daughter, favoured with the quality of that glory and blessedness, which flows from him everlastingly to his only-begotten Son.*

**Anne and Barry Riley**

# Concerning Circles

## New Members

Recruiting has gone well this autumn and as a result we can welcome the following fifteen new members, who have been elected at recent Council meetings. They are attached to Circles as shown.

Mr M. J. Burke (North Merseyside), Mr A. & Mrs M-J. Bush (Hertfordshire), Dr A. Claveirole (Edinburgh), Mrs L. Greenwell-Bliss (Cleveland), Dr S. Gregson (York), Mr R. K. Harker (York), Mr J. Kelly (Glasgow), Miss A. P. Kennedy (York), Mr D. & Mrs C. Murphy (Ealing), Dr D. & Mrs M. Nicol (Coventry), Prof. R. B. Pulfrey (Cleveland), Mrs M. Scott (Birmingham).

## Requiescant in Pace

Your prayers are asked for the following members who have died recently:

Dr P. Achenbach (London), Mr R. M. Esson (London), Rev. J. Olliver (Surrey Hills)\*, Mr F. Partridge (Rainham), Mr C. J. Spruyt (Unattached).

\*Fr. John Olliver was the Chaplain to the Surrey Hills Circle.

**Wednesday, April 15th 2015**

## Manchester Newman Lecture

The first in a new annual lecture series

**The Politics of the Common Good:  
*What does Catholic Social Teaching  
have to contribute to electoral politics?***

Speaker: Dr Anna Rowlands

Lecturer in Contemporary Catholic Theology and  
Deputy Director of the Centre for Catholic Studies,  
Durham

***At Friends' Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS***

***No entry charge, but booking is essential. Bookings to Dr Chris Quirke,  
preferably by email ([secretary@newman.org.uk](mailto:secretary@newman.org.uk)) or alternatively phone 0161  
941 1707***

Coffee/tea available from 6.00pm, lecture at 6.30pm.





# Circle Programmes

## Aberdeen

5 February	Virtue	Contact: Margaret Smith, 01224 314566 <i>Fr Stuart Chalmers</i>
5 March	The Work of the Cardinal Winning Pro-Life Initiative	<i>Sr Andrea Fraile</i>
21 March	Day of Recollection	<i>Canon Bill Anderson</i>
16 April	SPRED – Special Religious Development	<i>Sr Agnes Nelson</i>
7 May	AGM + Cheese & Wine	

## All Circles

12 March	London Newman Lecture – Neuroscience and the Soul?	<i>Dr James Le Fanu</i>
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## Birmingham

	Contact: Winifred Flanagan, winifredflanagan@gmail.com	
7 March	GK Chesterton: Sanity and Sanctity	<i>Canon John Udris STL</i>
18 April		
16 May	A Celebration of Religious Sisters and Brothers	<i>Fr Denis Carter</i>

## Cleveland

	Contact: Judith Brown, 01642 814977, browns01@globalnet.co.uk	
15 January	New Year Lunch	
25 February	The Joy of the Gospel	<i>Kathryn Turner</i>
25 March	Who is my neighbour?	<i>Barbara Hungin</i>
15 April	Memories of a teenage refugee from Hitler's Germany	<i>Gabriele Keneghan</i>
20 May	AGM and supper	

## Coventry

	Contact: Steve Ferguson, 02476 674733. stephen.ferguson@cantab.net	
5 January	Epiphany Mass & Party	
24 January	Christian Unity Week Service	
27 January	Inculturation	<i>Sr. Ruth</i>
24 February	Evangelisation	<i>Rev. John Witcombe</i>
March	Day of Recollection	
24 March	Marriage and Family	<i>Elizabeth Davies</i>
28 April	Catholic Social Teaching	<i>Brian Davies</i>
26 May	Preaching	<i>Fr. Fabian Radcliffe</i>

## Croydon

Contact: Andy Holton, a.holton857@btinternet.com

## Ealing

Contact: Kevin Clarke, 07710 498510, kevin.clarke@keme.co.uk

## Eastbourne & Bexhill

Contact: John Carmody, 01323 726334, johncarmody44@hotmail.co.uk

## Edinburgh

Contact: Dan Cronin, 0131 667 5279, danjcronin@btinternet.com

## Glasgow

	Contact: Arthur McLay, mclay@btinternet.com	
29 January	The Promise of Receptive Ecumenism	<i>Mary Cullen</i>
26 February	TBA	
26 March	Aspects of John Henry Newman	<i>Professor David Jasper</i>
30 April	Catholic Culture and Scottish Writing	<i>Professor Gerard Carruthers</i>

## Hertfordshire

	Contact: Maggy Swift, 01582 792136, maggy.swift@btinternet.com	
12 January	Saints & Pilgrims	<i>Bishop Alan Smith</i>
8 February	The Church in Dialogue	<i>The Most Revd Kevin McDonald</i>
21 March	Quiet Day	<i>Bishop John Crowley</i>
15 April	AGM followed by talk: The City of Jerusalem	<i>Fr David Williamson</i>

12 May Newman's 'The Dream of Gerontius' *Jack Scrutton*

**Hull & East Riding** Contact: Andrew Carrick, 01482 500181

**LLanelli** Contact: M. Noot, 01554 774309, marianooot@hotmail.co.uk

**London** Contact: Patricia, 0208 504 2017

**Manchester & N. Cheshire** Contact: Chris Quirke, 0161 941 1707 dcq@mac.com

5 February Who told you that you were naked? A new look at the story of Adam and Eve in Eden *Joe Fitzpatrick*

2 March Paul to the Romans, a letter for all seasons *Fr Peter Edmonds SJ*

15 April THE MANCHESTER NEWMAN LECTURE The politics of the common good: what does Catholic Social Teaching have to contribute to electoral politics? *Dr Anna Rowlands*

11 May Experiencing 'Church' in Toxteth *Fr Nicholas Postlethwaite CP*

**North Gloucestershire** Contact: Stephanie Jamison, 01242 539810, sjamison@irlen-sw.com

3 February What sort of God is presented to us by the Old Testament? *John Huntriss*

3 March Collar and Mic – an Odyssey *Rev Richard Atkins*

7 April Writing about Cathedrals, Churches (an other things) *A Pitkin Guides*

5 May AGM The Outcome of the Synod on Family Life *Elizabeth Davies*

**North Merseyside** Contact: John Potts, john\_potts41@hotmail.com

19 February TBD *Fr. Daniel O'Leary*

11-15 March Trip to Rome

19 March The Jewish Celebration of Passover *Arnold Lewis*

16 April tbc Chemin Neuf *Rev Tim Watson*

## **SE Circles**

**North Staffordshire** Contact: Vincent Owen, 01782 619698

**Rainham** Contact: Marie Casey, bmcasey@btinternet.com

**Surrey Hills** Contact: Gerald Williams, guillaume30@btinternet.com

**Tyneside** Contact: Maureen Dove, 01912 579646, maureenanddove@btinternet.com

28 January Teilhard de Chardin and conscious evolution *Michael Porteous*

25 February Discussion on Faith in Old Age *John and Maureen Bailey*

25 March Annual General Meeting followed by a talk

**Wimbledon** Contact: Bill Russell, 0208 946 4265, william\_russell@talktalk.net

22 January Samaritans and Jews: Still Poor Neighbours? *Gerard Russell*

22 May TBC *Prof Tina Beattie*

**Worcester** Contact: Heather Down, 01905 21535, hcdownd@gmail.com

15 January Pope Francis *David McLoughlin*

19 February Annual General Meeting

5 March G K Chesterton *Father John Udris*

21 May 'Hopes and Aims' *Professor Karen Kilby*

**Wrexham** Contact: Maureen Thomas, maureenthomas@uwclub.net

**York** Contact: Judith Smeaton, 01904 704525, judith.smeaton@btinternet.com