



# THE Newman

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**Ecumenism: a New Initiative by the Newman Association**

A special review

**The Personal Ordinariate**

James Patrick

**The Holocaust and the Problem of Human Evil**

Canon Albert Radcliffe

**The Gospel According to St Paul**

Peter Edmonds SJ

Pastoral Challenges to the Family  
Meeting God in Friend and Stranger

Book Reviews  
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**Cover picture:** Canterbury and Pope

# Comment

It is now eleven months since Pope Benedict XVI shocked the Catholic Church by announcing his resignation. In March last year Pope Francis was elected to a tremendous welcome but there was also a sense of trepidation about the changes that were to come. This was a pastoral practitioner, a man of the people, to succeed a gifted but somewhat arid theologian. He was also a cardinal who had pursued a long career in the Church far away from the hothouse of the Vatican and its self-regarding civil service, the Curia: he had apparently been deliberately chosen by the Conclave last March to develop new approaches to the internal and external problems of the Roman Church.

Changes have come about quite quickly. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone has been replaced as Secretary of State at the Vatican by Archbishop Pietro Parolin and there have been important changes at the top of the controversial Vatican Bank. Pope Francis has given several interviews to journalists and, in November, he published a long Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* on the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world. In this he calls upon the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelisation marked by the joy of the Gospel: "An evangeliser must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral!"

Pope Benedict sometimes gave the impression that he had been worn down by the problems of the Church in Europe: the domination by materialism and hedonism and the challenge of relativism, which arises from a departure from the concept of absolute truth. Pope Francis is coming from a very different direction – that the world is hungry for inspiration and faith and it also searches for social justice: *Evangelii Gaudium* places great emphasis on the inclusion of the poor and the development of the Church's social teaching.

Conservative Catholics, however, are watching all this with some anxiety. Pope Francis talks of the need to promote a 'sound decentralisation'. Meanwhile the issues which have often been dominating the headlines during the past few years – family breakdown, sexual indiscipline, child abuse, homosexual lifestyles, the role of women in the Church – appear to be being sidelined, although the Pope has called a Synod on the family which will begin meeting next October. Does personal morality any longer have priority over social objectives? Is the pastoral Pope determined to fill his churches with happy sinners? "There are Christians," he says, "whose lives seem like Lent without Easter."

Popes are not stereotypes, however. We have not passed straight on from Benedict the enforcer to Francis the salvationist. The Church moves only slowly. But change is undoubtedly on the way.



Pope Francis, Time Magazine's Person of the Year 2013

Barry Riley



# The Personal Ordinariate: What Would Blessed John Henry Newman Think?

by James Patrick

It was our Holy Father Pope Emeritus Benedict who said that when one reads the writings of a saint enough, one can hear the particular saint speaking. He, I think, would include Blessed John Henry in the list of the saints, and he too knows his writings well enough to be able to recognise his cadences and hear him speak. I don't, so it's with some nervousness, and not a little humility, that I begin to address the question. But in order to address it, and I hope to answer it, remembering that context is everything, perhaps it's sensible to start with context. And you'll forgive me if I begin with mine.

My context was being born into a family that would describe itself as Anglican and being baptised on my parents' first wedding anniversary. Before you try to do the calculation, I was only 33 days old.

My grandparents were regular church-goers, but my parents weren't. My father taught at a boarding school, so he would attend chapel daily in term-time, but other than that it was Easter and Christmas, as well as hatches, matches, and dispatches.



I enjoyed singing, so joined the school choir. At 14, confirmation classes were offered, and I joined the queue, more for the party and the presents, than any real commitment to faith. But that said, having been confirmed, I went to Communion (as it was called) on Sundays and during the week at school, but seldom during the holidays. Sunday Communion was available to those who wanted it. Morning Prayer or as we thought of it, Choral Matins, was compulsory and those who wished, stayed on for Communion afterwards. The priest wore surplice and stole. It was all very middle-of-the-road. After heading off to read for my degree, I found I missed singing hymns and so set off for my local Anglican church. It was the autumn of 1985. I found one and went in.

Outside it had all the beauty of my school's gym. Inside, there were statues, and many more candles than the usual two. The priest wore vestments, and used the Roman rite from beginning to end, including the prayer for the pope. At the end, rather hesitantly, I asked someone if it was Church of England, and told yes. To misquote Star Trek, it's Church of England, Jim. But not as I knew it.

The priest, Father Paul, as we all called him, had been trained at the College of the Resurrection in Mirfield in Yorkshire founded in response to the witness of the Oxford Movement. He had been brought up in the Catholic faith in the Church in Wales, and that was what he lived and preached and taught. He said Mass every day. He used the Breviary. He made his, and heard others', confessions. He went on retreat and led us on

Pilgrimage, including taking me on my first few trips to a place called Walsingham. You might have heard of it.

He believed that the Church of England was part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. And he believed that it was part of the mission of the Church of England to be the Catholic witness in this country. It was in that ugly church that he taught the beauty of the Catholic faith. And he also fanned the flame of vocation.



*Monsignor Keith Newton*  
didn't come with them.

After studies had finished, I moved to Bristol, and settled in another Anglo-Catholic church. By now, it was the early 1990s. Within a couple of years we had a new vicar, called Keith Newton. The Church of England was debating women priests. The necessary two-thirds majority in each house of Synod had seemed impossible to attain but it was achieved. As you know, a number of Anglicans then left the Church of England: some became Catholics, others Orthodox. And some of those couldn't understand why more

What's my excuse? The best answer is that God calls you where you are. I was 25, just starting a career in a new city, unsettled by what had happened, but promised a future by those in Synod. And the time was not right. Having been taught that the Church of England was the Catholic presence in England, part of the one Holy Catholic Church, I glibly used to say: if one had the full "at home" service of the AA, it wasn't necessary to join the RAC. And it felt important in those days to stay and fight, keeping the Catholic tradition of the Church of England alive.

So it's here that I would like to diverge for a while. Earlier we thought about the inheritance of the Oxford Movement. After the post-Reformation national seesaw between Anglicanism and Catholicism which came to an end with the deposing of James II, from 1662, you will all know that the Church of England settled into its Protestant expression. And so it remained until the early 1830s, which was of course a time of great change, including the Reform Act, the Slavery Abolition Act and the Factory Acts (which banned, or at least restricted, child labour). It was against that background of change that the Oxford Movement was formed.

In 1833 the Whig government had sought to interfere with the rights of the Church of Ireland by reducing the number of Bishoprics and changing the terms of the leasing of church land. It was against this that John Keble preached his assize sermon in St Mary's Church in Oxford, where Newman was the Vicar, identifying a liberalism in society and its dealings with the church which in turn encouraged others to look again at the origins of the church. You all know that their study culminated in a series of Tracts for the Times newspaper, the most important of which arguably was Tract XC, written by Newman, which looked at the 39 articles of religion still to be found in the Book of Common Prayer and still a byword of orthodoxy in the Anglican faith, and claimed that they were compatible with the doctrines of the Catholic Church as defined by the

Council of Trent.

Religion, which had hitherto been practised rather as it had been practised at my school, was capable of being practised first in a way which was described as High Church, and then later described as Catholic. A liturgical movement emerged which made the worship of the Church of England more Eucharistic, and which saw the emergence of what had previously been thought of as popish practices – for example, the use of candles on the altar, the mingling of the chalice and the wearing of vestments. The way was not always easy.

Father Arthur Tooth, who was vicar of St James Hatcham in South East London, was sent to prison in 1877 for contempt of court after failing to stop using incense, vestments, and altar candles, things that, as an Anglican priest 130 years later, I did Sunday by Sunday. Those early members of the Oxford Movement saw the Church of England as a branch of the Catholic Church, initially Roman, then Roman and Orthodox, and finally Roman, Orthodox and Anglican. One hundred and fifty years later, in that ugly building in Birmingham, Father Paul still followed that principle.

But Newman didn't; or at least, he came not to. Newman had started his Christian journey as a Calvinist before being ordained as an Anglican in 1824. He was a friend of Pusey and an associate of Keble and a colleague of Froude. He heard Keble preach his assize sermon in 1833, and as has been said, Keble inspired the Oxford Movement, Froude gave it the impetus, and Newman took up the work.

Tract XC was the last to be published. It attracted very significant criticism from church and university authorities and so Newman withdrew to Littlemore on the edge of Oxford, and formed around him a community. He resigned his living in 1843 and was received into the Catholic Church by Blessed Dominic Barberi in 1845. He lost friends. His family took it badly. It moves me to know that the first Catholic church in which he worshipped was Our Lady of the Assumption in Warwick Street, the church in which I now have the privilege to serve.

It was his personal journey of faith that brought Newman into communion with the Holy See. What he did thereafter we know well. We know of the Oratories, his work amongst the poor and his cardinalature. It's easy to forget what his reception into the Catholic Church did for the Catholic Church in England together with that of Henry Manning who had been Archdeacon of Chichester. It's a cheap joke, but none the worse for it, to describe an Anglican Archdeacon, who in many ways is the equivalent of a Vicar General, as the crook at the head of the bishop's staff. Their reception secured prestige and respectability for the Catholic Church at a time when anti-Catholic feeling was almost a creed or a badge of Victorian Society.

So if the Oxford Movement saw branches, it too branched. Newman went one way to Roman Catholicism, and the Oxford Movement went the other by remaining. Father Tooth went to prison, but over time a rather different Church of England appeared. Post second-world war, the Parish Communion Movement saw the main focus of worship in the Church of England as the Eucharist. The use of candles was almost universal. Vestments were commonplace, and many churches saw the sacrament reserved, at least in an aumbry. Externally there were many similarities in the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England. That was particularly so when, 400 years after the Reformation, the Catholic Church caught up with the idea of

people participating in the Mass in the vernacular. I mentioned earlier that God calls you where you are. I was born in 1967, so there I am fixed very firmly as a child of the Second Vatican Council.

And so, after our canter around the Oxford Movement, we come back to 1992 and all that. Many left. You know better than I do, I'm sure, the people who have made an impression in this diocese since then, and I think of Bishop Alan, and Canon Tuckwell, and Fr Colvin and Fr Fairhead and the others. God called them where they were, and they were ordained as priests, and others joined them, all with the approval of the Holy See, and the support and care of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. But those who remained were promised an honoured place in the Church of England, and felt that there was something to this branch theory, and that there was something that was worth fighting for. And we battled, and it seemed like we fought some and we lost some. But of course there is more to Anglicanism than the Church of England. There are thought to be over 100 million Anglicans worldwide, and each province is autonomous. It is why in some provinces of the church there are women bishops, priests and deacons, in others those in holy orders are only men, and in still others there are all points in between.

I used to say that, on a good day, Anglicanism gave us a glimpse of what heaven would be like: a variation from the lowest of the low evangelicals on the one extreme to the highest of the high at the other. But when it comes to matters of doctrine, faith, and order, I have come to believe that it puts Anglicanism on the path of self-destruction. It seeks to square a circle. It seeks to offer an inclusiveness which simply is impossible. We all know that if we want to see what's going to happen here, all we need do is look at what has happened across the pond. That's been pretty much true, I think, postwar, and probably before.

With no Anglican equivalent of the Magisterium, we too looked to America to see what was to come over here. It's important to remember that this was not about one issue. It was about a liberalism which strikes at the heart of what we believe. It's about chipping away at or changing or even denying the faith as handed down by the Apostles. It's about a weakening in moral teaching and theology. It's about a relativism that places the individual at the heart of things: if it's right for me, then it must be right. Ultimately how can a Church survive if one part of it believes that Christ is truly present in the sacrament, whilst another part believes and is permitted to believe that the bread and wine remain bread and wine, and all that is happening is a memorial, so the bread can be put out for the birds, and the wine poured back into the bottle?

All the while, in this important and significant period, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith was looking too at what was happening within Anglicanism, especially its then Prefect, one Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. He had an appreciation of Anglicanism. When I first wrote that sentence, I said, he had an understanding of Anglicanism. I'm not sure that's correct, which is why it was changed to appreciation. He had an appreciation of it from the writings of his friend Newman.

He had an appreciation of it, too, from his dealings with converting Anglicans in the 1990s. It was said in his time at the CDF that if as a Catholic Anglican you rang the doorbell and asked to see him, without an appointment, there was a chance that he would see you, because he was fascinated that there were people living the Catholic

faith, praying and using the Catholic liturgies, and yet who were not in communion with the Holy See.

From 1992, those storm clouds from the west continued to roll in over the Atlantic. What was said in 1993 and 1994 to be an honoured place was chipped away at. And so people did start knocking at the door of the Vatican. But they came with an important message. Historically the journey into the Catholic Church is a solitary one. You might have been baptised as an infant. Your family and friends might have been gathered around you. But one by one you were received. As an adult, or as a convert, the process was the same. When I was an Anglican priest, one of my predecessors was a very fine man who had been an Anglican priest for 50 years, and who knew the Catholic faith like the back of his hand. He had run large city centre parishes, and brought people into the Catholic faith. He ended his life as a Canon of Clifton Cathedral. But when he converted in his late 70s, he was required to undertake RCIA. Encouraged in part by that sort of experience, Anglicans continued to approach the Catholic Church. Whilst recognising that reception must inevitably be a matter for the individual, the Church and God, was there another way? Was it possible for groups of Anglicans to be led into communion? I mentioned earlier my vicar in Bristol, Keith Newton. By now he had become one of the flying bishops, who was acting for traditionalists on the eastern side of the province of Canterbury. Reflecting on St Augustine's writing on the shepherds, he saw the dilemma that he faced. Many were calling for him to lead them in their fight to stay within the Church of England. But he recognised that there is another role for the shepherd. If the wolf is in the sheep pen, then the shepherd needs to lead his flock to safety.

Groups knocked on the door of the Vatican, and by now there was a new caretaker. The German Shepherd had moved from one side of the Piazza to the other, he who appreciated but could not understand Anglicanism. And so, to our great surprise, *Anglicanorum Coetibus* was published in October 2010. Three bishops led members of their flocks into full communion with the Holy See. Within 11 days of being received, they had been ordained priests. There's a lovely story told by the organist for their priesting in Westminster Cathedral. He knew that Anglicans like to sing. He set the stops at the same level as he does for Midnight Mass, but he said that wasn't enough, because he could still hear them singing. There's a point to that story that I will come back to. And then others of us followed.

I was received in Holy Week in 2011, and ordained deacon less than three weeks later. Because I'm a judge, and hold public office, canon law does not permit me to be ordained to the priesthood. It's for that reason that I am a permanent deacon. But when I retire I will cease to hold public office, and so will no longer have my impediment, and so I hope, the Ordinary permitting, that I might be priested in my late 60s. By my reckoning this makes me the only transitional permanent deacon in the whole of the Catholic Church.

In doing what he did, Pope Benedict recognised that there is something distinctive about the Church of England, being a separated daughter of the Catholic Church. He also recognised that there were gifts which we had, which we could bring with us, which was referred to as patrimony. Reception, if you like, is not rebranding. We have been fully absorbed, but are permitted to remain distinctive. If I'm honest, I've had



some difficulty with the idea of patrimony because it's not an idea that I'm especially familiar with. But it all became a bit clearer the week before last when I visited Madrid. Queuing to buy tickets to enter the Royal Palace I saw that it was administered by Patrimoni Nacional, the equivalent of the National Trust. And in that title came a better understanding of what it was that Pope Benedict saw in us, with our history and our tradition and our heritage. Now I'm treading on thin ice here, which is risky when you're my size. Please remember that I've entered into full communion with the Catholic Church because I think it is right, so what I'm about to say is not to be taken critically, or to be seen as biting the breast that has given me new life.

But there are aspects of our Anglican tradition which could be a gift to the Catholic Church. Music is one of them. That's not to say that there isn't fine music in the Catholic Church: there is. But it's been a shock to me, and I mean a shock, about how little is sung, and how banal some of it is. I learnt the faith through hymns, some of them ancient hymns of the early church, some of them by Methodists, some by other nonconformists, and many by Anglican divines. Holy week isn't the same for me without being brought close to tears by the words of a former dean of Bristol Cathedral in his hymn *My song is love unknown*. And can it be that I should gain an interest in my saviour's blood? Thou within the veil hast entered, robed in flesh our great high priest. Sing we then of Blessed Mary.

There is also the Anglican tradition in the confessional. When I made my first confession in the Catholic Church, I was amazed how I was pushed along, and hurried. Not only amazed, but also saddened. It was a means of such grace, to be encouraged and assisted with advice. It took a bit longer, but it helped one to reflect on where one was, and where one ought to be. For married men and women to meet in the confessional a married priest can often also be a means of grace, and a very particular blessing. As a friend of mine said, it feels as though the priest would hardly notice if you'd said you'd killed your granny. There are also the works of the great Anglican writers, and poets: George Herbert, John Donne, the Oxford Movement Anglicans and the Oxford Movement Catholics. If you like, it's the recognition that Anglican and Catholic writings maybe on different shelves, but they are in the same shop.

And of course there is also the form of the liturgy, as the Ordinariate Use incorporates much of the language of the Book of Common Prayer, whilst at the same time making it Catholic; this liturgy is being authorised and it will introduce into Catholic life something resembling the Extraordinary Form, but in the English Language.

And so we return to the original question: what would Blessed John Henry think? It's tempting to say "I've no idea" and sit down. But I do have an idea. When I was an Anglican I worked to try to persuade the Church of England to give traditionalists their own diocese to enable them to stay, and grow. I couldn't believe it when the Church of England said such an idea wasn't possible, and yet Pope Benedict said that it was. I think Newman will be pretty surprised at the generosity of the welcome of the Catholic Church 160 years later. I think he would be pretty surprised – if not astonished – to find that the same Pope was formed by his own writings. I think he would be equally surprised to discover that he had been beatified. He might be relieved that what he foresaw for the Church of England was coming true.

But ultimately he would be glad that the kindly light still leads people on into full

communion with the Holy See. He would be glad that labourers have still arrived eventually in the vineyard. But most of all, I suspect he would be glad that hearts are no longer speaking to other hearts, but instead are beating as one.

*His Honour Judge James Patrick is also a deacon in the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham*

## Concerning Circles

### **New Members**

Recruitment has been good recently and as a result we can welcome the following new members who have been elected at recent Council meetings. They are attached to Circles as shown:

Mrs H. Biggins (Glasgow), Mrs A. Brydone (Edinburgh), Miss S. Cousins (Eastbourne & Bexhill), Mr D. Cronin (Eastbourne & Bexhill), Mrs M. Cullen (Glasgow), Miss S. S. Gibson (Edinburgh), Mr D. Giles (North Merseyside), Ms H. Hania (Glasgow), Mr J. W. Horkan (Cleveland), Mrs M. F. May (Wimbledon), Mr K. McKenzie (Manchester & N. Ches.), Mr J. M. Scott (Cleveland), Mr J. E. Stoer (Glasgow), Mr D. A. Thomas (Unattached), Mr J. V. Thornton (North Merseyside), Dr M. T. R. B. Turnbull (Edinburgh), Mrs C. Wiggins (Wimbledon).

### **Requiescant in Pace**

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

Mr P. J. Cole (London), Mrs C. E. Galligan (Manchester & N. Ches.)  
Dr A. D. Grady (Hertfordshire), Mr J. D. Green (Ealing),  
Fr. Giles Hibbert OP. (Manchester & N. Ches.) Dr M. M. Lawlor (London),  
Mrs J. S. Rees (Unattached), Dr J. N. O'Neill (Cleveland).

Christine Galligan and Fr. Giles Hibbert were longstanding members of the Manchester & N. Cheshire Circle. Christine Galligan was the wife of John Galligan, a previous Association President, and Fr. Giles was for many years a greatly-valued Circle Chaplain.

### **A note by Michael Vadon on Dr Monica Lawlor RIP**

Monica died peacefully on 17th September 2013. From 1949 she taught at Bedford College until it merged with Royal Holloway in 1985. Thereafter she both taught and worked as a clinical psychologist. She twice chaired the British Psychological Society Psychotherapy Section. Monica never married but had seven godchildren whom she cherished and who cherished her. A devout Catholic, in the 1960s she was chair of the London Newman Circle which then had 800 members.

### **Subscriptions**

The Membership Registrar, Bill White, is eager to save time, postage costs and stationery by encouraging an increase in the number of members who pay their subscriptions by Direct Debit. Any member paying by cheque who would like to change to payment by Direct Debit is invited to request the form to arrange this when they send in a cheque this year. Bill White, [membership@newman.org.uk](mailto:membership@newman.org.uk)

# A short history of Catholic ecumenism

Last summer the Newman Association endowed a one-year research fellowship in Ecumenical Theology and Ecclesiology at Durham University's Department of Theology and Religion. This was a practical demonstration of the Newman Council's support for what has become known as Receptive Ecumenism, a movement which has for some years been promoted by Professor Paul Murray and others at Durham and elsewhere. There is much token support for church unity amongst Christians, but actual progress has been very slow. Churches are unreceptive and there is a search for a new way forward.

In the period when St Paul was marshalling the scattered groups of early Christians he wrote to the Ephesians: "Do all you can to preserve the unity of the spirit by the peace that binds you together. There is one body, one spirit, just as you were all called into the one and same hope when you were called. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

The history of Christianity over the subsequent 2,000 years has, however, been characterised by divisions. The two most important were the schism between the eastern and western churches in 1054 and the splintering of the Roman Catholic church in Europe into many factions during the 16th century and thereafter.

When people have strong faiths they do not easily compromise. Religious conviction is not a matter for negotiation. After the Reformation Christian sects often defended themselves through persecution and violence. People with slightly different beliefs could be described as dangerous "heretics" and burnt at the stake, especially when religion became entangled with nationalism and politics, as it often did. Although hostility moderated over time the Roman Catholic Church continued to be strongly antagonistic to Protestant churches until the early part of the 20th century.

Many Newman Association members are old enough to recall the days when even to enter a non-Catholic church was said to risk sin. In the 1917 Code of Canon Law canon 1258 said: "It is unlawful for the faithful to assist in any active manner, or to take part in the sacred services of non-Catholics". Even at marriages and funerals passive presence would only be tolerated "for a grave reason".

It was left entirely to Protestants to set up the World Council of Churches in 1948. Even in Rome, however, attitudes were shifting. The Second Vatican Council formalised a profound change of approach. Indeed, Pope John XXIII initially linked the calling of the Council specifically with a search for Christian unity. Then in 1964 his successor Pope Paul VI promulgated the Council's decree on ecumenism called *Unitatis Redintegratio*.

The Council called on all the Catholic faithful to take an active part in the work of ecumenism. There could, the Decree said, be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart. But how could the guardians of the "One True Faith" possibly enter into receptive dialogues with other religions? Well, it appeared that the Roman Church could at least admit to having made small mistakes. According to the Decree: "Thus if, in various times and circumstances, there have been deficiencies in moral conduct or in Church discipline, or even in the way that Church teaching has been formulated – to be carefully distinguished from the deposit of faith itself – these can and should be set right at the opportune moment."

In 1966 the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity was created as a permanent dicastery of the Holy See and in 1988 this was upgraded by Pope John Paul II into a

Pontifical Council. In 2001 Cardinal Walter Kasper was appointed President of the Council, a post he held until 2010 when he was succeeded by Cardinal Kurt Koch.



In 2004 a 40th anniversary conference on *Unitate Redintegratio* was held and an update on the document was delivered by Cardinal Kasper. He said there had been dangers, which the Council had been aware of, in trying to incorporate the ecumenical movement within the Roman Church: it could bring tensions between traditionalist and progressive groups. The Catholic principles of ecumenism, he said, did not throw overboard anything which had been valued and cherished by the Church in its previous history. But the tradition was a living tradition. "The ecumenical movement does not annul tradition, rather it grants a new and more profound insight into what has been handed down once and for all."

Cardinal Walter Kasper

In the same talk he commented on the lengthy controversy raised over the Vatican Council's puzzling use of the phrase '*subsists in*' in describing the position of the Roman Catholic Church in relation to the Church of Christ. Previously the word '*est*' had been used in describing an identity of the Church of Christ Jesus and the Roman Church; they were one and the same, as Pope Pius XII had emphasised in *Humani Generis* in 1950. Did the phrase "subsists in" used in the document *Lumen Gentium* imply that other churches could claim validity? No, said Cardinal Kasper, but the Catholic Church now saw itself "in the context of dialogue with the other churches and ecclesiastical communities".

Today the Council is engaged in intermittent dialogue with a dozen or so Orthodox and Protestant Churches and Communions and with some Pentecostal groups. It also, somewhat anomalously, has responsibility for religious relations with the Jews; relations with the Muslims, however, are the responsibility of the separate Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

Despite all the talking real progress has been painfully slow. Diversity is often a much stronger practical theme in religion than unity. In some parts of the world, such as Africa and Latin America, Pentecostals pose much more of a challenge to the Roman Catholic Church in attracting members than do the often declining Protestant sects such as Anglicanism and Methodism. The Pentecostals offer exciting and varied musical services and personal freedoms in contrast with Catholicism's rigid liturgies and obsession with sin. Rome has been in discussions with various Pentecostal groups since 1972 but what has been achieved?

The latest report on these discussions, in 2006, described frankly the Pentecostals' reluctance. "Pentecostals are cautious in regard to ecumenism. Although they recognise the work of the Spirit in other Christian traditions, and enter into fellowship with them, they are hesitant to embrace these movements wholeheartedly for fear of losing their own ecclesial identity or compromising their traditional positions". That must sum up the position of many, if not all, faiths.

Ecumenical discussions focus partly on doctrinal issues. The schism of 1054 related

partly to differences between Rome and Constantinople on the nature of the Trinity, in particular of the Holy Spirit. Today the Western and Eastern Orthodox Churches remain as far apart as ever on such dogmas. But there are also practical and disciplinary issues. Rome no longer insists on the exclusive use of Latin in services, and it is even willing to give ground in some circumstances on the marriage of priests. It is not unknown for Catholic parishes in the UK to hold their services regularly in Anglican churches. The Vatican will not, however, even discuss the possibility of women priests. Rapid changes in the Anglican Communion, including acceptance of homosexuals, have threatened relations not only with Rome but with other Protestant churches.

The 1964 Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio* had made a particular mention of the Anglican Communion as occupying “a special place”. But by 2009 Pope Benedict XVI had become tired of endless talks with the Anglicans, with whom doctrinal differences were small but disciplinary differences were wide and growing rapidly wider. Instead, through the Apostolic Constitution *Coetibus Anglicanorum*, he offered individual Anglicans, including married priests, their own corner within the Roman Church called the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham; the Book of Common Prayer would be largely accepted but there would definitely be no women priests, let alone bishops.

Rome would accept other kinds of Christians, it seemed, only if they could be securely ringfenced. Contamination of the Magisterium of Rome had to be avoided. Ecumenism in practice for Rome was therefore much more of a monologue than a dialogue. But some Catholic activists in North-East England had been searching for a more positive approach. They were associated with organisations including the Department of Theology and Religion at Durham University (also the home of the Centre for Catholic Studies) and Ushaw College. In January 2006 they held an international research colloquium on the theme Catholic Learning and Receptive Ecumenism. It was also the occasion for the award of an honorary doctorate of divinity to Cardinal Kasper.

The project focused on the fundamental need for two-way thinking. The point of ecumenism was not to ask “what do the other traditions first need to learn from us?” but rather “what do we need to learn from *them*?” That was why the theme of Catholic learning was heavily emphasised. A programme of development was carried out, mainly in North East England. In 2009 Cardinal Kasper expressed a cautious welcome: receptive ecumenism, he said, offered “a new way forward on our ecumenical path”.

In October 2013 Paul Murray, Professor of Systematic Theology at Durham University and Director of Durham’s Centre for Catholic Studies, gave a talk to the York Circle of the Newman Association. The challenge, he said, was to overcome an apparent impasse. “As pioneered through a series of projects operating out of Durham University’s Department of Theology and Religion in recent years,” he went on, “Receptive Ecumenism proceeds by bringing to the fore the dispositions of self-critical hospitality, humble learning and ongoing conversion that have always been quietly essential to good ecumenical work.” These principles should be turned into the explicit required strategy and core task of contemporary ecumenism.

Progress was indeed possible “but only if a fundamental, counter-instinctual move is made away from traditions wishing that others could be more like themselves to instead each asking what they can and must learn, with dynamic integrity, from their respective others”.

Professor Murray emphasised that “Life and Works” ecumenism – doing things



together – whilst absolutely vital could never be enough. We had to return to our core calling and ask what fresh performances of this were appropriate to the specific challenges and opportunities of our times. Testing by the ‘head’ – by critical theological scrutiny – must be supplemented by an affair of the ‘heart’ as a matter of being attracted by another tradition.

**Barry Riley**

## The Newman Association Fellowship at Durham

You will have heard and read by now that Council decided to make a substantial contribution to a Newman Association Fellowship in Receptive Ecumenism (RE), earlier in the year. At a recent Council meeting, as the prime mover in this award, I was asked to offer the Association at large some of the background detail as to how this will, I hope, benefit the Association, both in the near and the remote future.

Barry Riley has written up some of the ideas contained in the notion of Receptive Ecumenism and I do not intend to duplicate them here. I would, however, like to emphasise that this method of ecumenical engagement appears to be one of the most positive ways forward at a time when the ecumenical movement at large seems to have stalled somewhat on the theological level owing to various practical decisions made in some of the Churches with regard to sacramental discipline. So I think it is good for the Association to be on hand and engaged in promoting this particular form of ecumenism.

Moving on to more specific gains for the Association, it has been decided to offer an extra one-off talk on the present state of RE by Josh Furnal, who was awarded this Fellowship. It would obviously be impossible for him to go round all the Circles individually, so it is suggested that Circles within reasonable distances from each other should come together to mutually-agreed venues. If possible, the various dates and venues for these talks might be co-ordinated, at least in some way, so that Josh could go on a mini-tour – for example, of the Southern Circles. The Circles would jointly cover the travel expenses and Newman members could offer Josh overnight hospitality. His fee would be covered within the award. In this way, hopefully, all

Circles of the Association would be given the opportunity of being drawn into this movement without there being too much of a financial burden.

Josh’s talks would take place in the first half of the year before a conference on RE to take place in Fairfield University, Connecticut, in June. We are in the process of planning our own conference in Manchester in the early part of September entitled ‘The Fruits of Fairfield’. Josh will be the keynote speaker at that conference and will contribute all the most up-to-date information. It is intended that a document should be prepared after the Fairfield conference to be presented to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in Rome. Paul Murray, Director of the Centre for Catholic Studies in Durham (CCS), which is co-sponsor of the Fairfield Conference, is also a



*Professor Paul Murray*

member of ARCIC III. This will mean that, through the Fellowship, the Association is not only drawn decisively into the wider academic world in the UK via its close association with the CCS, but also in the Catholic world.

Josh has to return to the USA at the end of September, but the connections built up through this Fellowship between the Centre for Catholic Studies (CCS) in Durham and the Association will continue and, hopefully, bear more fruit in the longer term. The CCS is working on a handbook on RE for the United Reform Churches in the Durham area and there is the possibility of using the Association's network throughout the UK to promote such a handbook much further afield.

I have also spoken to the Durham University Catholic Chaplain about making some moves towards bringing the Association into the mind of Catholic students with the possibility of recruiting that particular group of Catholics, as was done by the Association in the past. Josh and the CCS would be an ideal point to begin investigating such a possibility. Finally, on a wider and perhaps deeper level, as Paul Murray has mentioned to me, our support for the CCS through this Fellowship had created a Newman Association shape with the CCS. How we fill and develop this space will be one of our responsibilities for the future.

Such is the present state of the Fellowship and its relationship to the Association, and its future prospects. What is clear to me, as I informed Council, is that we, as an Association, are the only people who can make all this work:

- I can promote and answer queries
- Christopher Quirke and the Manchester Circle, in conjunction with the CCS, will be doing the main organisation of the September Conference
- but Josh's Circles 'tour' can only work if the Circles themselves support it.

What the Association has is an opportunity to join at a fundamental level in an aspect of the ecumenical movement which is growing in importance. If we take up this opportunity and challenge over the coming months, we will be showing that we are truly forward-looking in our thinking and this will bear much fruit, I am sure, in the years ahead.

**Brian Hamill**, *Vice-President of the Newman Association*

## Joshua Furnal

Dr Joshua Furnal is a member of the Department of Theology and Religion at Durham University and was recently appointed as the Newman Association Research Fellow in Ecumenical Theology.

An American, Dr Furnal has taught at Durham in the areas of philosophy of religion, Christian theology and religion in films. A current project is the preparation of a monograph on the influence of Søren Kierkegaard upon Catholic theologians before the Second Vatican Council.

Other research interests have included 20th Century Catholic theology, ecumenism and Muslim-Christian dialogue. In 2012 he published an academic paper On the Hermeneutics of Religious Film Criticism. He is an Italian speaker and translates Italian theological papers.



*Joshua Furnal*

# Using Legacies and other Donations to Develop the Association



*Anthony Baker*

The Newman Association is blessed in having generous members who make donations in their lifetimes or provide legacies in their wills. These have great value in providing funds to develop the Association and increase its profile in the community. Such gifts are particularly helpful, because in recent years the Association has made an “operating loss” in each financial year (e.g. in 2012-13 a loss of £2,550 before counting in legacies, and in 2011-12 a loss of £5,610) - a situation that is unlikely to change until bank interest rates increase and we earn much greater amounts from our deposit accounts.

Over the last couple of years we have received the following donations and legacies:

- Legacies of £61,802 from the estate of the late Mrs Mary Brogan, £4,552 from the estate of the late Miss Muriel Houldin and £500 from the estate of the late Miss Moyra Archibald
- Donations of £3,000 from the Fattorini Trust in memory of the late Mr Thomas Fattorini and £1,000 from Miss Mary Fitzpatrick, an early member of the Association

There is also a prospect of a further legacy from the estate of the late Dr Alison Grady.

There has been vigorous debate at Council, essentially about how to strike a balance between providing more money to ease the running of Circles and spending on significant central projects which could be expected to bring strategic benefit to the Association. In general the funds provided are “unrestricted”, though the Grady bequest is understood to be linked with the Hertfordshire Circle. In deciding what to do Council has sought to understand the enthusiasms of the providers of the funds, without being constrained in particular directions. Council also recognises that the money can be spent only once, and is not in a rush to empty the treasury – a five-year perspective has been suggested.

## **Projects so far**

So far Council has agreed several projects, external and internal to the Association:

- £19,000 in the year 2013-14 to (part-) fund a Newman Fellow in Receptive Ecumenism at the Centre for Catholic Studies, University of Durham.
- £5,000 for bursaries for mature students on the Theology and Ministry course at the Margaret Beaufort Institute, University of Cambridge.
- £3,000 ( the Fattorini donation) for enhancement of The Newman journal and around £1,000 for immediate changes to the website
- Smaller amounts for the transfer of the Association's archives to Durham (Ushaw) and for specific projects involving the Croydon, Glasgow and Edinburgh Circles

## **What next?**

There are further ideas for an annual Northern Newman lecture (perhaps called the Brogan lecture) with parallels to the very successful series of London Newman lectures. We will almost certainly need to provide some funds to catalogue our

Archives and make them readily accessible. And of course we will continue the policy of underwriting Newman Conferences, in keeping with the use of the funds from the former Newman Centre Trust.

### **Your thoughts please**

Council welcomes members' thoughts, both on the nature of projects which would really develop the Association and on principles to be applied in assessing such projects. These can be communicated via the Secretary of the Association ([secretary@newman.org.uk](mailto:secretary@newman.org.uk)). Many of the possibilities to develop the Association will come locally as Circles seize opportunities, perhaps for publicity, perhaps in joint activities, for the promotion of an educated Christian (especially Catholic Christian) perspective in society. The ways in which this may be done will vary with Circle locations, styles and opportunities. But, as a reminder to Circle officers, please do be aware that there are Association funds available to help you seize these initiatives, and Council will seek not to be too bureaucratic in the processes for sending in and evaluating such projects.

Also, as a message to all members, further legacies and other gifts are always welcome!

**Anthony Baker**, *President*

## London Newman Lecture 2014



### **Sacraments: doing the joined-up living?**

**Dr Gemma Simmonds CJ,**

Thursday, March 6th, 6.30 for 7PM

Dr Simmonds is a senior lecturer in pastoral theology at Heythrop College, London. She will argue that on their own the Sacraments (signposts to the Kingdom) hang in mid-air whereas they should be seen as rooted in our everyday lives. Heythrop College, Kensington Square, London W8 5HN

*Tickets £7 (to include a glass of wine) available from:*

*Chris Quirke, 29 Spring Road, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 2UQ*

*Tel. 0161 941 1707, email [secretary@newman.org.uk](mailto:secretary@newman.org.uk)*

Cheques should be made payable to The Newman Association. Please include a stamped, addressed envelope, and you may also like to give a telephone number or email address in case of any last-minute change.

**Errata** Due to errors in audio-based transcription there were several misspellings of names in the article on Vatican II by Michael Walsh in the September issue. These were not the responsibility of the author.

Cardinal Bea was misspelled as Bayer and Cardinal Liénart as Lie'nart. Willem Visser t'Hooft, first Secretary General of the World Council of Churches, was incorrectly described as Bishop Hooft, and Louis Bouyer appeared as Buoyer. Joe Komonchak was wrongly rendered as Komenchak. The anthropologist referred to in the first footnote should have appeared as Clifford Geertz.

# The Holocaust and the Problem of Human Evil

Canon Albert Radcliffe

**The popular view that some people are monsters by nature and act out of a monstrous character and psychology does not stand up to the evidence. It is as wrong as it is comforting.**

Nothing brings the problem of human evil, that is, *'the deliberate and large-scale harming of human beings'*, before our minds in so devastating a way as the Shoah or Holocaust: those murderous events that Laurence Rees, the historian of World War II, called *'the lowest act in all history'*. Between 1941 and 1945 six million of Europe's eleven million Jews were systematically rounded up by the Nazis, robbed, herded like cattle, appallingly mistreated and then put to death by shooting, gassing and neglect or worn down by relentless brutalisation. Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, has the names of over 4 million victims.

We remember them because as Elie Wiesel (b. 1928), the Nobel prizewinning holocaust survivor, reminded us: *"To forget is to kill twice"*.

The Greek word *Holocaust* refers to the 'whole burned offering' of the temple sacrifice but, in Israel, it is no longer thought appropriate. There, the Hebrew word *Shoah*, *'catastrophe'* or *'calamity'*, is preferred. To avoid confusion both will be used in this paper. History has seen many genocides but none as calculated, thorough and cynical as the Shoah. Human beings have often inflicted massive, hate-inspired suffering upon entire communities but this targeting of Europe's Jewish communities was different. It was something designed to be total and was as organised as a modern industry. However, all that this continent-wide business (it was partly run as a profit-making business) produced was suffering and death – death subsidised by mountains of cast-off clothing, hair, gold teeth and confiscated property.

I will explain the Holocaust as an *'organised convergence of ordinary human weaknesses, vices and capacities for wrongdoing, across a number of wickedly contrived and extreme political and social situations'*. How could the Shoah have happened? How could ordinary people be guilty of such atrocities? How were people like you and I turned into monsters who created and operated the extermination or death camps?

Before attempting an answer let us remind ourselves of what sheer heartlessness and calculated suffering these places represented. *Concentration camps* were places in which people were collected together for convenience and, if death occurred, it was chiefly through brutal mistreatment. *Extermination or death camps*, on the other hand, were created solely with the purpose of killing all prisoners through gassing or slave labour. Camps with this purpose had never existed before in the history of the world. They define the Shoah as a unique evil. There were six such camps dedicated to organised mass murder: Auschwitz-Birkenau with 1.1 million victims; Belzec with 500,000; Chelmo with 150,000; Majdanek, with 800,000; Sobibor with 150,000; and Treblinka with 850,000.

The job of running these camps was entrusted to Himmler's elite *Schutzstaffel*, the SS, who contrived a trouble-free passage, from arrival to death, of the Jewish men, women and children who passed through their hands. When the victims arrived in obscenely overloaded trains, riots and stampedes were prevented by the simple expedient of





*The gates of Auschwitz*

falsely reassuring them that the worst was over and that from then on their lives would get better. As the victims stepped from the train it was as if life was normal again. Survivors report seeing flowers on the platform and blossoms on fruit trees, while slogans like *Arbeit Macht Free (Work Makes Free)* at Auschwitz hinted at nothing worse than compulsory hard labour. But, after arrival, things moved quickly, giving the victims no time to think. SS doctors divided them into two groups: those fit

enough to be worked to death and those who were to be sent unsuspectingly to the gas chambers.

These were told that for health reasons they were going to the camp showers and should remember carefully where they had left their clothes. In order not to panic them, SS personnel were polite and helpful as their victims entered the supposed shower room. The doors were locked, the gassing and the screaming began, and within half an hour their bodies were ready for cremation. Józef Paczyński, a Jewish Polish survivor, said of Auschwitz: *"You become indifferent. A human being can get used to anything"*. It is an important insight. Then the next trainload was on its way.

The death camps have become the ultimate face of human evil. To understand them we begin with the realisation that complex evils do not happen all at once. They are incremental, evolving from modest beginnings as moral restraints are progressively abandoned. The roots of the Holocaust must be traced to Germany's loss of the First World War and specifically to the discharge from the army of the previously homeless, failed watercolour artist Adolf Hitler (1889-1945). For Hitler, and the majority of soldiers, Germany did not lose the war fairly; its army, the best fighting machine in the world, had been betrayed, stabbed in the back from within by a worldwide conspiracy of Jewish-controlled capitalist financiers and Communist revolutionaries hellbent on the destruction of Germany.

In his book, *Believe and Destroy, Intellectuals in the SS War Machine*, Christian Ingrao, a Belgian historian working in France, shows how these erroneous and widespread ideas came together to comfort and mislead even the most educated Germans. Among these beliefs were the pseudo-sciences of racial theory and racial superiority which made history a Darwinian struggle between the strong and the weak, a war between races, in which the Aryan super-race would triumph over the inferior Jews and Slavs who surrounded Germany and threatened it with annihilation.

The seeds of evil grow slowly, but to grow at all they need power. The greater the evil the more power it needs, especially psychological, spiritual and political power – which Hitler eventually acquired. When Germany surrendered in 1918 Hitler was in hospital recovering from the effects of mustard gas. On his release he moved to Munich and found himself in a chaotic Germany torn between the politics of left and right. He joined a small, extreme right wing, Workers Party which, in 1920, changed its

name to the *National Socialist German Workers Party*, Nazi, for short. The programme of this small, anti-Jewish, anti-communist, marginal political group appealed to him. It called for the revision of the unjust Treaty of Versailles, the return of the territories lost to France and Poland, and the unification of all ethnic Germans, whether in Austria, the Sudetenland, Poland or the USSR into a single Reich in which all Jews would be excluded from citizenship.

As a new member Hitler discovered a gift for oratory and an ability to inspire personal loyalty. Then, on November 8th 1933, he overplayed his hand, took part in a failed coup d'état and was imprisoned. In jail, he wrote *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle) in which he set out his political beliefs and agenda: that western culture was created by the superior Aryan race, but imitated and carried on by lower races until, with the Jews, the destroyers of culture, Germany would be totally corrupted and destroyed. If Germany was to survive then the Jews must be defeated and the purity of the Aryan race maintained.

Few inside or outside Germany took the Nazi Party or *Mein Kampf* seriously, as together they set out an absurd political programme, one that under normal circumstances and in any other country stood little chance of being implemented. But in Germany all institutions were in crisis and therefore malleable. There was a widespread belief that democracy had failed and that what was needed was 'a strong man'. Against all the odds, and in under nine years, Hitler had been propelled into absolute and total power, and with that power he would put his extreme fantasies into practice. He was sworn in as Chancellor on January 30th 1933. On March 11th Nazi storm troopers attacked Jewish department stores; and on the 26th an emboldened Hitler called for a boycott of all Jewish businesses.

When, on November 7th 1938, a Polish-Jewish student shot Ernst vom Rath, the third secretary in the German Embassy in Paris [he died two days later] Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945), the Nazi Minister of Propaganda, instigated a two-day pogrom in which 267 synagogues were destroyed, 7,500 shops looted, 30,000 Jews sent to concentration camps, and 91 Jews were killed. The entire community was then fined 1 billion Reichsmarks; its children could no longer go to German schools and Hermann Goering (1893-1946) was put in charge of the 'Jewish Question' and issued his *Decree on Eliminating the Jews from German Economic Life*. In all these actions, Nazi anti-Semitism had greatly expanded 1900 years of Christian anti-Judaism in which Jews were discriminated against and wrongly blamed for the crucifixion of Jesus.



Joseph Goebbels

For Jews evil then began to take even greater strides. Hitler had long planned a land empire in the east, expelling native Slavs to make room for his Greater Germany. It was why he invaded Poland in September 1939. But immediately he had a problem:

what to do with Poland's 2 million Jews? Three days after the invasion, special SS Einsatzgruppen, or 'Task Forces' began, on local initiatives, the mass coldblooded shooting of Jews in Krakow.

Human evil is human violence; it grows incrementally from small beginnings and needs power, yet if it is to operate on any significant scale it needs to be organised, which was why, in 1929, under Heinrich Himmler, Hitler had set up the elite, black-uniformed *Schutzstaffel* to carry out his dirty work. SS men were 'political soldiers' drilled to be hard, to despise compassion as weak and to obey without question. Their cult flourished on the widespread German culture of obedience and unquestioning respect for authority. Even so, the strange truth about human evil is that its perpetrators need to believe that what they do is morally justified. Hence John Milton's Satan saying in *Paradise Lost*, "Evil be thou my good"?

After Poland's surrender ghettos were set up and Jewish councils organised to run them. Things could now only get worse. Jews were condemned to forced labour and made to wear the yellow star. For a while there were wild ideas about deporting all European Jews to Madagascar but it came to nothing. The only hint about how bad things might become was when the Nazis began gassing Jewish mental patients in Brandenburg.

Long before this happened the Nazis had set up a secret euthanasia programme for the killing, by lethal injection or gas, of disabled German adults and, later, disabled children. The programme's justification was the genetic health of the Aryan race and to save feeding 'useless mouths'. Although public pressure caused Hitler to cancel the programme an important moral line had been crossed. The systematic killing of the unwanted was now accepted within party ranks.

The Nazis saw the mere existence of Jews as their biggest problem; yet every general solution so far had failed, though thousands had died through maltreatment. With overcrowded ghettos and their millions of 'useless mouths' to feed what was needed was some 'Final Solution' to the 'Jewish Problem'. One began to take shape with the invasion of Russia on June 22nd 1941. The Germans' advance was so rapid that within months the Wehrmacht found itself responsible for millions of Soviet prisoners of war and countless Jews, Communist officials and others, all needing to be fed and cared for. It was a logistical nightmare! Within two days Jews were being systematically killed by the Einsatzgruppen assisted by Lithuanian volunteers. By August 31st the death toll amounted to 150,000 and kept rising. On September 29/30 33,771 Jews from Kiev were shot at Babi Yar. Of the 4.8 million Russian Jews in 1941 over 2 million were eventually murdered.

When Himmler saw for himself the demoralising effect on the SS of these slow, man to man executions, he searched for a more efficient method. Inefficiency, however, was not the problem; it was emotional distress among the SS and this could not be openly admitted. Ordinary human empathy and compassion were interfering with the programme and needed circumventing. In most human beings there is a powerful taboo against personalised killing even among trained soldiers.

In the Shoah, every human faculty and institution was corrupted and dedicated to murder. With the death camps we see the corruption of reason and logic with genocide as the rational outcome of Nazi political thinking. The Nazis were not mad nor were they automatons. Given that the Nazi premises, or starting points for their arguments,

were 'morally crazy', arguments built upon them, though vile, were nevertheless logically sound, a reminder that you and I need to keep our rational faculties morally and spiritually in good health. Nazi racial ideology, justified intellectually by contemporary science, was at root pure fantasy – an emotionally-backed illusion.

In a world described as post-religious you and I are faced today with the argument that religion is dead, slain by reason and science, and that from now on reason and science are humanity's best hope. But if the Holocaust has convinced me of one thing, it is that from a moral point of view reason and science by themselves are not enough. Human reasoning is like Euclid's geometry, or what mathematicians call *Formal Axiomatic Systems* – it begins with what is self-evident, or can be convincingly demonstrated, and builds up logically from there. Everything then depends on the rightness or otherwise of the axioms on which reason builds.

Given that Jews were what the Nazis believed them to be, then the death camps followed rationally from Hitler's anti-Semitic rants in *Mein Kampf*. The Holocaust reminds us that, as rational beings, you and I need to keep our rational and moral faculties in good health.

The man in charge of corrupting the moral premises of the German people was Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945), Minister of Propaganda. Goebbels was a master of media manipulation which he used to direct ancient Christian and secular prejudices against the Jews, portraying them as Germany's nemesis. Goebbels then presented Hitler as the genius whose clear-sightedness was Germany's road to salvation. At the time the 'Final Solution' got under way in 1941, after 8 years of anti-Jewish propaganda, the Germans were winning the war. It was not important then that every German agreed with what was being done for few would risk unpopularity in championing the Jews.



*The end of the line at Birkenau*

Corrupted reason was one way the Nazis overcame our human capacity for the compassion that could have made the Final Solution impossible. In his book *The Moral Molecule* the neuroscientist Paul J. Zak has shown that our capacity for trust, love, empathy, and compassion is connected with the release in the brain of the hormone and neuro-modulator *Oxytocin* popularly known as 'The Love Hormone'. Zak rechristens it 'The Moral Molecule' and argues for its involvement in human decision-making. He points out that all social animals have distress calls which act as triggers for oxytocin production. So what blocked oxytocin production in the response to all those distress calls in the death camps, especially from children? Part of the answer lies in another hormone, *Testosterone*, which is associated with the desire to punish. Again it is an effect that can be measured.

Oxytocin is also involved in social bonding. It is what helps hold societies together by engendering empathy and trust on a massive scale. It creates the willingness to sacrifice for the common good; however, it can also encourage hostility to foreigners and outsiders. Darwin argued that the function of religious ecstasy was to help a

society outperform its rivals, even on occasions justifying genocide. Zak points to the role of the ecstatic rituals of Goebbels' Nuremberg Rallies in this. Overall however, the most effective SS strategy for inhibiting empathy and compassion was 'distancing', separating executioners from their victims, geographically, organisationally, personally, emotionally and situationally.

In 1934, instead of swearing allegiance to the Constitution, members of the armed forces swore an oath of allegiance personally to Hitler instead. The result was to strengthen the power of Hitler over the armed forces who were now simply carrying out his orders. In an authoritarian society, the effect was to distance the soldier morally from his actions enabling those running the death camps to believe that moral responsibilities had been passed to the Führer. With compassion inhibited, they could believe they were only doing their duty. A strong code of honour made disobedience difficult.

To be a good German now meant submission to a regime in which the will of the Führer was what finally counted. In any totalitarian regime, the human capacity for altruism is corrupted. We should always be careful what we submit to. It is invariably the beginning of some idolatry. In the death camps the SS were further able to alienate themselves from suffering and compassion by appointing selected prisoners, known as *kapos*, to manage their fellow victims at almost every stage of their extermination. *Kapos* were granted a few privileges, such as extra rations and a longer life, higher status and power over other prisoners.

In addition, language itself had become a distancing mechanism. The murder of Jews was only ever spoken of obliquely. *Endlösung*, the Final Solution, was a euphemism, as was the expression 'sent east', east being where the death camps were located. Euphemism was an effective defence against thinking and moral awakening. It was why Hannah Arendt in her controversial study of Eichmann's trial argued that his 'remoteness from reality' was linked to his inability to think.

Whenever they could the SS had Jewish victims do their dirty work for them as another distancing mechanism. In the overcrowded, sealed-off ghettos of Eastern Europe, the Nazis appointed Jewish Councils, *Judenrat*, to run them. The *Judenrat* controlled the Jewish police who kept the ghettos in order. Their job included selecting Jews for emigration, then for forced labour and lastly for transport to the death camps; where a 'special unit', the *sonderkommando*, another euphemism, composed entirely of Jews, was forced by death threats to dispose of corpses from the gas chamber.

As the *Sonderkommando* needed to be physically fit they had better food and conditions; and as *Geheimnisträger*, 'bearers of secrets' they were kept apart from other prisoners. On average they enjoyed four months of extra life before the next 'special unit' disposed of their bodies. With this kind of cumulative 'distancing' as few as two SS supervisors were required.

At Auschwitz, in April 1944, two Jewish barbers from Greece were given, by the SS Economic Division, the task of cutting the hair from corpses so that it could be spun into thread to make 'felt socks for submarine crews'. Jewish dentists were to extract gold teeth from Jewish bodies. The *Sonderkommando* also stockpiled victims' clothing and valuables. Nothing was wasted, corruption was inevitable so that Auschwitz had a thriving black market, loot from the dead being traded for delicacies and luxuries.

In his infamous speech at Posen in October 1943 Himmler, the Nazi moralist, boasted



that throughout all this his SS killers had 'remained decent'. "That has made us tough", he said, "we have taken nothing for ourselves". Though responsible for the deaths of millions Himmler worried that his honour-bound SS might actually descend to petty pilfering. Indeed, they had! The Final Solution was not only mass murder, it was also grand larceny. Through it Hermann Goering built up the best private art collection in the world. Eventually Auschwitz had 28 sub-camps selling slave labour at vast profit. Prisoners were sold to drug companies as human guinea pigs. Many died. Evil as deliberate harm to fellow human beings had become the moral norm as well as a profitable industry.

In the end the Nazis had constructed an enormous, impersonal, machinery of death with Heinrich Himmler in overall charge. In that vast apparatus of hatred and extermination everyone was trapped. For the victims, the Holocaust was personal, for the perpetrators impersonal. Few of those caught up in it had the moral and spiritual transcendence to rise above it or escape it. Its scale was such that everyone felt powerless.

We owe to the experiments of the social psychologists Stanley Milgram and Philip Zimbardo the realisation that unquestioned authority in situations of comparative helplessness can radically transform the behaviour of otherwise good people. Unquestioned authority and situations defined by arbitrary power were the very fabric of the Nazi state. The survivor, Toivi Blatt, when asked what he learned in the death camps replied: "*None of us know ourselves*". He said later, when someone somewhere was really nice to him, he found himself thinking: "*How would they be in Sobibor?*"

If any non-Jews think that they could have survived the Nazi propaganda machine with their character intact I suggest that they are almost certainly fooling themselves. Few of us are so strong. It was the very human characteristic of self-deception that created the Nazi state.

For more than ten years now at study days I have given papers on the Holocaust and on each occasion I have felt uncomfortable in even tackling the subject. In writing this latest paper, the reason has become clear. My own formative training was not in theology but science, and today the lingering scientist in me always takes a detached, impersonal view. To gain the objectivity he needs the scientist must distance himself from his subject, and that very distancing and objectifying is uncomfortably like the distancing strategies that turned people into objects and made the Shoah possible.

There is a paradox here. Somewhere along the line all our thinking ends in paradox. Mathematicians and logicians know this. It is the moralist in us that prefers things to be in the black and white of non-paradox. Unfortunately our world is paradoxical through and through and nowhere is this more evident than in the difficulties we have with the reality of evil. We owe to the French mathematician and spiritual writer Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) the paradoxical and uncomfortable insight that: *To understand is to forgive*.

My own meditations on the Holocaust have taught me that the popular, tabloid view, that some people are monsters by nature and act out of a monstrous character and psychology does not stand up to the evidence. It is as wrong as it is comforting. The paradox of writing about the Holocaust, is that on the one hand we need to empathise with the horrendous suffering it involved while, on the other, we must distance ourselves from it in order to understand it.

My old college Vice-Principal when faced with irreconcilable standpoints like this would advise his students to "hold these things in tension". He said that was the best

he could offer. Faced with the Shoah and the problem of human evil it is also the best that I can do.

*This article is based on a talk given to the Manchester and North Cheshire Circle of the Newman Association in November 2013. Albert Radcliffe, an Anglican, is a retired Residentiary Canon of Manchester Cathedral. He was for many years Chairman of the Manchester Council of Christians and Jews.*

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## **Obituary of Alison Grady (1927-2013)**

Alison was a long-time supporter of the Newman Association, first in Coventry and then in Hertfordshire. Alison was a good friend to many in the Circle, especially to Eileen Durie and later to Judi George. She was a great traveller and indomitable on Newman Pilgrimages. She virtually saved the Herts Circle on one if not two occasions when Committee enthusiasm declined. Alison took the chair, giving the programme new energy. She also served on the national Council during the 1990s and was an auditor for the Westminster Archdiocese Marriage Tribunal. Latterly Alison suffered a period of declining health, supported especially by Judi, and sadly died in September. Her funeral Mass at Enfield was full, with a good number of the Circle present. May she rest in peace!

**Anthony Baker**

### **NOTE FOR YOUR DIARIES**

## **Annual General Meeting 2014 – Wimbledon**

The AGM of the Newman Association will be held in the Parish Hall of the Sacred Heart Church, Edge Hill, Wimbledon SW19 4LU on **Saturday June 14th 2014 at 11AM**. There will be Mass after the business meeting, followed by lunch. In the afternoon, at 3PM, there will be a talk by **Quentin de la Bedoyere** entitled 'The Natural Law'.

# Meeting God in Friend and Stranger

by Colin Carr O.P.

***Meeting God in Friend and Stranger*, published in 2010, is a Teaching Document of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.**

Let us start with two of the Good Friday prayers from the 1962 Missal, remembering that before 1962 the remarks on the Jews had been even less complimentary.

*Let us pray for the Jews: that our God and Lord would remove the veil from their hearts: that they also may acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Almighty and everlasting God, who drivest not away from thy mercy even the Jews: hear our prayers which we offer for the blindness of that people; that acknowledging the light of thy truth, which is Christ, they may be rescued from their darkness.*

*Let us pray also for pagans: that almighty God would remove iniquity from their hearts: that, putting aside their idols, they may be converted to the true and living God and his only Son, Jesus Christ our God and Lord.*

*Almighty and everlasting God, who ever seekest not the death but the life of sinners: mercifully hear our prayer, and deliver them from the worship of idols; and join them to thy Holy Church for the praise and glory of thy name.*

Now consider what Pope Benedict had to say about a famous text in Matthew's Gospel: this extract is from the second volume of his '*Jesus of Nazareth*':

*When in Matthew's account the "whole people" say: "His blood be on us and on our children" (27:25), the Christian will remember that Jesus' blood speaks a different language from the blood of Abel (Heb12:24): it does not cry out for vengeance and punishment; it brings reconciliation. It is not poured out against anyone; it is poured out for many, for all. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...God put [Jesus] forward as an expiation by his blood" (Rom.3:23, 25). Just as Caiaphas' words about the need for Jesus' death have to be read in an entirely new light from the perspective of faith, the same applies to Matthew's reference to the blood. These words are not a curse, but rather redemption, salvation. Only when understood in terms of the theology of the Last Supper and the Cross, drawn from the whole of the New Testament, does this verse from Matthew's Gospel take on its correct meaning.*

If you read the New Testament with an anti-semitic prejudice in your heart you will find an anti-semitic New Testament; if you read it the way Pope Benedict read it, with love for Jewish people in your heart, then you will not be reading an anti-semitic book. If you look at the world with prejudice in your heart, you will understand your faith in a way which excludes and despises other religions; if you look at it with the love of Christ in your heart, you will understand God's welcome for all his children.

'Meeting God in Friend and Stranger' is inviting us to look at the world – and at members of other religions – with Pope Benedict's attitude, with the welcoming attitude of Peter speaking to Cornelius and his household: "*I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him*" (Acts 10:34). Without that attitude we wouldn't be here, and we wouldn't want to know what the document is about.

Chapter 1 is straightforwardly called *What is 'interreligious dialogue'*? We probably

think of it as, say a group of Christians and a group of Muslims sitting down together and discussing the nature of God; that certainly is one important aspect of dialogue, but for the Church the word means much more. Pope John Paul II put it like this in 1990:

*"Dialogue is not so much an idea to be studied as a way of living in positive relationship with others."*

I remember shortly after some major event – I think it was that threat which has meant that ever since you can't take liquid with you on to a plane – following a Muslim driver at an air pump in Sainsbury's garage, and asking him how to use this new-fangled machine; he showed me and I thanked him and we said goodbye: just that. Simple neighbourliness; that, too, is included in the concept of dialogue.

Dialogue might also mean people of different religions working together for the common good; or it might mean, more explicitly, learning about another's faith and culture. But rather than listing the ways in which dialogue can happen, the document speaks of it as a whole attitude – a humble and unprejudiced approach to the 'Challenge of Difference'. Does this mean that we temporarily put aside our convictions in order to listen objectively to the other person? Not at all: it is our very conviction about the truth we have found in Christ Jesus that motivates us to listen for the truth that is found in other faiths, and to recognise where we cannot agree.

The second chapter is entitled *The Changing Face of Britain*, and points out that there is now a highly visible presence not only of *ethnic* diversity (which you anyway find within the Catholic Church and the other Christian bodies) but of *religious* diversity – buildings such as mosques, and dress which proclaims religious adherence (that was how I knew my kind helper at the air pump was a Muslim). The implication for us is that we foster good relations between different groups, without being blind to the possibility of religious people expressing themselves in a hateful way, or politicians exploiting fear of ethnic diversity. The document distinguishes two terms: pluralism, which means a positive attitude to the fact of difference in our society; and relativism, which is a philosophy which says there is no absolute truth, and what people believe is their own affair: it's true for them, but not necessarily for someone else. As followers of Jesus whom we believe to be the Way, the Truth and the Life, we don't say that just because there are other faiths visibly present in our society now, the truth has changed. Jesus Christ is still the same, but we have an opportunity to share his love with others not simply by overt proclamation, but by all the types of dialogue mentioned in chapter 1 and spelled out again in chapter 3 which is the main chapter. Jesus Christ is the truth, and therefore, as well as commending him to all people, we delight to find the truth in other faiths because all truth is God's truth.

Chapter 3 of the document is entitled *Dialogue in the Teaching of the Catholic Church*. It reminds us of the extraordinary document of the Second Vatican Council, '*Nostra Aetate*'. That document was originally intended to be about Jewish and Christian relations, but it soon became clear to the bishops that it would be necessary to address the whole question of our relationship with all other faiths. The quotation from the 1962 Missal which I started with gives a flavour of the kind of attitude we had towards Jews and 'pagans' – which I presume meant all the rest, though how you could accuse Muslims of idolatry I wouldn't know. *Nostra Aetate* and many other documents of Vatican II are positive about other religions, while never denying the truth as it is in

Christ Jesus. And papal actions, especially the days of prayer at Assisi, have been the Church's body language about our attitude to other religions.

Undoubtedly the relationship with Judaism is special: the Commission for relations with the Jews is not housed in the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, but in the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. However, *'Meeting God in Friend and Stranger'* is concerned with all interreligious dialogue, and probably most of us are aware of the challenge of Islam because there are far more Muslims around than adherents of any other non-Christian religion.

The Church wants us to proclaim Christ as the unique Saviour; the Church wants us to enter into real dialogue (not cryptic proselytising) with all religions. Aren't those two wishes contradictory? Surely if you want to proclaim Christ and his Church as the place where salvation is found, you don't have dealings with other religions which don't acknowledge him as God and Saviour. Either proclamation or dialogue, but not both.

Well, the Church has a habit of going for the 'both-and' option, especially in its understanding of who Jesus is: he is both truly human and truly God. We are both sinners and saved. So dialogue and proclamation do not have to be in contradiction: it is our duty to proclaim – to tell the world that Jesus, the Son of God, is the truth by whom we are saved. But we do not deny that truth by having respectful and sincere dialogue with people of other faiths. There are two reasons, which together make a third reason.

First, there is the unity of the human race. We are all God's creation, and God is the goal towards whom we are going, whether we know it or not. Whoever you meet in the street is made in the image of God, loved by God, destined for God. The church is the sacrament of the unity of the human race, and of our unity with God; so we are not called to be a ghetto, or to consider ourselves superior to others; we are called to promote unity among all people, and one of the ways of doing that is dialogue. As Churchill reputedly said, *"Jaw, jaw is better than war, war"*.

Secondly, there is the call to be open to what is holy and true in other religions. The Second Vatican Council was very firm about this, reflecting what some of the early Church Fathers said about 'seeds of the Word' being found in humankind's searching. God has not left himself without witness in the different religions of the world, and it is our task to recognize those elements in other faiths which can speak to us of the true God. We can recognise in Islam a commitment to fasting, prayer and almsgiving which is an expression of their submission (islam) to the one God. We can recognise, as Thomas Merton did, the profound contemplative dynamic of Buddhism. And for each religion one could point to an aspect which both harmonises with our faith and challenges us to live it as fervently as Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists live theirs.

Both those reasons – the unity of the human race and the call to be open to what is holy and true in other religions, constitute a call to dialogue: the Church is calling us, and God is calling the Church, to enter into a dialogue which is both proclamation of our own faith – we don't just talk about the weather – and a learning from the faith of others. None of this is a watering-down of our faith in the uniqueness of Christ and of the call to all the human race to recognise him and acknowledge him in faith and baptism. But proclamation is not just standing on a soapbox and yelling at people: it is proclaiming Christ to those whom we have met and learned to respect, and proclaiming him not as the contradiction of their faith but as its fulfilment.



There is a problem lurking here, which some critics of this approach would call religious imperialism. (I'm not now giving an exposition of MGFS but discussing our whole approach to others). It raises its head when we talk about Karl Rahner's 'Anonymous Christians'. To say that a good Hindu is really, deep down, a follower of Christ without knowing it may seem to be an insult to her religion and its integrity. She will want to say, "Hang on, I'm a moderately good Hindu and I'm not a Christian, much as I admire Christians whom I've met in India; I am a Hindu, not an anonymous Christian." All that MGFS says is that we both share our own faith – in its integrity, not watered down – and recognise and learn from the truths we encounter in another religion. We can and must in all honesty say where we disagree. It is possible to disagree agreeably!

And remember that dialogue is not simply discussion of religious topics: MGFS outlines 4 types of dialogue:

- **The Dialogue of Life:** this is simply people living together as good neighbours, like my Muslim friend at the air-pump; only we never saw each other again; what is envisaged more is those who are literally neighbours living in a neighbourly fashion day after day.
- **The Dialogue of Action:** I quote from the Document:  
*This is where those of different religions collaborate in working for greater human freedom and development, such as in matters of peace, justice and the integrity of creation.*  
 Here is an example: In Lent 2011 Jim Wallis, of Sojourners (an American Evangelical movement which is on the side of the poor) was appalled by the US budget proposals which savagely cut programmes of aid to poor people, leaving untouched military expenditure and tax-breaks for the rich: he and many other religious and secular leaders fasted during Lent as a protest, and some of his colleagues in the fast were Jews and Muslims.
- **The dialogue of Theological Exchange:** I quote again:  
*Here specialists and scholars seek to deepen their understanding of one another's religious heritage, and their appreciation of one another's spiritual values.*  
 This is probably the first kind of encounter that springs to mind when dialogue is mentioned, but while not all of us are specialists, we can engage in the other forms of dialogue mentioned.
- **The Dialogue of Religious Experience:** This is about sharing experiences and thoughts on prayer and the search for God; although the document doesn't mention it in this context, the practice of coming together to pray may be an example – as in Assisi, as at the Shrine of Our Lady of Jesmond, where every year a group of Muslim and Christian women go to honour Miriam, the Mother of Jesus.

All these forms of dialogue require that we have a confident and humble faith, and a willingness to learn from others.

I began this talk with a quotation from the 1962 revision of the Roman Missal – still in the Tridentine Use. That attitude towards Jews and Pagans was more or less standard in the Church for most of its life; is there a completely new attitude in Pope Benedict's Jesus of Nazareth Volume II, and in *Nostra Aetate*? No, both in Scripture and the history of the Church there is an – admittedly minority – voice which does not condemn

non-Christians (or non-Jews in the Old Testament). The Second Vatican Council and subsequent teaching have simply listened to that minority voice and realised that it was right all along. It is the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church that other religions are to be respected and the truths found in them appreciated. Our attitude is not to be condemnation but dialogue, and this is in no way a contradiction of the command to proclaim the truth about Jesus Christ and his Church. There are still plenty of Catholics who have not got that message. But if we are to contribute to the peace of the Kingdom, if we are to enrich our own faith and spiritual life, then the way forward is the way of dialogue – and if I hear that word once more, I shall rejoice!

*This article is based on a talk on Chapters 1-3 of Meeting God in Friend and Stranger given to the Tyneside Circle of the Newman Association on July 31st 2013*

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir

Last Advent marked the second anniversary of the introduction of the new translation of the Mass, and I for one was no more reconciled to it than I was in November 2011. Every time I go to Mass I am so distracted by the strange admixture of baroque, multi-claused Latin sentences (the Proper prayers, and especially the Collects), turgid circumlocutions ('my most grievous fault', 'I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof', 'with your spirit'), awkward uncolloquialisms ('consubstantial', 'in a similar way', 'in the light of your face'), and straight mistranslations ('confess' instead of 'profess' or 'acknowledge', 'for many' instead of 'for the many' or 'for all', 'adore' instead of 'worship') that I have difficulty in concentrating on the main purpose of public, communal worship that we are meant to be about. And though my reaction may be a bit extreme, I am certainly not alone: of the many people I have spoken to on the subject, both inside and outside the Newman, only one or two have said they like it, whereas the overwhelming majority regard it on a scale ranging from a major disappointment to a scandalous disrespect for God, God's people, and the English Language.

Council may not consider it appropriate for the Association to become involved in any lobbying for general change from the 2011 translation, and indeed I have no wish to deprive the minority in favour of it from continuing to enjoy it. But, if I am right in thinking that most Newman members don't like it, I would like to suggest that Council might nevertheless encourage the use of better versions at Circle and Association Masses. The simplest alternative, of course, would be to revert to the familiar 1973 translation. But the preferable, and not especially difficult, alternative would be to use the much better—indeed, in my not very humble view, excellent, and often beautiful—1998 ICEL version which had been approved by the English-speaking bishops and would—should—have been introduced but for the intervention of a powerful 'formal equivalence' (literalist) lobby in Rome.

At the very least, can I recommend members to look at that version for themselves and make up their own minds about whether it would be worth trying out? It's available at <http://wikispooks.com/wiki/Template:1998Sacramentary>.

Martin Redfern

# The Gospel According to St Paul

by Fr Peter Edmonds SJ

*This talk on the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians was given to the Manchester and North Cheshire Circle on March 4th, 2013*

## Presuppositions

Thessalonica was founded in 315BC by Cassander, a general of Alexander the Great (356-323BC) who was determined to spread Hellenistic (and urban) civilisation throughout the world. Thessalonica was the name of Cassander's wife. The city became a Roman Province in 148BC, two hundred years before Paul's visit in 49AD.



While 1 Thessalonians is the earliest New Testament document (50/51AD), it was written by Paul some 15 years after he began his missionary work. His preferred missionary method was the personal visit to a community; if he were "stopped by Satan", possibly through an illness, he would send his representative. Now he tried a third means: a letter. Such letters were common in secular commerce but up to that point they were unknown in the Christian mission. Paul adapted the form to his new purpose. A letter would bear some of the characteristics of a speech and reflect some of the skills of rhetoric. The letter was to be read out to the whole community. In the event the letter was a success; Paul himself would write more letters, even to a community that he had not visited, such as the Romans, and the form would be imitated by his disciples (Ephesians, Colossians and pastoral letters)<sup>1</sup>.

## The Evangelist

Paul wrote from Corinth where he spent eighteen months. The opening verse, and the frequent repetition of 'we' in the letter, reminds us that he did not write or work alone. He was at the head of a complex missionary enterprise. We know the names of forty of his helpers (the fullest list of these is in Romans 16; it includes both men and women). Hard though he worked (toiling "night and day") he knew that the force behind his apostalate was the grace of God. He uses three practically synonymous expressions to describe this in 1:5 – it is "power and the Holy Spirit and full conviction". This is a rhetorical device repeated in 2:10 (*His behaviour was holy, righteous and blameless*) and in 5:23 (*He prays for your spirit, soul and body*). The grace to which he owed his call (Galatians 1:15, 1 Corinthians 15:10) was still his support as he proclaimed Christ to the Gentiles. Luke hands on a tradition that he used as his base for his evangelising activities the workshop of Jason (Acts 17:5). In his autobiographical confession (2: 3-12) he defends his behaviour against those who saw no difference between him and other wandering teachers of the day; he was *no charlatan, a flatterer or lover of money*. His attitude was that of a nurse (one who gave the sick proper medicine) and of a father who took proper care of those entrusted to him. He addressed his converts as *adelphoi* (brothers and sisters); they were his beloved.

## His *Evangel* (Gospel)

Paul's doctrinal teaching (*kerygma*) concerned:

- God who is 'Father', 'living and true' and 'faithful'. Truth would suggest for Paul the covenant virtues of *hesed* and *emet*, love and fidelity. Paul's Gospel was the 'gospel of God', a God who tests hearts. He is the God of peace.
- Jesus who is *Christ*, the Messiah of Jewish expectation and *Lord*, the one raised from the dead. *Lord*, *kurios*, was the title claimed by the Roman emperor; his subjects had to acknowledge him by confessing 'Caesar is Lord'. Especially emphasised is the imminent *parousia*, the future coming of Jesus.
- Traces of primitive confessions of faith are found in passages like:
- *They wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers from the wrath to come* (1:10-11)
- *We believe that Jesus died and rose again* (4:14)
- *Our Lord Jesus Christ died for us, so that whether we wait or sleep we might live with him* (5:10)
- His moral teaching (*didache*) includes a call to holiness; on two occasions this is the subject of his prayer:
- They were to be different from the society around them, particularly in their sexual behaviour (4:3-8).
- They were to win the respect of outsiders through their love of the brethren, their quiet lives and their hard work. In this they were the imitators of Paul himself.

Note especially the instructions of 5:16-22 (34 words in the Greek), representing the so-called 'shotgun theology', giving an easily-remembered recipe for Christian living.

## The Evangelised

Already they are called a church, a word suggesting the *qahal* that Israel became for God in the desert as the elect people of God. As God's people they were chosen and beloved by God. Mainly of polytheistic, Gentile background they had embraced their new religion with enthusiasm. In his opening Paul compliments them on *their work of faith, labour of love, steadfastness of hope*; at its close he exhorts them to make *faith and love* their breastplate, and their helmet hope. They were full of joy (a gift of the last times), had imitated Paul and had themselves become examples to others. Like Paul himself they were full of missionary zeal.

But they endured affliction and tribulation (*thlipsis*): this may refer not only to the persecution they were suffering from their own countrymen but it may also be associated with the suspicion that went with being a strange sect. Was it the reaction felt by the newly-converted once the novelty had passed? Were they worried about the coming end? Were they overzealous in their enthusiasm to convert those around them and were they now suffering the consequences?

## The Reason for the Letter

Paul sent Timothy to them "to establish you in the faith and to exhort you". He brought back news of their faith and love. But he may well have promised them a word from Paul. So Paul writes about four things:

- Their **sanctification** or holiness. The main problem seems to have been a loose

sexual morality. There may also be a reference to exploitation in business deals.

- **'love of the brethren'**. He simply says that God himself has taught them about this and he adds nothing of his own. It is a subject of his prayer.
- **'those who have fallen asleep'**, that is, those who had died. Would they miss out at the *parousia* of the Lord?
- **'the times and the seasons'**, that is, when will the *parousia* take place?

The reader has to strain out the *apocalyptic* language. This is familiar and recognisable for what it was at the time; it is used in Daniel and Revelation and in some two hundred other works not included in the Bible. But it is dangerous for us who tend to confuse the symbolic and the poetic with the reality. We are to recall our own belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus and our confidence in our destiny: "We shall always be with the Lord". God will lead them and us through a new Exodus into a new Promised Land. This is the source of our comfort. Like Jesus himself, Paul refuses to give any date. Let them rather *encourage one another and build one another up*. The Lord would come like a thief. Matthew repeats the same teaching: *You must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour*. The day would be sudden, precarious and inevitable, as the prophets had written about the Day of the Lord. Meanwhile the people were to continue responding to the demands of Christian life.

### The Account in the Acts

The only other source that we have for Paul's activity in Thessalonica is Luke. The chronology fits well; Paul had come from Philippi. Timothy came from Macedonia to Corinth where Paul would write the letter. We find a hint of how he might have supported himself in the workshop of Jason. There is reference to persecution by the Jews. But there are difficulties in reconciling Paul's own words with the account in the Acts, which was written so many years later.

- The content of Paul's preaching (*evangel*) resembles the standard Lucan message for a Jewish audience.
- The length of Paul's stay (three weeks) seems too short to establish the sort of relationship between Paul and the Thessalonians implied in Paul's own account.
- His audience appears to be primarily of Jewish background in contrast to the Gentile audience of the letter.

### Appendix

We can imagine the scene as the letter is read out. We can put ourselves in the audience and analyse our reactions as we hear Paul speaking in his letter.

- His greeting reminds us that we are in the world of the Father and the Son; we have forgotten our idolatry
- His thanksgiving encourages us to persevere in the new life we have chosen
- We hear others talking about us in terms that we enjoy
- We are given Paul's own view of his mission, which will help us to defend him against the criticism of our former friends; we realise our good fortune in meeting Paul
- We realise how much we mean to him, that the visit of Timothy was a substitute for one of his own
- He is sufficiently concerned about us that he does something he has never done

before: he writes us a letter

- At last he has to challenge us about some backsliding in the matter of holiness and in our failure to love one another, and he knows all about our worries about our dead who we think will miss the coming of Christ
- His device of a prayer\* helps us to remember his message
- He deals with our problem about our dead by recalling the fundamentals of our faith; he tells us to comfort and encourage one another
- Our holy kiss represents our reconciliation
- The experience of hearing his letter read aloud encourages us to live afresh our vocation as the “church” of Thessalonica

*\* Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you; and may the Lord make you increase in love to one another and to all, as we do to you, so that he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints (3: 11-13).*

<sup>1</sup> Although the Letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians are attributed to Paul in the Bible many scholars are doubtful that he really wrote them, or indeed the Second Letter to the Thessalonians. The Letter to the Hebrews, and several other letters, are not attributed to Paul in the Bible.

## Spirituality Page

*contributed by Eileen Cheverton*

How sweet it is, out in the fields, at the end of the long summer afternoons! The sun is no longer raging at you, and the woods are beginning to throw long blue shadows over the stubble fields where the golden shocks are standing. The sky is cool, and you can see the pale half-moon smiling over the monastery in the distance. Perhaps a clean smell of pine comes down to you out of the woods, on the breeze, and mingles with the richness of the fields and of the harvest. And when the undermaster claps his hands for the end of work, you drop your arm and take off your hat to wipe the sweat out of your eyes. In the stillness you realise how the whole valley is alive with the singing of the crickets – a constant universal treble going up to God, rising like the incense of an evening prayer to the pure sky, *laus perennis*!

And you take your rosary out of your pocket and take your place in the long file, and start swinging homeward along the road with your boots ringing on the asphalt, and peace in your heart! And on your lips, silently, over and over again, the name of the Queen of Heaven, the Queen also of this valley: “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee...” And the Name of Her Son, for whom all this was made in the first place, for whom all this was planned and intended, for whom the whole of creation was framed, to be His Kingdom. “Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus!”

“Full of Grace!” The very thought, over and over, fills our own hearts with more grace: and who knows what grace overflows into the world from that valley, from those rosaries, in the evenings when the monks are swinging home from work!

*From Elected Silence by Thomas Merton*

# Marriage, the Church and Modern Society

*Two members of the Editorial Committee of The Newman here give some of their personal responses to the Church's current initiative on marriage and the family.*

## **Josephine Way: reflections on marriage and the Church**

People have found that the Church's recent questionnaire on marriage and the family does not ask helpful or relevant questions; this seems to show that the Church cannot come to terms with the fact that its teaching might be at variance with laypeople's lived experience. This writer claims no professional qualifications; her reflections are based on 25 years of happy marriage (four children), 30 years as a widow, including 10 years engaged in marriage guidance, and decades of reading, beginning with Kevin T. Kelly's *Divorce and Second Marriage*.

The concept that an unbreakable bond is established with the consummation of a marriage entered into with consent bears no relation to reality. I married my husband on Holy Innocents' Day; this was appropriate because as only children we had everything to learn about a shared life. Through love, goodwill and the grace of God we made some progress, but God does not join two people together without their collaboration. It takes years of loving work to create a marriage and some people never achieve this. It is also a fact that some unions simply break down, through unkindness, infidelity or simple incompatibility. The palpable Christian witness of so many marriages of divorced people gives the lie to the idea that these unions cannot be blessed by God.

To claim that human marriage is indissoluble because it reflects the union of Christ and His Church is a *non-sequitur*. That He loves his Church as a bridegroom loves his bride and gives Himself for her expresses one similarity between the two, but does not declare them to be identical. Reasoning cannot be built on a figure of speech. In fact the two are different in that we understand human marriage as a partnership of equals, and as well as the possibility that the husband saves his wife. St Paul also declares that a believing wife may save her unbelieving husband.

It has taken centuries for the hierarchy to move on from St Augustine's teaching that sexual intercourse is basically sinful, only redeemed by the intention to conceive. But whereas animals mate just to reproduce, human beings make love. The intrinsic value of lovemaking is now acknowledged by the Church: it is seen as binding a couple together and a source of strength and comfort in times of grief or anxiety. Therefore it is neither necessary nor appropriate for every marital act to be open to the transmission of life. Every birth is a miracle; which is why we are drawn irresistibly to the programme *One born every minute!*

Many couples are happy with the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* and even experience it as an enrichment, and many others, not all of them wealthy, successfully raise a large, loving brood. But for perhaps the majority this ruling can create problems which drive husband and wife apart. In Third World countries with a high maternal death rate all the good work of Catholic charities does not compensate for the Church's perceived failure of caring in this regard.

The Church bases its teaching on natural law, but not everyone would interpret this in the same way. Jewish law considered homosexuals 'perverted' because they were believed to be acting against their true nature. We now understand that homosexual orientation is no more "unnatural" than being left-handed, and in this country gay and

lesbian couples are accepted as a normal part of society.

I was ashamed to be a Catholic when the Bishops of England and Wales set up their campaign to “defend” marriage, an exercise which could not fail to be understood as homophobia. Would straight people really be put off marrying because gays and lesbians could do so? The latter, in fact, set a good example to promiscuous straight people and those who cannot bring themselves to make a faithful permanent commitment. True love, wherever it is found, should be respected, as Cardinal Hume has acknowledged.

It is easy for us old people to ‘tut tut’ at younger generations’ free lovemaking, not wanting to see that in some, (many?) cases it is a thing of beauty, a craving for something beyond the human, God perhaps. It has wisely been said that sexuality is spirituality *incognito*.

There exist two Roman Catholic churches; alongside the institution of laws and regulations, which sees no need to listen to the voice of human experience, there is a living, compassionate and humane Church at the grassroots which seeks to walk with people in their joys and sorrows. Can they be brought together?

### **John Duddington: an engagement with Josephine Way**

May I approach what Josephine says by her final paragraph as she argues that ‘There exist two Roman Catholic churches’ and contrasts the institution of the church with what she calls a ‘living, compassionate and humane church’.

I would see the matter differently. In ‘*Pray, Love, Remember*’ (DLT 1998) the former Dean of Westminster Abbey, Michael Mayne, in the context of a discussion on ministering to AIDS victims, speaks of “the necessary distinction between affirming a principle and responding with care to those in need”. This is, and has always been, the challenge for Christians of any denomination, not only Catholics. It is also a challenge for all other institutions, not least my own profession of the law where we are often called on to decide if a principle set down in statute law should give way to the higher demands of justice in a particular case.

What it does not mean is that all principles are *ipso facto* wrong and that for instance the Christian view of marriage, because it clearly involves adherence to a principle, should give way to an acceptance of, in some cases at least, “free lovemaking”.

The institution of marriage with the conferment of the sacrament is, we believe as Christians, the basis of society and has been so down the ages. The fact that today that



*Pope Francis*

institution is under threat is no reason for bending our teaching to suit the times. However, as Josephine says, there is the need for compassion and so here we need to look at the position of those whose marriages have broken down. At present the Church responds to this in different ways, such as by declarations that the marriage was in fact never a marriage at all. Is this the right way to proceed? I wonder. However, this does not lead me to question the insistence of the Church that marriage solemnized by the sacrament is the only way to contract a marriage and that sexual intercourse can only take place in that context.

Similar principles apply to the legalisation of marriage between persons of the same sex. The fact that persons of the same sex wish to marry is not by itself a reason



for allowing them to do so. If we argue that the church should allow same sex marriage then we must say that the church has been wrong on this throughout the ages and should have allowed it from the start; otherwise we are upholding what Pope Francis has called (in *Evangelii Gaudium* para. 61) a culture “where each person wants to be the bearer of his or her own subjective truth”. What we as Christians must do instead is to hold in balance the principle that marriage is between a man and a woman only whilst upholding as strongly as possible the equally valid principle of the innate dignity of each person which means that we condemn and more, we resist, the persecution of homosexuals which is happening in so many places across the world.

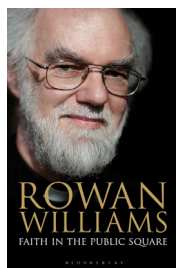
Finally, my own experience of marriage has been a happy one too and has even survived nearly thirty years joint membership of the editorial committee of this journal. Thus the title of this piece is to be understood in a literary sense only.

## Double Book Review

**Faith in the Public Square by Rowan Williams; Bloomsbury 2012, £20.00**  
**and Triple Jeopardy for the West by Michael Nazir-Ali, Bloomsbury 2012, £10.99**

Here are two more contributions to the debate on the place of religion in public life, by two former Anglican bishops. Let it be said at once that there is a pressing need for such studies. As Pope Benedict XVI reminded us in his address to both Houses of the UK Parliament in 2010: “Religion is not a problem for legislators to solve, but a vital contributor to the national conversation. In this light, I cannot but voice my concern at the increasing marginalisation of religion, particularly of Christianity, that is taking place in some quarters, even in nations which place a great emphasis on tolerance.”

This theme has most recently been taken up by Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* where he says (at para. 183): “...no one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions, without a right to offer an opinion on events affecting society. Who would claim to lock up in a church and silence the message of Saint Francis of Assisi or Blessed Teresa of Calcutta?”\*



Neither book is, as it were, newly-minted: that by Rowan Williams is a collection of lectures delivered over the years when he was Archbishop of Canterbury at such venues as the Hay Literary Festival, the Vatican and the University of Oxford. However, there is a satisfying coherence about them: all are of similar length and in a similar style.

That by Michael Nazir-Ali consists partly of essays that have previously appeared in magazines and newspapers and others seemingly specially written for this book. However, the length and the depth of argument varies: there is a long chapter, for this book,

of 26 pages, titled ‘Islamic Law, Fundamental Freedoms and Social Cohesion’ (which is most readable, by the way) contrasted with the arrestingly-titled chapter ‘What would Jesus do? Certainly not vote for the BNP’ of only just over four pages.

The style varies, too, between the academic and journalistic. It is a pity also that the various writings have not been updated for this book. For instance, chapter 14 is entitled ‘The moral and spiritual challenge facing the Coalition’ which is clearly outdated. Then chapter 17, which looks as it though it has appeared previously although where is not mentioned,

begins by stating that: "By any standards 2012 will be a tough year for the Prime Minister". Only a little rewriting would have altered this; one wonders why was it not done?

There will be those who, faced with a book by Rowan Williams, will simply say: "Oh, no, that's not for me, his writing is far too dense". That would be a mistake because, although there is much in this book that is challenging, there are some excellent pieces of analysis. For example, in the introduction there is an illuminating discussion of what Rowan Williams suggests is a distinction between 'procedural secularism' and 'programmatic secularism'.

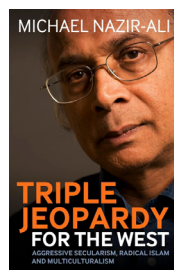
The first of these, he suggests, occurs where the state "defines its role as one of overseeing a variety of communities of religious conviction and, where necessary, assisting them to keep the peace together". In short, it is where the state adopts a principle of neutrality between religious groups. This, he feels, is acceptable. *Programmatic* secularism, on the other hand, relegates religious belief to the private sphere in the way rejected by both Pope Benedict and Pope Francis, so that only one loyalty counts in public debate, loyalty to what he calls 'public orthodoxy'. This is very useful but, as with much that Rowan Williams writes, one must ask: why use terms that are off-putting? What exactly is 'programmatic secularism' supposed to mean?

The book is then divided into seven parts: secularism and its discontents; living within limits: liberalism, pluralism and the law; living within limits, the environment; housekeeping, the economic challenge; justice in community; religious diversity and civil agreement; and rediscovering religion. Of these I found chapter 12, 'Do Human Rights Exist?' (contained in part 2) the most valuable as Rowan Williams analyses the concept of human dignity as a benchmark for human rights discourse and argues that human dignity must not be assessed by a list of particular capacities. If it is, then inevitably those who lack some of these capacities, such as those with disabilities, will be held to have a lesser dignity than others.

Michael Nazir-Ali's book is more provocative. The triple jeopardies he identifies are 'aggressive secularism, radical Islam and multiculturalism'. The tone, as one would expect, is sharper than that of Rowan Williams and the book is more readable and is full of striking quotations. For instance, he points out (at page 36) that although as Christians we are often called to be the salt of the earth it is in fact as a light to the earth that we are called to be "working against the grain in a prophetic and not merely a pastoral mode". This is really the key to this book: Nazir-Ali sees threats to Western Christianity from all of the three areas mentioned and the book, to some extent, is concerned with ideas on how to combat them. There is much that is good here: for example on page 11 he remarks on the tragedy that large numbers of peoples of other faiths and cultures arrived in this country "at exactly the same time as there was a catastrophic loss of Christian discourse". Thus the debate on how to relate these arrivals to the culture of this country was cast in the "new-fangled and insecurely-founded doctrine of multiculturalism and not in the Christian concept of hospitality".

To sum up: these two books are really worthwhile contributions to the continuing debate on the place of religion in our society and any Newman member interested in this topic would find them both stimulating and readable.

\* Readers who wish for a pithy statement of this principle should turn to the answer to Q2 in the Penny Catechism



**John Duddington**

# Circle Programmes

## Aberdeen

6 February  
6 March  
22 March  
3 April

Conscience, Creation and Newman  
The ministry of deacons in diocese and parish  
Day of Recollection  
Faith and Science

Contact: Margaret Smith, 01224 314566

*Fr Stuart Chalmers*  
*Deacon Tony Schmitz*  
*Canon Bill Anderson*  
*Dr Duncan Heddle*

## All Circles

6 March

London Newman Lecture: Sacraments: Doing the Joined-Up Living?

*Dr Gemma Simmonds CJ*

## Birmingham

Contact: Winifred Flanagan, winifredflanagan@gmail.com

February  
8 March  
5 April

Social lunch  
Creative Writing  
Care in the Community  
Care in Hospital

*Annie Murray*  
*Brian Greaney, Patricia Curley*  
*Fr Jeremy Howard*

## Cleveland

Contact: Terry Egerton, tpj.egerton@virgin.net

19 January  
19 February  
19 March  
23 April

New Year Lunch  
Lumen Gentium  
T.B.A.  
St Bede and the Northumbrian Saints

*Rev Deacon Vince Purcell*  
*Prof Paul Murray*  
*Lucy Beckett*

## Coventry

Contact: Maureen Porter, 02476 502965, maureen.porter@talktalk.net

25 January  
28 January  
25 February  
15 March  
25 March  
March  
29 April

Week of Prayer for CU Ecumenical Service  
Greek Orthodox Prayer and Ritual  
Faith, Prayer, Ritual, An Anglican Perspective  
Day of Recollection  
Experience of Faith in Pakistan  
Ecumenical Service  
Catholic Experience in a Multi Faith Hospital Chaplaincy

Led by *Coventry Circle*  
*Fr. John Nankivell*  
*Rev. Katrina Scott*  
TBA  
*Fr. Dennis Carter, S.S.C.*  
Led by *Coventry Circle*  
*Fr Jeremy Howard*

## Croydon

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

## Ealing

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

16 January  
20 February  
10 April

Secularism – threat or opportunity?  
Marriage in the 21st Century  
The Global Perspective

*Myriam Francois-Cerrah*  
*Edmund Adamus*  
*Fr Aylward Shorter M. Afr., White Father*

## Eastbourne & Bexhill

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

## Edinburgh

Contact: Annette Brydone, annettebrydone@gmail.com

## Glasgow

Contact: Dan Baird, danbaird98@hotmail.com

30 January  
27 February  
27 March  
1 May

Religion and Social Change in Latin America  
What Happened to Ecumenism?  
Religion in an Independent Scotland  
The Vatican and the American Sisters' Leadership Group

*Dr Liam Kane*  
*Rev John Miller*  
*Duncan MacLaren*  
*Sr Mary Ross*

## Hertfordshire

Contact: Maggy Swift, 01582 792136, maggy.swift@btinternet.com

19 January  
6 February

A Fundamental Option for the Poor  
A Trigger from the Psalms

*Scott Albrecht*  
*Bishop John Crowley*

22 March	Circle Quiet Day	<i>Brother John Mayhead</i>
2 April	AGM & 'The Catholic/Methodist Dialogue'	<i>Bishop John Sherrington</i>

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

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

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

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

3 February	Faith in Africa	<i>Keith Neal</i>
3 March	John's Gospel: if you knew the gift of God	<i>Peter Edmonds SJ</i>
29 March	Quiet Day: Lenten Reflection	<i>Father John Twist SJ</i>
7 April	Treasure behind the scriptural texts	<i>Teresa Brittain NDS</i>

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

5 February	TBA	
4 March	Biblical Account of Idolatry & its Relevance Today	<i>Prof Melissa Raphael</i>
1 April	TBA	

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

20 February	Food & Faith	<i>Steve Atherton</i>
20 March	The Sunni Muslim Faith & The Spirit of Cordoba	<i>Zia Chaudhry</i>
10 April	The Social and Political Situation in Palestine	<i>Dr. Gergely Juhasz</i>

**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

29 January	The temptations of religious fiction	<i>Professor Terry Wright</i>
26 March	AGM followed by a talk on Mary Tudor	<i>Professor J. Derry</i>

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

28 January	East and West: Is Unity Possible?	<i>Mr Anthony O'Mahony</i>
27 March	The Permanent Diaconate	<i>Julian Burling</i>

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

16 January	St. Paul	<i>Paula Gooder</i>
6 February	Annual General Meeting	
20 March	What is the Ordinariate?	<i>Father John Pitchford</i>

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

31 January	Choosing Life in Chaotic Times	<i>Maggie McCarthy</i>
28 February	Science and Faith: Friends or Enemies	<i>Dr Gordon McPhate</i>
28 March	Reflections of a Pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela	<i>Rt Rev Edwin Regan</i>
25 April	A Black American Family's Journey through the Civil Rights Era	<i>Ali Ansari</i>

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

20 January	Constituency groups [working title – to be confirmed]	<i>John Hinman</i>
17 February	St. Clare (title to be confirmed)	<i>Revd. Rowan Williams</i>
17 March	The council that Restored the Permanent Diaconate	<i>Rev. Vincent Purcell</i>
14 April	City of Sanctuary [title to be confirmed]	<i>Tiffany Allen</i>