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The Manchester Newman Lecture

Catholic Social Teaching and Electoral Politics

Anna Rowlands

Catholic Evangelism

Canon Kathryn Fleming

Human Rights and the Church

John Duddington

The London Newman Lecture

Neuroscience and the Soul

James Le Fanu

Newman 2015 AGM in North Wales
Letters to the Editor
Spirituality Page
Poverty Study Day report

Contents

Comment 1
The Politics of the Common Good: What does Catholic Social Teaching have to offer to electoral politics? 2
Catholic Evangelism – some thoughts for Coventry Newman Circle 11
To the Saints in Rome 18
Human Rights – a challenge for the Church? 22
Neuroscience and the Soul 26
The Edinburgh Affair 33
Letters to the Editor 34
An AGM in North Wales – June 13th 36
The Newman Association.....is it Worth Saving? 38
Ushaw Study Day, 'Catholic Perspectives on Poverty' 40
Responding to the Challenge of Climate Change 41
Spirituality Page 43
Ecumenical Conference, November 14th 44
Concerning Circles 44

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Comment

We have just been through a long and gruelling General Election campaign in which some issues (such as the National Health Service and education) have been very prominent but others (like the family and social responsibilities, and the sanctity of life) have been largely ignored. Immigration has been important, but has often been treated as almost beyond political competence.

Before the campaign began the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales circulated a letter to the faithful, selecting some key issues: respect for life, the alleviation of poverty, the living wage, religious freedom, overseas aid and sustainable development. Politicians, they said, should be committed to the common good.

For Anna Rowlands, in her inaugural Manchester Newman Lecture, included in this issue of *The Newman*, the theme was also the common good, a fundamental element of Catholic Social Teaching. If we could all agree on the common good all would be well. But we live in an increasingly divided society, so how can the conflicts be reconciled? The task of political parties, she said, was to orientate the interests of the people towards the common good.

Awkward themes lie under all this. People may feel they have "rights" but these can only be satisfied in practice if they, or others, also accept responsibilities. Meanwhile the economic divisions in our society appear to be widening, which has led to a lively political debate about tax avoidance; but the deeper question here is whether a small, wealthy group can be expected to share a general population-wide concept of the common good and pay high taxes accordingly.

Under such domestic and international pressures our longstanding two-party system in the UK appears to be breaking up. Small parties can focus on their specialist concepts of the common good, based on the environment, for example, or on English or Scottish nationalism. The Conservative and Labour parties, though, are still seeking the all-embracing strategies (and consequent political fudges) that might yield them Parliamentary majorities at Westminster.

The bishops advised us to decide, in the light of the Gospel, how our votes could best serve the common good. But for many of us that involved some difficult compromises.

Barry Riley

The Manchester Newman Lecture 2015

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

By Anna Rowlands

These are the words of Michael Sandel, the popular American political philosopher, writing in The Guardian in 2012:

"We can't decide any of the questions we argue about without implicitly relying on certain ethical ideas, certain ideas of justice, certain ideas of the common good. We can't be neutral on those questions even if we pretend to be."[1]

The idea of the common good is back on the political and economic agenda. Public intellectuals including the socialist-anarchist thinker Noam Chomsky and the communitarian thinker Sandel write in support of the idea that we need to retrieve the concept of the common good. For Sandel our biggest challenge is to find intellectual and practical resources that help push back against the pervasiveness of markets in determining our human experience. Sandel calls for a critique of the idea that economic efficiency, "defined as getting goods to those with the greatest willingness and ability to pay for them", determines what we commonly understand by the common good[2]. For Chomsky we have reduced the notion of the common good to little more than an aggressive focus on private gain alone. This dominant cultural emphasis suppresses the deeper social emotions of solidarity, mutual support and care, which are vital to our social wellbeing and tend in practice to motivate much of our actual behaviour.

But whilst Sandel and Chomsky might largely agree on what is wrong with the way we currently think about politics and 'common goods', they do not agree on what should replace our current approach. Sandel, in particular, has drawn attention for his willingness to defend the role that religion can play in fostering a less primarily market-driven version of the common good; but others still feel that religious traditions are conversely too divisive and too idealistic to foster a genuine common good.

Despite this continued liberal concern about the role that religion might play in forging a common life, one of the most significant contributions to the re-emerging contemporary conversation about the common good – its meaning, significance and substance – has come from Catholic social teaching (CST). Indeed CST's version of the common good has been a key resource for the 'Blue Labour' and 'Red Tory' movements. Jon Cruddas, author of Labour's Policy Review, has repeatedly stated

that he wanted Labour's manifesto for the 2015 election to be based on CST and its concept of the common good. Even the Greens – not known for their orientation towards such language – launched their manifesto with a common good tagline. Along with the concept of human dignity the principle of the common good is a foundational one in CST. It is an idea that has its roots in Aristotle, and was developed most coherently in its Christian form by Thomas Aquinas. However, despite these deep roots, it can be a notoriously slippery term, sliding easily through the fingers, or else being open to serious manipulation at the hands of those who want to use it to their own advantage. In the process the term becomes either vacuous or dangerous, emptied of its richer meaning and content.

The meaning of the Common Good

So what does CST say about the meaning of the common good? The Second Vatican Council defined the common good as: *"The sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily"*[3]. Later Church documents have referred to the common good not so much as a process of social life but more as the end or *telos* of social life itself – the goal of living in society is to attain the common good. We still find both of these emphases in CST.

In a recent article the Anglican evangelical theologian Oliver O'Donovan slightly rephrased this understanding: "The common good is the good of the community of communicating members, consisting in their capacity to realise fulfilment *through* living together"[4]. Similarly, the British Catholic philosopher John Haldane has tried to break open the idea of a good which is genuinely 'common' by distinguishing between five different kinds of goods. In ordinary conversation there is a tendency to use the term 'common good' as an umbrella term to cover what might actually be better understood as a series of quite different, although interrelated, goods. By way of illustration we often tend to think about the provision of public services as matters of the common good. In a sense they are, but Haldane argues that in fact some of these kinds of goods are better conceived of as *public* goods: goods where the possession or enjoyment of them by one group does not preclude similar benefits being enjoyed by others.

By enjoying clean air I don't use up a quota of clean air that prevents others from having access to the same good. Haldane also distinguishes private goods, individual goods, and collective goods from common goods. *Private* goods involve the possession of a good by one party, such that another may not simultaneously possess it: an appointment with my hairdresser or doctor or dentist, for instance. An individual good is a good that attaches to an individual independently of the well-being enjoyed by others: warmth, the absence of pain. A *collective* good denotes a set of individual goods: aggregate wealth, property ownership. However, for Haldane, as for O'Donovan, truly *common* goods are goods that relate to the life of collectivities and can only be enjoyed through membership of groups. Truly common goods are always more than aggregates, more than collections of interests.

So what are Haldane and O'Donovan trying to emphasise? Both men are deliberately placing emphasis on the idea that because we live in communities we must be capable of communicating with each other in order to create the social conditions necessary for achieving something close to the common good. The common good does not boil

down to the sum of interests, the aggregate of the things we individually lobby for. You cannot, for example, reach the common good from a vast focus group exercise, which surveys what groups of people think in order to deliver public policy on an (often short term) aggregate basis.

The focus group run by the pollster wants to know only about sums of interests. If we are going to focus on the necessary conditions for you and I to have a decent conversation about what we care about we need to think hard about the best ways for us to communicate with each other, most especially about the things that are tricky to talk about. The way we set the conversation up makes a difference to whether we can really talk about goods, or only about interests. And so it becomes clearer that dealing in the common good assumes that we have some ethical concept of community in the first place and some practices to go with it – that we have at the very least a sense of place and relationship with neighbours. Of course, without this we will still have politics but we will not reach a politics of the common good. **CST is not looking to get rid of the idea or language of 'interests', or common interests, but wants to reframe how we think about interests, including self-interest. And electoral politics needs to be able to participate in that, or else it becomes nothing more than a game of power and the assertion of the will.**

A Christian notion of the common good challenges the idea that freedom is best thought about *only* in negative terms as *freedom from* coercion. CST still wants to think *also* about freedom for creative association: what we might create in communities where communication about the good becomes possible. This contrasts with the basic insights of many of the founding fathers of political liberalism for whom any attempt to make talk about the good – the foundation of political life – will tend to induce its opposite: intensified conflict. For a certain strand of Hobbesian political liberalism, to replace talk about the good with the brokering of interests is the best hope we have for a decent and peaceful politics. The Catholic social tradition has repeatedly challenged this worldview. A language of interests rather than goods sets us in competitive relation, takes scarcity rather than abundance as the basis of its political and social mindset, and arguably proves too 'thin' a moral discourse to build genuine human relationship and strong community.

Three Reasons Why This Tradition Is Important Now

In the light of this rough outline of the understanding of the common good, I want to suggest three very basic contextual reasons why in the context of an election we especially need to engage with the common good. First, to seek the common good is to seek a way of speaking and acting that unites rather than divides. This does not mean that all conflict is avoided – a point to which I will return. However, the concept

and practice of the common good does represent an indispensible language and practice of relationship.

Although a Catholic notion of the common good is rooted in the Scriptures, and in the teachings and writings of the early church fathers, it is with the work of Thomas Aquinas that the idea receives its most systematic development as a distinctively Christian idea. In his writings on the common good and political rule Aquinas suggests that, within creation, multiple forms of practical 'care' exist so that we may be guided towards the end already purchased for us by Christ.[5] He notes that if we were destined only for an end that lies within ourselves then the care of the doctor, teacher, banker, or tutor would be sufficient for us to live the good life. However, in faith we are destined for an end outside of ourselves and therefore need a wider form of spiritual 'care' from our political leaders to guide us beyond ourselves to communion with God and with each other.

Aquinas argues that we see here an analogy between the care for the 'one' and the care for the 'whole' or the 'multitude'. If the highest good of the one person is to be found in seeking education, physical health and material goods to sustain life, then it follows that these are the goods that the virtuous ruler needs to seek and protect for society as a whole: health, knowledge, and wealth maximisation. But here, Aquinas says, Christian faith makes all the difference to our politics. The Christian believes the good life to consist of other, truer ends: to live well together in peace, rendering mutual assistance and in so doing learning to participate in something of the life of God. This requires a capacity for a future-oriented reading of moral relationships and neighbour love. My neighbour is not just the person with whom I find myself in proximity now, but also the person with whom I might be destined to share the life of communion in God eternally. As I can never be totally sure who my eternal neighbour might be, perhaps I should err on the side of treating all as my neighbour. In the developing Catholic sacramental tradition, my neighbour is also an altar where I meet God now. Christ is mysteriously present in each neighbour in ways I cannot fully grasp. This is a radically inclusive, future-oriented vision of neighbour love. And it changes the way we see our politics.

Some such fundamental notion of irreducibly common goods, which produce the experience of a good that is more than the sum of their parts, seems vital in contesting the atomistic and divisive social language that currently permeates our social spaces. Lest this sound overly esoteric, it is worth noting the extent to which we are currently surrounded by divisive social language. Much of the political language – used across parties – that has been shaping our public conversations about austerity has been highly divisive. In fact, it has seemed at times as if the notion of virtue itself required a willingness to speak in such divisive terms: the deserving versus undeserving poor, strivers versus skivers, illegal versus legal persons. This kind of language comes to dominate our public spaces and fails to recognise the irreducibly common goods that ground a peaceable social order and strikes me as the antithesis of a Thomist view of social life.

The second reason we need the language and practice of the common good is connected to the first: because a Christian conception of the common good maintains a focus on the whole which is greater than the sum of parts it continues to speak

of human value rooted in an account of *being*, rather than merely human function. It therefore provides a necessary challenge to all forms of public and private action seeking to reduce the human body and human relations to functions and interests, to costs and benefits. Talking only of private and public goods is too weak an account, morally speaking, to prevent the instrumentalising of human life and the endless invention of new forms of exclusion and destruction. As Hannah Arendt noted so clearly the language of function and interest quickly gives way to practices of human superfluity: to the idea that some people are not essential, can be discarded, expelled or even exterminated.[6]

In contrast to the language of function and interest, forms of common good language (when handled well) contain humanising words that help us speak publicly not only of hope but of the unacceptable and difficult: suffering, failure, pain and tragedy. Communication about the good within meaningful communities will need to carry stories of pain, anxiety, and profound loss. This is a side of common good talk we don't hear so much about.

Common good talk provides the possibility of a response to difficulty and human suffering that is more than silence, suppression, distraction or consumption. It is this approach to politics that Pope Francis has exemplified on the public stage, particularly when addressing the challenges of global migration into Europe. His first question to Christians in the face of migrants drowning was: have you wept? We overcome the 'globalisation of indifference' through first choosing not to anaesthetise ourselves to social pain in the name of 'wellbeing'.

New forms of socialisation

The third reason we need to maintain an engagement with the language and practices of the common good concerns the paradoxical challenge of learning to live with a vision of life in communion, but in the context of a generation experiencing the challenges and opportunities of radical plurality. Whilst we rightly talk about isolation, the breakdown of human relations and hyper-individualism as challenges to the common good, this captures only one dimension of a more complex social story. Arguably, what we face is not a simple decline of socialisation – we are all less sociable - but the simultaneous eclipse of older forms of socialisation and rebirth of new forms of socialisation.

Catholic social teaching began to discuss this reality in its handling of the common good from the 1980s onwards. John Paul II described forms of increasingly intense social interdependence, which he carefully and very deliberately distinguished from forms of social solidarity.[7] He argued that increased use of all forms of technology, rapidly intensifying forms of human migration, the increased experience of bureaucracy in everyday life are all social facts which speak of newly intensified forms of socialisation. However, such forms of interdependence and socialisation are not necessarily expressions of solidarity or civil communion. Each has the potential to be so, when rightly engaged. John Paul II argued that solidarity is the solid social practice and moral virtue that moves us from intensity of basic socialisation towards something richer: a community of caritas, justice and peace.

Echoing and deepening this analysis, David Hollenbach SJ, of Boston College, suggests that these forms of contemporary interdependence simultaneously shape and

limit our engagement with the common good.[8] Intensified plurality of this kind makes conceiving of the common good more difficult, yet our only real ethical possibility. Hollenbach raises a series of questions for advocates and critics of the common good alike. Without some shared sense of the Real and the Good, it seems increasingly difficult to address any of the really complex questions we face.

The challenges are varied and significant:

- the crises in political authority
- the challenges brought by human migration
- the fallout from the economic crisis
- intensified forms of global conflict and displacement
- ecological change
- and the future of social care

These require some kind of concept of the common good. The question, as Sandel suggests, is less *whether*, but *which*, concept of the common good we hold. However, Hollenbach poses a serious question for any keen enthusiast of common good thinking: given the evisceration of our common good practices and the layers of ethnic, religious and economic difference to be negotiated, can a commitment to the common good be revitalised without, at least in the short term, provoking a simultaneously increase in social conflict?

It seems clear that any robust account of the common good we seek to pursue in response to these stark challenges needs to be more open to handling paradox and conflict. Both John Paul II and Francis have suggested that an account of conflict needs to be brought within a Catholic social teaching of the common good. Whilst this is hinted at as a necessary development, it is not yet a sustained theological reflection.[9] Perhaps the much-anticipated social encyclical on ecology will offer us more resources to think about conflict and the common good. For CST to act as a convincing resource for those navigating political life at the coal face it will be increasingly necessary to talk openly and clearly about how we handle the conflicts.

A further (not unrelated) point concerns the need to prize apart a Christian form of common good thinking from a narrower idea that equates the common good with a rational intellectual consensus or a search for cultural homogeneity. This is to recall that the Christian understanding of the truly good is rooted first and last in forms of *communion* rather than in *agreement* per se.

Alasdair MacIntyre, the Scottish philosopher, is surely right that we still lack spaces for handling the properly deliberative element of the common good – but given the more spacious and imaginative contours of the Thomist account of the common good, we need to talk about more than *just* the deliberative element. Christian reflection on the common good needs to serve genuinely *plural* Christian forms and practices of the common good, of communion and gift exchange. Perhaps one of the most profound examples of Christian common good thinking is to be found in the life of L'Arche communities established by Jean Vanier or the Focolare movement, through their creative business practice found in the economy of communion.

At root, the practices of politics and faith are shared responses to the question: what life do we wish – or in our case are we called - to live together? In the Catholic social

vision what faith gives to 'secular' politics then, is less a list of policy demands and more an animating vision of the very purpose or end-goals of politics. The more concrete translation of those ideas has led to a Catholic emphasis on:

- the dignity of work and labour and its priority over capital (including calls for a living wage)
- the necessity of structuring national borders to allow protection to refugees
- the need to view ourselves as intergenerational stewards of creation
- the need for social care for the most vulnerable
- a concern for clear just war criteria
- the need for a highly participatory political system and one in which those least able to lobby in their own favour are heard within the policy system

The beginning and end of politics then, is the common good. What makes a account of the common good distinct from the idea of the greatest good for the greatest number is the very framework within which it views the point of politics.

The roots of the political in CST and the common good of political parties

One of the unique contributions of the Catholic social tradition is to view politics itself as a natural inclination of all rooted in the good life. The political instinct is a gift of creation – even if Adam and Eve had not eaten the apple, figuratively speaking, there would still have been politics. That is a thought worth thinking about for a moment, because not all Christians would say that; for some, politics is simply a consequence or outcome of the Fall, of sin. Of course, even for Catholics politics becomes even more necessary after the apple is eaten and conflict and division enter the human family, but fascinatingly the Catholic tradition sees the abiding roots of politics originating before that moment, within the good life of Eden itself.

If you are scratching your head at this point – where in Eden does politics find expression? – then the Catholic answer goes something like this. Politics begins when we first learn that we need to talk to each other, to join together to act in order to order, organise and participate in the world around us. *Associating* with each other to act creatively in the world around us and to *order the world around us* are desires rooted in goodness, they are not just about compensating for sin. So a true, although easily distorted, desire for relationality and right order lie at the heart of a Catholic belief in the necessity and virtue of politics.

We might say that Catholics have a 'high' view of the political vocation, and an ambitious – although not utopian – sense what might be achieved by coming together to act. One expression of that task of associating with each other to build relationality

and order is found in the work of political parties.

So, given the election season we are in, I will conclude now with four particular 'common good' tasks which belong to political parties. This is especially timely given the rise of new, regional and far right parties, and the massive decline in party membership.

CST describes the four common good 'tasks' of political parties as follows: first, to foster widespread participation in political life and in so doing to make taking on public responsibilities seem accessible to all. This, I think, raises very interesting questions for us about what kind of people are and are not currently well represented in elected roles, and the extent to which what happens within political parties is a force for good in encouraging participation especially amongst those who don't think standing for local or national government is for them.

Second, the task of all parties is to interpret the aspirations of civil society: to listen actively to the desires of the people one seeks to represent and to try to get a sense of a wider set of hopes and grief amongst the electorate beyond special interests. How are political parties currently listening? Is that listening process driven primarily by financial interests and what sociologists call 'short networks' – the idea that the 1 per cent have the networks and connections to make public life work for them, whereas the 99 per cent do not. What reflections do we, the 99 per cent, have on whether these methods of 'listening' seem to be good vehicles of engagement for a politics of the common good?

Further, CST says that the party task is not just to listen but then also to help orientate the interests people describe towards the common good. This is partly how we ensure listening doesn't just become the tyranny of the majority in moral terms. To what extent, then, does our practice of party politics foster division or seek to build opportunities for civil friendships between groups, especially brokering relationships between those whose interests might be seen to be opposed?

The audience at Friends' Meeting House

Finally, CST emphasises that political parties are tasked with offering effective ways for all citizens (beyond just the membership of a party) to contribute to the formulation of party policies. Attempts by the Conservatives to choose candidates through local primaries, and by Labour to engage policy ideas through meetings with non-members using community organising techniques, are interesting experiments in this area. However, given levels of apathy and disengagement the question remains: what else might be done?

Two missing points

Perhaps this formal analysis of the role of parties in the common good in CST is missing two things. First, the question of power and its distribution – or lack of distribution – in modern democracies; the fact that liberal democracies by their very nature, despite their aspirations, tend towards inequality rather than equality, and towards consolidations of power rather than dispersal of power. This does not inevitably mean that democracy is a sham, but perhaps that democracy needs to be self-reflexive – a bit humble and repentant even – and learn how to identify its own weaknesses and act upon them in the interests of something beyond and before it.

The second missing analysis relates to a historical awareness of the ways in which the mass movements of the 20th century brought about change in the basic conditions of justice and distribution. These movements are now in serious decline, or else all but gone: without such movements mobilising the wider body politic, it is hard to see where political renewal will come from. To act on the vision of the Common Good offered by CST would require mobilisation within communities with concrete enough focus to them that face-to-face communication about the good is possible.

As the political philosopher David Runciman has argued, if it is a question of mobilising the 99 per cent as a mass grouping my money is on the 1 per cent continuing to run the show. But perhaps the future lies wide open for those who are able to grasp what it might look like to explore relations with actual neighbours in the light of a vision of future neighbourliness.

Dr Anna Rowlands is Deputy Director of the Centre for Catholic Studies, Durham. This article is an edited and abridged version of her Manchester Newman Lecture which she gave on April 15th at Friends' Meeting House.

[1] Interview with Michael Sandel in The Guardian, 27th May 2012.
[2] http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/regulars/if-i-ruled-the-world-michael-sandel (last accessed 17/04/2015)
[3] See the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World: Gaudium et spes, #26
[4] http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2015/02/20/4183986.htm (last accessed 17/04/2015)
[5] This section refers to Aquinas' 1267 letter to the King of Cyprus, On Kingship [De Regimine Principum]. See R.W. Dyson, Aquinas' Political Writings, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
[6] See Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.
[7] See John Paul II's 1987 social encyclical: Sollicitudo Rei Socialis.
[8] See David Hollenbach, The Common Good and Christian Ethics, Cambridge: CUP, 2002.
[9] See Pope Francis' 2013 Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelii Gaudium.

Catholic Evangelism – some thoughts for Coventry Newman Circle

By Canon Kathryn Fleming

Once upon a time – a good twenty years ago – I was a Lay Minister in a group of parishes in the North Cotswolds. It was quite an exciting time for me. The woman vicar of our parishes had just been ordained priest and I was beginning to wonder whether it was in any way possible that God might be suggesting something similar to me. We were training a new Local Ministry Team to help with leading worship and the training had drawn a delightful group of people together who were unfailingly kind to me as a young mum, several decades their junior. But they were also prepared to be honest about their own vulnerabilities and the things that they just didn't know.

It was one of them, Sheila, who first made me think about my own attitude to evangelisation – or evangelism, as the Church of England puts it. We had completed modules on Old and New Testaments, on Pastoral Visiting and on the preparation of family-friendly non-Eucharistic worship. We enjoyed our evenings exploring together, sitting around a kitchen table. But when we realised that the module next on the list was 'Mission and Evangelism' there was, suddenly, an uncomfortable chill in the air. That group, who had been so relaxed in one another's company, suddenly started looking at their papers or staring out the window – doing anything rather than engage. Finally Sheila burst out: *"It's no good. If I have to do evangelism to be an effective Christian – well, I'm giving up!"*

I wonder if that's you?

- Whether evangelisation feels like a duty or a joy?
- Where you place yourself on the spectrum when it comes to sharing the joy of the gospel with others...
- Whether you are overwhelmed with zeal, or secretly hoping that the whole thing will turn out to be something that really only applies to other people?

You might like to think about that.

It's funny, isn't it – the way the 'E' word terrifies so many of us. I guess it's hard to dissociate it from Bible bashing hardline preachers, or the lone crank with the sandwich board at Oxford Circus, in other words the kind of zealots that give zeal a bad name. We know that we should be overwhelmed with enthusiasm at the idea of sharing our faith with others, but somehow those images intervene and we leap back, convinced that evangelisation is just not for us.

Or is that a purely Anglican problem? Perhaps it is...I certainly can't imagine that a work by the ABC entitled *The Joy of Evangelisation* would provoke much genuine enthusiasm; but, nonetheless, the past decade has seen the Church of England engage with evangelism with fresh enthusiasm. This is an enthusiasm that springs largely, I think, from a renewed understanding that it is not the Church of God which has a mission, but the God of mission who has a Church. In other words, the mission imperative comes not from the Will of the Church, but from the character of God. The Father sends the Son who sends the Spirit. And that the three together send the Church.

Missio dei

Since God is constantly reaching out to us in love, through each and every aspect of creation, since he is so passionately intent on communicating that love to us that he chose to enter our world as Jesus, do we actually have any option at all? John Chrysostum said "I cannot believe in the salvation of anyone who does not long for the salvation of his neighbour" – because, after all, once we know ourselves fully accepted, welcomed and transformed by a loving God, the only possible human response must be to share that experience of loving welcome with others.

I'm from that end of the C of E spectrum which is proud to describe itself as 'catholic' in theology and praxis – valuing a strongly sacramental ministry, keeping the Saints and focussing on the centrality of the Eucharist. But I would say that 'Catholic Evangelism' is a call for the whole church – because, of course, of the true meaning of catholic is ALL EMBRACING, and the point of the Gospel is always, always, to share it. It is our calling to play pass-the-parcel with the good news of God's love so that everyone can know and respond.

In *'Evangelium Gaudii'* Pope Francis writes *"Evangelisation is the task of the Church, first and foremost a pilgrim people advancing towards God"*...It is never something that can be left to others – the ordained, those with a special gifting or inclination. *"I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world"* he says – and "I" in this case means not Francis, not Justin, not a select and holy few – but every single one of God's people – here to live out God's loving purpose and to share it with others. In other words we are dealing with evangelism for all – both those who give and those who receive!

These days evangelism is often thought of as something Protestants do (indeed, in the C of E 'evangelical' and 'protestant' are almost interchangeable as descriptions of a particular kind of churchmanship). But that hasn't always been the case; go back, for example, to the 16th Century when Protestant Christians were almost entirely inwardly focussed on coming to terms with their new 'Reformed' identity and it was Catholic missionaries in the form of the Jesuits who went off to far off lands such as India, China, the Philippines and Japan to tell people about Jesus's love for them.

Of course we may still have anxieties about the 'E' word but listen to this wisdom from Bishop Stephen Cottrell, writing in his splendid book *From the Abundance of the Heart – Catholic Evangelism for all*[1]. *"Although many people in the church today are still suspicious about evangelism, the sharing of good news is something we do all the time. If we have experienced something as good and joyful, there is nothing more natural than to share it with others. So, if we go to a good film, read a good book, if our football team wins, or if a new child is born into our family, we tell people about it. We don't feel we are oppressing them in any way by telling them about it. We don't necessarily expect, and we certainly don't demand, that they see the film, read the book, support the team or adopt the baby! We are not looking for any reward. We simply share our excitement with them. We have experienced something to be good. We tell people about it. We can do no other."*

Put like that it sounds so simple! Who WOULDN'T share good news of a birth?

The difficulty comes if we haven't experienced our faith as such good news...

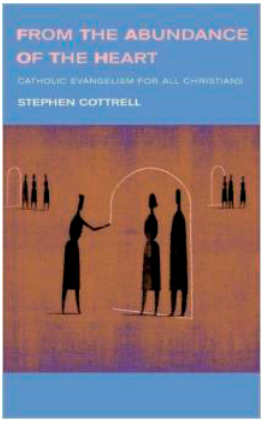
Pope Francis recognises this problem: *"Unless we are convinced from personal experience that it is not the same thing to have known Jesus as not to have known him, not the same thing to walk with him as to walk blindly, not the same thing to hear his word as not to know it..."* – well, our evangelism is never going to be very fruitful – and in any case, why would you even bother?

If all we have to offer is membership of a worldwide club with some slightly unusual membership requirements and practices – then the whole enterprise is unutterably pointless. Deeply conscious of our roots in history, recognising and treasuring the legacy of the past, we don't necessarily embrace change with much enthusiasm – and there's also a natural human tendency when under threat to cling to what we do know and trust that can make it particularly tricky to recognise when some changes are not only desirable but essential.

That never means throwing out the baby with the bathwater – but it does mean being conscious of the changing shape of modern life. While Sunday was most definitely a day when not a lot happened in my childhood, by the time my own children came along most of their friends were doing exciting things on Sunday mornings. With both parents working full time and Saturday as catch-up day, Sunday is often the only real family time – and unless the church becomes better at modelling family – including everyone, ensuring that there is space for them to be themselves with one another and with God – we may well find ourselves rejected by those who with whom we already have a connection. The chances of bringing others to share the good news are frankly remote.

In any case, it's not really all about what happens within the Church, is it? One of the great catholic evangelists of the last century, Vincent Donovan, of whom more later, wrote: *"' It is amazing how, in every crisis in world history, the church has the temptation to react in an inturned way. "Straighten out the calendar of the saints", it says, "or purge some of the more outlandish ones on the list. Reform Canon Law. Revise the seminary curriculum or structure. Make new laws about the priesthood or the religious life. Clean up the liturgy. Tidy up the sacraments. Be good and the world will come to you."*

That's the sort of behaviour that earns us a reputation as experts in rearranging the deckchairs on a certain doomed liner. And, try as we might to render our liturgy more enticing, our worship times more convenient, people won't come unless they have good reason to do so. And the trouble is, of course, that so often what we do and who we are is so very loud that nobody can hear, even for a moment, what we say! So – before the Church can engage with evangelising the world she needs to receive the good news for herself and be transformed afresh by the gospel.



Stephen Cottrell again: *"Do we experience the Christian faith as good news? Are we in a place of receiving, where the goodness of what God reveals to us in Christ can actually start shaping and changing our lives?" Or if you prefer Pope Francis: "We know well that with Jesus Christ life becomes richer and that with him it is easier to find meaning in everything. THIS IS WHY WE EVANGELISE!"*

As an unashamed liberal, who believes that hell is empty

because the goodness of God is always greater than the worst of our human sin, I find that last explanation really helpful. We are not evangelising in order to offer people a sneaky "Get Out of Jail Free" card but rather because, to repeat: *"We know well that with Jesus Christ life becomes richer and that with him it is easier to find meaning in everything. THIS IS WHY WE EVANGELISE!"*

Isn't that wonderful!

The best reason

Over the past decade the C of E has introduced something called 'Back to Church Sunday' - and provided all sorts of exciting resources from tailor-made invitations to specially designed Fair Trade tee shirts to support the campaign. But I'm sure I'm not alone in having worshipped in some churches where my prayer would be not "Dear Lord, please send more people to meet you in this place" but rather "Dear Lord, PLEASE send anyone who is seriously seeking you somewhere else...if they come here they'll lose all heart and hope instantly"

So we need to be confident that we are inviting people into a church that lives and breathes the reality of their life in Christ. Put another way, before the Church can evangelise the world, the Gospel must evangelise the Church. Some churches will work really hard on 'outreach' to particular groups – very often young families. That's brilliant – if the church is thoroughly committed to the flourishing of the whole community.

But too often, whatever the intention, what actually happens is something like this. A Church Council meets and has a long, hard, look at itself. The conversation unfolds along disturbingly familiar lines.

- *If we don't regenerate, everyone will eventually get old and die.*
- *It's energising to have young people around.*
- *Younger members can do the work that older members can't manage anymore.*
- *Young families remind us of church when we were younger, and our children not yet grown up and gone*

What price now loving service? Suddenly instead of an invitation issued in response to God's overwhelming love and grace poured out for us, we have what amounts to a marketing campaign, manipulating people as targets who can be used for our purposes. At this point we are dangerously close to saying that we want these rare and valuable Young Families for what they can give to us rather than celebrating the fact that, as Pope Francis put it: *"Every person is immensely holy and deserves our love".*

To use that as our foundation is to revolutionise our approach to evangelism. Suddenly, rather than wondering whether we can persuade the playgroup families who meet in our Hall to cross the Church threshold and come to Mass, we are able to ask with honesty *what do those families need? How can I show them by the way I care for them that they are uniquely loved and precious to God? How can I serve these people, in this place – the community that God has given me here and now, the community God has given me to love?*

So let's try that Church Council scenario again, with a different agenda. Suppose that the Church was above all determined to feed souls and share authentic community? By that light, young families are welcome! Of course they are. So are older families,

childless couples, singletons: so welcome, so very, very welcome. And most welcome of all must surely be the broken people, those who are unlikely to contribute anything except their wounds and their neediness; those who will never make it on to the readers' rota nor help with a successful fundraising push; the broken.

Now that would be a church *worth* belonging to...and if the good news that we are sharing is good news for the broken, then all is well. Pope Francis declared: *"The heart of the Christian moral message is love for one another, which must motivate Christians to share the Gospel, help the poor and work for social justice."*

Bishop Cottrell again: *"And here we come to the first of many paradoxes that inevitably shape any consideration of Christian faith. It is in giving that we receive. We may not get very far in enabling the gospel to evangelise the Church if we do it in a vacuum, locked away inside Church buildings and Church culture. It might best be done in the community around us. After all, the raison d'être of the Church is the needs of the world."*

Evangelism is indeed about looking outwards – but it's about doing so without being in any way predatory. Despite the reminder that the fields are indeed white for harvest, it's not about harvesting souls for the sake of filling barns and shutting the doors firmly against the world. Indeed, woe betide anyone who believes, even for an instant, that the Church has the monopoly on God's actions in the world he loves so much. As then Archbishop Rowan Williams wrote in his foreword to the C of E report of 2004, *'Mission Shaped Church'*: "Mission is about working out what God is doing, and then joining in", or if you prefer Pope Francis' version "Look for the people, places and trends where God is present".

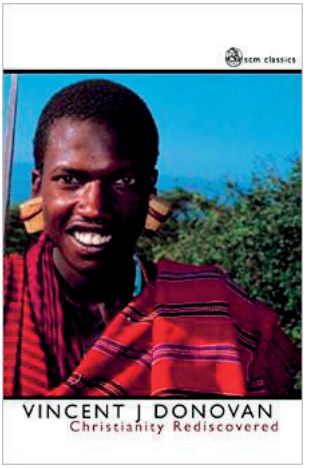
We're catholic, after all, and for me part of that is recognising that God made the whole earth to be a sacramental sign of His presence – so that we can constantly expect to find him in all his creatures, and, finding Him, point out his presence to others. For me, that is very close to the heart of evangelism; saying to friends and strangers: "Look! This is Holy ground! YOU are Holy ground. Here God lives among God's people."

Remember that St Dominic felt called to found his missionary order after spending the whole night in a Tavern chatting about faith with an innkeeper who was a Cathar. Part of the reasons Catharism was so prevalent at the time was because the official representatives of Christianity in the area, the Papal Legates, lived a life of luxury, so remote from most ordinary people that they even travelled shielded from their gaze, as they were carried around on litters. It was no surprise that the Southern French peasants could not relate to this and willingly threw in their lot with the heretics.)

So Dominic established an order of poor priests to live *among* the people rather than above the people. In the same way, Jesuit missionaries to China in the 16th/17th century dressed as Chinese philosophers – so that they would underline respect for the local culture rather than standing outside it as critical foreigners, intent on

imposing an alien culture. This approach reaches its apotheosis in the work of Vincent J Donovan, which formed much of the thinking behind *'Mission Shaped Church'*. In *Christianity Rediscovered*[2] he tells of his own faltering attempts as a missionary to the Masai, transformed when he began to understand that the only way he would ever get the gospel across would be if he could translate it into the CULTURE, and not simply the language, of those he was trying to reach.

"As I began to ponder the evangelization of the Masai I had to realise that God enables a people, any people, to reach salvation through their culture and tribal, racial customs and traditions. In this realization would have to rest my whole approach to the evangelisation of the Masai."



It worked! Of course it did, because after a year of sharing the Gospel expressed in Masai terms Donovan helped them to recognise the God already at work among them. He had the courage to recognise his need to listen and learn, rather than proceed from a position of superiority..."Jesus is the answer. Now tell me the question." Jettisoning accepted missionary practice must have felt dangerous to the point of lunacy - but then the heart of the Gospel is surely holy lunacy – a baby in a manger, a man dying on a cross. His lunatic courage bore fruit. Stripped of its western cultural accretions the Gospel made sense and as he immersed himself in the ways of the Masai they understood that he was truly committed to their communities.

The Masai Creed

It was a breakthrough for Donovan when one Masai village forged its own creed: *"We believe in the one High God, who out of love created the beautiful world and everything good in it. He created man and wanted man to be happy in the world. God loves the world and every nation and tribe on the earth. We have known this High God in the darkness, and now we know him in the light. God promised in the book of his word, the bible, that he would save the world and all the nations and tribes.*

We believe that God made good his promise by sending his son, Jesus Christ, a man in the flesh, a Jew by tribe, born poor in a little village, who left his home and was always on safari doing good, curing people by the power of God, teaching about God and man, showing that the meaning of religion is love. He was rejected by his people, tortured and nailed hands and feet to a cross, and died. He lay buried in the grave, but the hyenas did not touch him, and on the third day, he rose from the grave. He ascended to the skies. He is the Lord.

We believe that all our sins are forgiven through him. All who have faith in him must be sorry for their sins, be baptized in the Holy Spirit of God, live the rules of love and share the bread together in love, to announce the good news to others until Jesus comes again. We are waiting for him. He is alive. He lives. This we believe. Amen."

This process of enculturation has been foundational in our understanding of mission and evangelism over the past few years – and as a result things like cafe church, skaters' church and church in the pub have emerged...communities gathering around

the person of the Risen Christ, exploring the meaning of faith and discipleship together and, as they become a community, learning to value and to celebrate the sacraments too. This isn't *'either/or'* - but *'both/and'*, or what Rowan Williams dubbed the 'Mixed economy church', enabling evangelisation in terms that everyone can own.

But we know, of course, that you can't be a Christian alone. Evangelism isn't just about bringing people into relationship with Jesus, it's about bringing people into relationship with his family the Church. For catholic Christians, being Christian is about being part of a community, that band of pilgrims travelling together as sisters and brothers. This is both appealing and alien to many in this age of individualism: while people are willing to admit to loneliness, they are loathe to give up self-determination and the impact of community life lived well (life shaped by the catholic disciplines of spiritual formation- self-examination, confession – is both attractive and abhorrent).

And of course the point of the Church as community is that it can never be a sanctuary of like-minded souls. It is all about pushing us beyond our comfort zone – *because that is what God does*. He is always ahead of us, already talking to those awkward people we hoped we wouldn't have to meet. What can we do but follow? Again we find ourselves recognising truths discovered by Vincent Donovan, who wrote to his fellow missionaries – to all of us who long to be catholic evangelists: *"Do not try to call them back to where they were, and do not try to call them to where you are, as beautiful as that place might seem to you. You must have the courage to go with them to a place that neither you nor they have ever been before."* God is on the move, and we are invited to travel with him.

Of course, as catholic Christians (Anglo- or Roman-) we will have particular nuances and emphases relating to how we think about evangelism. We might be more reticent about altar calls and conversion experiences (for surely we know that conversion is a continuing process, involving failure, repentence, and a new start again and again and again). For all the dramatic conversions à la Saul or Francis there are many other slow growths in faith and understanding.

But the most famous modern example today of a process-led (rather than decision point) method of evangelism actually comes from charismatic evangelicals - the Alpha Course. That doesn't mean we catholic Christians would necessarily give exactly the same talks on the Alpha Course (though of course there is the Catholic version) but the method chimes with our own understanding of how we can grow into our knowledge of the good news of God's love.

For at the end of the day we are left confronting the simple truth that actions speak louder than words. The instinctive catholic model of mission is both incarnational and sacramental...combining worship and service. At the altar, actions speak louder than words; they do so on the streets as well – and it is the same Christ who is worshipped and adored in sacrament and slum. We continue his mission as we are baptized into his Body, and we live his life, for others, in the World he loves so much.

This talk was given to the Coventry Circle in February 2015. Canon Kathryn Fleming is Canon Pastor at Coventry Cathedral.

[1] Published by Darton, Longman & Todd (2006), £12.99
[2] SCM Classics (2001), £16.99

To the Saints in Rome

by Peter Edmonds SJ

The letter of Paul that is heard more often than any other as the Second Reading on Sundays in the three-year Catholic lectionary is his Letter to the Romans. This letter is the longest, the most influential and the most rewarding of Paul's undisputed letters. It may well be the last that he wrote.

The ruins of a temple in Ancient Corinth

He seems to have written it in Corinth (in modern Greece) during his stay there recorded in Acts 20.3. Cenchreae was its port, where Phoebe was a deacon (Romans 16.1); and the Gaius mentioned in 16.23 may well be the Gaius whom Paul baptised in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1.14). It was written around AD 57; we cannot be sure of the exact year, but certainly it was written before the publication of any of the written Gospels.

Paul wrote to the Christian community in Rome (Romans 1.7). This was a Church he had never visited or evangelised; nonetheless, as "minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles" (15.16), he longed to see them (1.11). Rome was the most important city in his world; its government, through its representative Pontius Pilate, had executed Jesus in faraway Judea. The Christians of Rome, at the centre of the Roman Empire, had many contacts, especially with the churches in Judea (Acts 28.21). Luke, in Acts, describes Paul's eventual arrival in Rome as a prisoner (Acts 28.14).

Why write to the Romans?

Many have thought that, after more than twenty years in the apostolate, Paul thought it worthwhile to write a general essay about his theology; to provide a manifesto for the converts he had made and the assistants with whom he had worked (some of whom he lists in his final chapter). If this is correct the letter differs significantly from his others, which were all written in response to specific pastoral situations. Paul's preferred method of evangelisation was to visit a community personally (1 Thessalonians 2.17); if he was unable to do so he would send his delegate (1 Thessalonians 3.2). He had, over recent years, adopted a third method – that of writing letters (1 Thessalonians 5.27). If, then, he wrote to the Romans for no obvious pastoral reason this would be an innovation.

Others say that Paul wrote because he was a "minister of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians

5.18). The Roman Church could have been one of the oldest: Luke wrote in Acts that people from Rome had been among those who heard Peter preach on Pentecost day (Acts 2.10). Luke also reported that the emperor Claudius had expelled the Jews from Rome in AD 49, and these would have included Jewish Christians (Acts 18.2). This would have left the Christians of gentile origin by themselves in Rome. On the return of the Jewish Christians at the death of Claudius in AD 54, there would no doubt have been tensions and misunderstandings between Christians whose background was so different. Paul's words about the universal nature of God's all-inclusive plan for salvation, especially in chapters 9-11, would have been very relevant for a community of such diversity. The instructions that he gives about relationships between the weak and the strong in the matter of eating meat which had been used in idol worship would have addressed a particularly difficult area in the relationships of a community divided between Jewish and Gentile converts (14.13-23).

Another view is that he wrote out of self-interest, or rather out of interest in his apostolate. He mentions in the letter that he intended to go to Jerusalem to deliver a gift to the poor Christians there (Romans 15.25). Jerusalem was a Church which still held him in suspicion because of misunderstandings about his attitude to the Mosaic Law (Ac 21.21). He wanted the Romans to use their influence that he might be well-received there; he also wanted the support of the Romans for a projected visit to Spain.

Why Romans is Important

The Letter to the Romans is the most significant of Paul's letters theologically and historically. It has had an immense influence. In it, Paul did not speak only to the Christians of Rome and give them direction in areas that were troubling them. The fact that it was included in a collection of Paul's letters as a whole (2 Peter 3.15-16), meant that it was soon recognised as a valuable tool to assist Christians from other places in their understanding of the relationship between God's old and new covenants. These Christians would also deepen their understanding of the significance of the work of Christ in bringing the love and mercy of God to the whole of humanity.

There never has been a time in history when Christians have not had much to learn from this letter. In the fourth century the reading of two of its verses, Romans 13.13-14, provided part of the story of the conversion of St Augustine. In the Reformation period of the sixteenth century it was a major influence on Martin Luther, especially because of its teaching on 'justification by faith'. Karl Barth, an outstanding Protestant theologian of the early years of the twentieth century, wrote a major commentary on Romans. The importance of the letter for dialogue between the major religions is now being rediscovered.

Some Theological Ideas

The theology of the letter follows its structure. After a greeting and introduction, Paul defines the gospel of salvation which he preaches (1.1-17). The next chapters are concerned with three characteristics of God.

- We learn first about the necessary *anger* of God against the sinfulness of the world. No-one is exempt; Gentiles and Jews are equally guilty and God, who is good, must necessarily feel anger at the evil which distorts his creation. There is no human being who does not need salvation from this anger (1.16-3.19).

- God himself provides the means for this salvation because of his second characteristic, his *righteousness*. Because he is good, God finds a solution to the power of Sin that is destroying his creation. Through Jesus Christ God *justifies* us and *redeems* us. He brings about the *expiation* of our sin. By these means, the fulfilment of the promises God made long ago to Abraham is achieved.
- But there is a third attribute of God, namely the *love* of God. This is poured into the hearts of the believers (5.5). No longer does sin live within those who are 'in Christ'. Paul explains how, before the death and resurrection of Christ, the world was under the control of three tyrants: Sin, Death and the Law. The Law, though good in itself (7.12), was able only to point to sin but it could give no remedy for it.

The work of Christ destroyed the power of these tyrants and in their place the Holy Spirit dwells within the believer, so that a new quality of life is possible. Believers are now children of God, able to overcome all the wickedness in the world. If faith was a key word in the previous section, hope is the key word in these chapters. In two typical verses, it occurs five times (8.24-25). Paul ends this section with a wonderful cry, "Who can separate us from the love of God?" (8.39).

Hope (9.1-11.36)

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (10.13)

God's love was truly for the whole of humanity. But Paul knew well enough that the people to whom he belonged, the Jewish people, had refused to accept Christ. Paul, "an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin" (11.1), becomes extremely personal in discussing his anguish about the fate of his own people, the Jews, who, despite their many privileges, refuse to accept this gospel (9.1-2). Employing many quotations from Israel's scriptures, Paul argues from the fidelity of God to the final salvation of his own people. He concludes with a verse quoted in the Second Vatican Council's discussions of the relationship between Christians and Jews, *"the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable".* (11.29).

We now understand why Paul referred so often earlier in the letter to *"to the Jew first and also to the Greek"* (1.16). These chapters are a challenge to believers today, when members of major religions, despite their worship of the same God, are divided, and when even among Christians there is separation. For Paul, such complex problems are not beyond the outreach of God's mercy. The hope he preaches is offered to all God's creatures.

Love (12.1-15.13)

"All the commandments. . . are summed up in this single command: You must love your neighbour as yourself." (13.9)

The final chapters are very practical. How are we to live our daily lives against the reality of this saving gospel? The main point is that we live out a 'liturgy', in the sense that everything we do becomes part of our grateful response and worship of God. There is nothing that is not sacred in our lives. The attentive reader will notice parallels between what Paul has to say and what Jesus is reported to have said in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). He also echoes the words of Jesus to the scribe in the gospel when he writes that the commandments *"are summed up in this word, 'Love*

your neighbour as yourself'" (Mark 12.31; Romans 13.9).

And then, at last, Paul comes to certain problems which he had heard existed in the Roman community: the conflict which split the 'weak' and the 'strong' because of their attitudes to eating meat which had been used in worship in temples which were dedicated to gods who were not gods at all.

Conclusion (15.14-16.27)

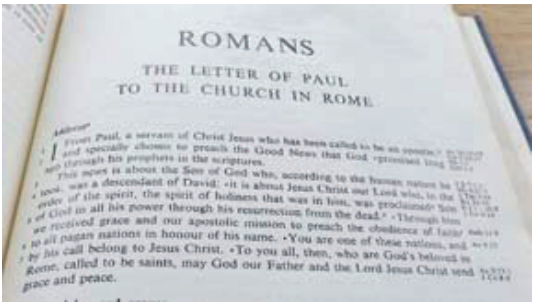
As he concludes the letter, Paul becomes friendly and personal. He admits that he has written 'somewhat boldly' to the Romans (15.15). He gives greetings to 28 individuals whom he knows in Rome (16.1-15). Perhaps he wanted them to speak out in favour of his request for their support for his projects in Jerusalem and Spain (15.24-25). This reminds us how Paul was not a somewhat grim individual evangelist, working alone, but the leader of a team. The concluding lines give us yet another hymn of praise to God's glory and a special blessing to all who read and hear the letter. We are all invited to reply to his 'Amen'.

A letter for all seasons

Catholics hear this letter up to 28 times in the course of the three-year Sunday lectionary cycle. It is considered relevant at all times of the Church's year. Sixteen of these extracts are read between Sundays 9 and 24 in Ordinary Time in year A. Four are read during Advent, three in year A and one in year B. Five are read during Lent, three in year A and one each in years B and C. Two are read on Trinity Sunday in years B and C; one is heard optionally on Pentecost Sunday in year C. Extracts are brief and struggle to do justice to the letter as a whole. The chapter which is almost read in full is chapter 8; this is welcome, because it is surely the favourite chapter of all who know Romans well and is especially valuable for what it has to say about the Holy Spirit.

However, because of various feast days, some Sundays in Ordinary Time drop out and as a result we do not hear some rewarding and significant passages of this letter. All the more reason, then, to set aside time to discover the riches of the letter for oneself. Charles Cranfield, the author of the two-volume *International Critical Commentary on Romans*, introduces the shorter version of his commentary with the words, "Having been seriously engaged with the Epistle for more than a quarter of a century, I still find it always fresh and cannot read it without delight". May we come to share his delight.

Peter Edmonds SJ is a member of the Jesuit community in Stamford Hill, north London. An original version of this article appeared in the Jesuit online publication www.thinkingfaith.org, and was the basis of a talk to the Manchester/N Cheshire Circle in March, 2015.


ROMANS

THE LETTER OF PAUL
TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

Address

1 From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who has been called to be an apostle,
and specially chosen to preach the Good News that God promised long ago
2 through his prophets in the scriptures.
3 This news is about the Son of God who, according to the human nature he
4 took, was a descendant of David; 4 it is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, to the
5 order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son
of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead. 5 Through him
we received grace and our apostolic mission to preach the obedience of faith
6 to all pagan nations in honour of his name. 6 You are one of these nations, and
7 by his call belong to Jesus Christ. 7 To you all, then, who are God's beloved in
Rome, called to be saints, may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send
grace and peace.

Human Rights – a challenge for the Church?

By John Duddington

Introduction

Kate was a Newman member. She had taught classics for many years at a girls' school but then retired. She was Circle Secretary for many years but then, through failing health, entered a care home. Her care was privately funded from her savings. I often visited her and saw that she was not being cared for: she was not being washed regularly and food was simply thrust at her. She could not feed herself properly and so remains of food covered her clothing. Nor were her continence needs attended to. I told her only surviving relative, Jack, her nephew, about this and Jack visited Kate and confirmed what I had seen. He complained to the management of the care home who replied with the meaningless words: *"We regret that the standard of care in your aunt's case has fallen below our usual high standards"*. Jack then received a letter from the home saying that they are giving Kate a week's notice that they can no longer care for her. Clearly Jack does not want Kate to stay there for much longer but he may need more time to find alternative accommodation.

The names in this story are changed but the facts are true. Why is it important in the context of human rights? Simply because any discussion of a topic such as human rights legislation needs to be rooted in the effect that it has on the lives of ordinary people. Thus, in this case, we turn to Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which is incorporated into UK law by the Human Rights Act 1998. This provides that there is a duty on the home to respect Kate's private and family rights which means that both their treatment of Kate and their peremptory notice when Jack complained are in breach of this. But does the ECHR apply? Under the Care Act 2014 this is now so as a result of a late amendment in the House of Lords. Meanwhile those who campaign for the UK's withdrawal from the Convention on the basis of misleading statements in the popular press should honestly answer this question: do they feel that people in Kate's position should be left without the protection of the law or not?

This is the Human Rights Act 1998 as it works on the ground. You would not think so from what you read in the popular press with its constant tales of how it is used as a vehicle to enable criminals to have soft treatment when in prison or to enable illegal immigrants to avoid deportation on some spurious grounds. Both of these side-effects can support valid criticisms of the Act, although I know as a lawyer how often the press misrepresent what has happened in a court case. All this leads to silly letters coming from in effect the political right which, in the words of a recent letter to a national newspaper, regards human rights as "a tool for pushing the world towards progressive liberalism".

But the secular liberal left is also guilty of using human rights as a tool for its own ends. Thus Vanessa Klug, in her book *Values for a Godless Age*, regards human rights "as a possible alternative common morality for the UK". Religion has gone, now for human rights! Moreover, secularists use human rights to promote their own ends. Thus in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*[1] Stephen Bowen, Director of the British Institute of Human Rights, and Dr. Mark Porter, Chair of Council, British Medical Association, when marking the 66th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

(UDHR), wrote that "from ensuring equality for those receiving care services to equality for same-sex couples, our Human Rights Act is helping to deliver the promise of the UDHR in Britain ...". In fact, of course, when the UDHR was issued in 1948 same-sex marriage was not thought of.

So often, then, there is no real debate on human rights but just the shouting of prejudices from right and left. Moreover the issue gets mixed up with the issue of possible withdrawal by the UK from the European Union (EU). Although there is some linkage between the two the institutions are quite separate: for instance, Russia is a signatory to the ECHR but of course is not a member of the EU.

Where do Christians stand in this?

The issue is this: in one aspect talk of rights can seem to be frankly individualistic and selfish and thus in fundamental discord with Christian thinking. Yet if Christians say that human rights do not exist for them then is this denying humans redress against forms of injustice that offend the basic Christian principle of the innate dignity of each of us?

David McIlroy

Secularists claim that human rights are a product of Enlightenment thinking and point to, for instance, the French Declaration of 1789 *des Droits de l'Homme* which had the anti-clerical slogan: *"ni Dieu, ni maitre".* Here we see the concept of human rights denying any Christian origins and becoming what the Baptist lawyer and theologian David McIlroy calls "some kind of free-standing, self-supporting system of beliefs and values".[2]

Yet in fact human rights have a profoundly Christian origin. We can say that the whole basis of Christian thought with its proclamation all of us (in St. Paul's words) as *"heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ"*[3], means that we all have an inalienable dignity; in the context of the common good this must be protected. As George Newlands points out: "The Bible talks of release of captives, and Jesus speaks of visiting prisoners"[4]. In a more modern context St. Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester,visited Bristol, then part of his diocese, in the late 11th century to preach against the slave trade.

Not only this, but long before the secularists got involved the Catholic Church firmly proclaimed human rights. Let's take another true story, not this time from a care home today but from a makeshift wooden church on the island of Hispaniola in what is now the Dominican Republic[5]. Here, on the second Sunday of Advent in 1511, the Dominican friar Anton Montesimo preached a great sermon to the Spanish conquerors on how they should treat the native Indians: *"I am the voice of Christ in the wilderness of this island...This voice says that you are all in mortal sin and that you will live and die in it for the cruelty and tyranny with which you use these innocent people. Tell me, with what right, with what justice, do you hold these Indians in such cruel and horrible slavery?....Are they not men? Do they not have rational souls? Are you not obliged to love them as yourselves? Don't you understand this? Can't you grasp this?"*

This is derived from a book, *Human Rights and the Image of God*, by Roger Ruston. The sermon, Ruston relates, caused uproar and complaints went to the Dominican Provincial and King Ferdinand of Spain. The King ordered the friars back to Spain to be punished and, regrettably, the Provincial took his side. Nevertheless, as Ruston puts it, "there was sufficient moral unease at Court to prompt the King to call a meeting and laws were passed aiming to curb the brutalities of the colonists". Following this Pope Paul III in his encyclical *Sublimis Deus* of 1537 stated of Indians that: "They are to have, to hold, to enjoy both liberty and dominion, freely, lawfully. They must not be enslaved. Should anything different be done, it is void, invalid, of no force". Although the Catholic Church later placed less emphasis on a notion of universal human rights this document of a Renaissance Pope stands for ever as a ringing endorsement of the concept.

Reluctance of Christians to use the language of rights.

However, it is true to say that the Catholic Church did look with suspicion on claims founded on rights, due, I think, to the idea of human rights being linked to the Enlightenment and also their link to the Protestantism emphasis on a gospel of individualism. In fact both Catholics and Protestants have played a noble part in the modern human rights movement. Protestant Christians, with support from some Catholics such as the future Pope John XXIII, played a notable part in ensuring that human rights were included in the United Nations system after the Second World War[6]. This initiative eventually bore fruit in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued in 1948. Since then, as John Nurser observes[7]: "From the time of Pope John XXIII the popes have been the most coherent and assertive speakers of the language of human rights". This is certainly true and the starting point is Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, issued in 1963, up to the address of Pope Benedict XVI on 15th April 2008 when he spoke to the UN General Assembly on the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is Pope Benedict who, as so often, charts a way forward for us. In his address he emphasised that human rights rested on the foundation of "the natural law inscribed on human hearts and present in different cultures and civilization". Here for Catholics is the answer: human rights are not seen as the product of a culture based on the false gods of autonomy and individualism, with

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their worship of mere selfishness, but on the immutable principles of natural law with its twin pillars of human dignity and the common good.

However, the question still lingers: should Christians be concerned with rights as such? In principle Christians emphasise not individual rights but instead the common humanity of us all. Furthermore, is talk of human rights another way of selfishly saying "my rights"? Pope Benedict XVI himself reflected this concern when, in his address to the United Nations he suggested that: "Perhaps the doctrine of human rights ought today to be complemented by a doctrine of human obligations and human limits".

Accordingly we need to set the exercise of human rights in the context of the common good and make clear that these rights are not to be asserted simply to satisfy my desires or wants but in order to promote the dignity of each person in that context. David McIlroy, in considering the relationship between rights and responsibilities, says: "It is not that we have rights and the correlative of our rights is that others have responsibilities towards us. It is that we have responsibilities towards others and those responsibilities ... entail rights"[8]. The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have put it neatly by saying that: "To claim a right for myself means my claiming it for others too"[9]. Moreover there is also an obligation on us all to ensure that everyone in our society is able to claim those rights and this means that we must, for example, look very closely at how litigation is funded and at how any proposed government cuts will affect the state funding of human rights claims.

Conclusion

If we approach human rights in this way and bring a Christian perspective to bear then we shall enrich the discussion so that human rights are seen as not only protecting the vulnerable, as we saw earlier, but as promoting a concern for rights in the context of the shared humanity of us all. If we do this, we can make a distinctively Christian contribution to a pressing issue in our society and so justify the words of Pope John XXIII in *Pacem in Terris*: "But first We must speak of man's rights".

1 December 10, 2014.

2 D. McIlroy "Human Rights Theory: Fit For Purpose, Fundamentally Flawed or Reformable?" Law and Justice 173 (2014) pp. 129-144 at p. 134

3 Rom. 8:17.

4 In *Christ and Human Rights* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p.13. This whole book is full of ideas for a Christian engagement with human rights and is enormously stimulating. See also J. Mahoney *The Challenge of Human Rights* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), which looks at the struggle for human rights from a wider perspective.

5 I owe this account to R. Ruston in *Human Rights and the Image of God* (London: SCM Press, 2004). *Human Rights and the Image of God*, pp. 66-68. This is, I think, the best account of the development of a Christian tradition of human rights.

6 The story is well told in John S. Nurser, *For All Peoples and All Nations* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005).

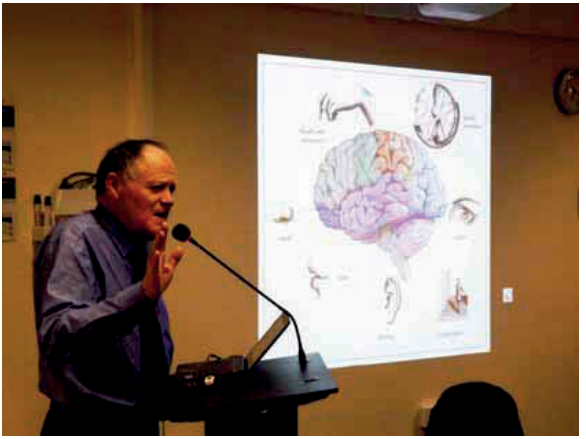
7 Ibid. at p. 168.

8 D. McIlroy "Human Rights Theory: Fit For Purpose, Fundamentally Flawed or Reformable?" Law and Justice 173 (2014) pp. 129-144 at p. 142.

9 *Reflections of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales on the Jubilee of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* para. 5 (1998).

London Newman Lecture 2015
Neuroscience and the Soul

By James Le Fanu



Neuroscience is so vast a subject that reflections on its contribution to our understanding of the metaphysical must inevitably tend to the overly simplistic. As for the soul, while those attending the London Newman Lecture might be expected to believe in its existence, there is likely to be a considerable difference of opinion as to precisely what that belief entails. Nonetheless my foolhardiness in addressing this subject is justified by the fact that in the recent past the details of the findings of neuroscience have quite unexpectedly illuminated in several interesting ways the common, if not strictly theological, perception: that the soul is that unique character or personality that we know ourselves to be.

The central philosophical question I will be addressing can be simply put. The brain, by common consent, is qualitatively different from any other organ of the body. Standard textbooks of cardiology or respiratory medicine describe in almost exhaustive detail the working of the heart and lungs, but the fundamental question of what the brain does remains quite unresolved – how do those neuronal circuits give rise to those non-material properties of our mind: our thoughts and imaginings, joys and sorrows and the sense of self.

The prevailing view of course is that those thoughts and imaginings and the sense of self must ultimately be explicable in terms of the physical properties of the brain as eloquently set out by Colin Blakemore, formerly Professor of Theology at Oxford University. He said: "The human brain is a machine which alone accounts for all our actions, our most private thoughts, our beliefs. It creates the sense of self. We may feel ourselves to be in control of our actions, but that feeling is itself the product of our brain whose machinery has been designed by natural selection".

The insuperable intellectual difficulty with this reductionist interpretation of a relationship between brain and mind is that it denies by necessity the reality of the two central and most important, aspects of our experience – our sense of personal identity and free will. Rather, by the materialist account, as Blakemore makes clear, the sense of self and free will can only be an illusion generated by the brain to create the impression that someone is in charge. We are, in short, the stooges of our brain.

Intuitively we know this cannot be so but it is also of considerable interest to

understand why this pervasive and influential view should be in error. Here context is all, so before turning to the recent findings of neuroscience it is necessary to consider, if briefly and schematically, how the scientific understanding of the relationship between brain and mind has evolved over the past one hundred years.

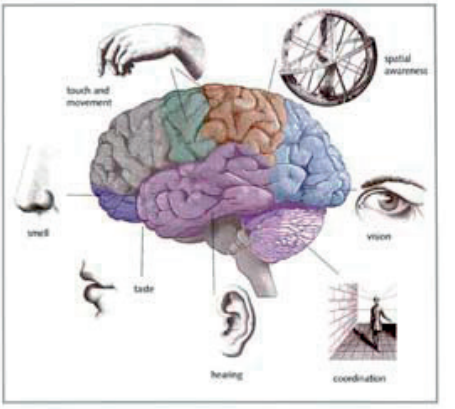


Fig 1 – The specialisation of the parts of the brain to fulfil its different functions includes (as illustrated here) the sensory perception of vision, smell, hearing and taste. The frontal lobes are dedicated to "higher" attributes of reason and imagination, and large tracts of the left hemisphere to language.

The three-pound entity

The human brain is the most capacious entity in the universe, both transcending *time* – recalling the past, experiencing the present, anticipating the future – and encompassing every magnitude of *space* from the vastness of the cosmos to the near intifessimal smallness of a single atom. The brain also poses the greatest conundrum within that universe – how those three pounds of protoplasmic stuff could give rise to the distinctive character and personality ,'the soul' of each one of us, both the billions with whom we currently share this planet and all who have gone before.

And more, how it is that, moment by moment, that same protoplasmic stuff perceives the world out there in all its exquisite detail, stores its experiences as memories to be recalled decades later and makes sense of the world through the powers of reason. How can the material brain be the causal basis of so vast a range of mental life? The obvious answer is that it does not and cannot and for more than 2,500 years that dissonance between the material brain and the properties of the mind was the most persuasive evidence for there being a dual nature to reality – a material and non-material domain.

The first modern philosopher Descartes made this distinction with great clarity, pointing out how material objects such as the brain occupy space and are objectively knowable, while the non-material elements – our thoughts and imaginings – do not and are only knowable to their possessor. Now, brain and mind must obviously be linked as, self-evidently, injury to the brain impairs the workings of the mind; yet it has always been part of the commonsense of mankind that body and soul, brain and mind are two different things.

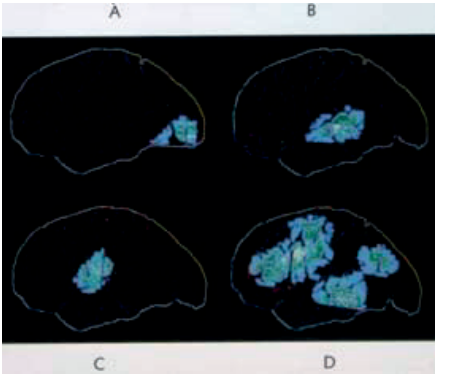


Fig 2 – The simplest of intellectual tasks such as reading or listening to the word "chair" generates widespread electrical activity involving millions of neurons in the visual and auditory cortex. Associating the noun "chair" with verb "sit" activates further vast tracts of the brain.

This dualist interpretation could scarcely

survive the ascendancy of science in the 19th century. Darwin famously in *The Descent of Man* incorporated humans into the evolutionary framework by denying the exceptionality of the human mind, arguing that its attributes were different only in degree but not in kind from those of our primate cousins. His great supporter Thomas Huxley was less convinced, suggesting that the mystery of how the brain gives rise to the mind is just as inexplicable as the appearance of the Djinn when Aladdin rubbed his lamp. Still, there seemed no alternative if science were to proceed to suppose a direct causal relationship between brain and mind; indeed, soon afterwards two important discoveries suggested the human brain was not nearly as inscrutable as it might appear.

First, the French neurologist Pierre Paul Broca noted at the autopsy of one of his patients, known as Tan – because that was the only sound he had been able to utter since his stroke 30 years previously, that the patient had suffered a discrete area of damage in the posterior part of his left frontal lobe that he inferred to be the speech centre of the brain. Soon after the German physician Karl Wernike described a comparable defect in a patient unable to comprehend speech. Over the next sixty years similar natural experiments revealed the cerebral hemispheres to be a chequerboard of specialised functions with which we are now readily familiar (see Fig 1).

This cartographic map of the brain can however be misleading on two counts. Firstly, while it is possible to allocate specialised functions to these discrete parts of the brain, large areas of the frontal and parietal cortex remain unaccounted for. From this one might infer they have some integrative role related to the higher functioning of the mind. Secondly, this phenomenon of localisation, fascinating as it is, offers no insight as to how it translates into subjective experience: how does the electrochemical activity of the millions of neurons of say, the visual or auditory cortex, give rise to such qualitatively diverse subjective experiences as watching a sunset or listening to a Bach cantata?

Brain or computer?

This brings us to the second stage of the unravelling of the relationship between brain and mind, from 1950 onwards, when the synthesis of four observations suggested a much more sophisticated metaphor for the brain, not as a map but as an information processing device – or computer.

First, the British neurophysiologist Charles Sherrington demonstrated how the individual neurons in the brain have two modes – where they can *excite or inhibit* the electrical activity of other neurons in close proximity. There is a clear parallel here with the brilliant Alan Turing's conception of a universal calculating machine that could in principle carry out any mathematical task using a binary code of just two symbols – 1 and 0. Further, the rich, dense circuitry of the brain is readily comparable to a microprocessing 'chip', and there is an obvious analogy between the famous distinction between the relative contribution of 'nature' and 'nurture' to the workings of the human mind and with the hardware and software of a computer.

This computer metaphor has certainly proved very fertile. The neuronal connections of the brain, its hardware, come hard-wired at birth with specific modules for language, music, mathematics, the ability to recognise faces and much else besides. As for

the software, the phenomenal neuroplasticity of the brain ensures the young brain voraciously and remorselessly programmes itself, integrating into its workings the culture, emotions, sights and sounds that it encounters. The similarities are immensely compelling, but while the computer's power to crunch numbers is one thing, the capacity of the human mind to hold a conversation or feel happy or sad is another. And here, when put to the test, the more closely the comparison is pursued the more astonishing and un-computer-like the brain appears to be.

This brings us to the third phase: the neuroscientific revolution of the recent past made possible by the novel and astonishing scanning technology that allowed scientists for the first time to observe the brain in action *from the inside*, thinking, perceiving and reflecting on the world out there. It all began just over 25 years ago in 1988 with a scientific paper in the prestigious journal *Nature* by two American scientists Marcus Raichle and Michael Posner: *Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Studies of the Cortical Activity of Single Word Processing*.

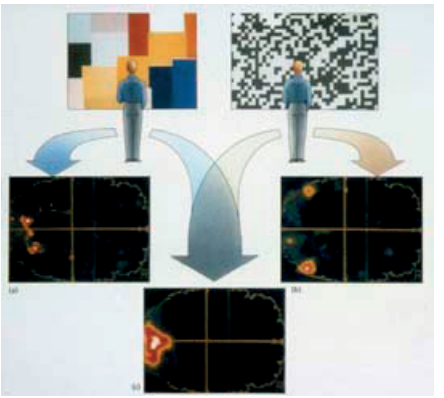


Fig 3 – The PET scans of subjects when viewing a colourful Mondrian painting (a) pinpoint the visual map for the interpretation of colour. By contrast the brain scans of subjects viewing a series of moving squares (b) activate the visual area concerned with movement.

The principle behind PET scanning technology lies in the fact that when, for example, a person is speaking the neurons of Broca's language centre in the left frontal cortex massively increase their demand for oxygenated blood reflected in an increase in blood flow. This can be detected by labelling the oxygen molecules with a radio isotope that is detected by the PET scanner and converted by ingenious mathematical algorithms into multi-coloured images.

There can, for example, be no simpler task than that investigated in this first paper on 'single word processing' – scanning a subject's brain when reading, hearing or repeating a single word such as 'chair', a trivial task indeed which nonetheless was shown to generate a blizzard of electrical activity across the relevant visual cortex and the language centres of the brain. When that task was made slightly more complicated by asking the subject to associate the noun 'chair' with a verb 'sit' there were activated, in addition, vast tracts of the frontal and parietal lobes (see Fig 2). Who could have supposed that this apparently simplest of tasks appears to involve the brain virtually in its entirety? What, one might reasonably enquire, must be going on in the brain during even the most elementary of conversations?

It would be impossible to summarise the findings of the flood of scientific papers generated by this novel technology but the most revealing – certainly in radically changing our understanding of the workings of the human mind – fall into the four main categories already alluded to. The first is perception: how the brain, through the senses, perceives the world out there in the most exquisite detail. Next comes memory, the lynchpin of the human mind, holding the past and present in a permanent

embrace. Then we have free will, or mental causation: how it might be that our non-material thoughts can nonetheless affect the physical workings of the brain so as to compel us to take one action rather than another. And, finally, there is the power of reason as revealed by its mediation through the faculty of language.

Fragmented images

We start with **perception** and one sense in particular, vision. The conventional and very persuasive view would be that the image of the world 'out there' is captured by the retina at the back of the eye and imposed, like a photographic plate, on the visual cortex. But perhaps the most dramatic of all those recent findings of neuroscience is that, on the contrary, the visual cortex fragments that image like an exploding firework. This was elegantly illustrated by Professor Semir Zeki of the University of London in a classic experiment that involved scanning the brains of volunteers looking first at a multi-coloured Mondrian painting and then at a screen filled with moving black and white squares to reveal two distinct 'hot spots' involved in colour and movement respectively. (Fig 3) Further investigation has revealed the brain perceives the world 'out there' by fragmenting it into thirty separate specialised functions scattered throughout the cortex.

Clearly, those fragmented functions must be reintegrated back into that unified stream of perception by means of which, moment by moment, we perceive the world out there – but how? David Hubel, Nobel prizewinner for his investigation of vision, clarifies: "This abiding tendency for form, colour and movement to be handled by separate structures in the brain immediately raises the question about how all the information is finally assembled, say for perceiving a bouncing red ball. It obviously must be assembled, but where and how **we have no idea**".

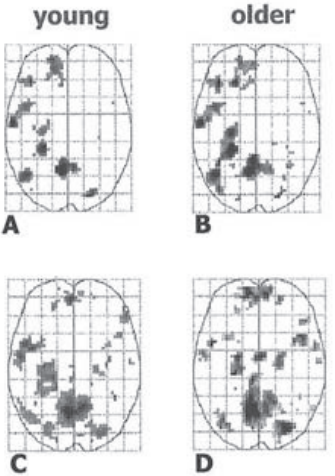


Fig 4 – Overlapping memories. A simple memory task lights up large tracts of the brain in both young and old, but there is a surprising degree of overlap in the retrieval of general knowledge (top) and a very different recall of autobiographical events (bottom).

Next we turn to memory, the lynchpin of the human mind with its three distinct components of memorising, storage and retrieval; this comes in the three forms of short, medium and long term and as two distinct types – declarative (the memorising of facts) and autobiographical (the memory for past events). The conventional view, invoking the computer analogy, would be that memories are stored away each in its own neuronal circuit and are available for recall at a later date. But that emphatically is not the case: this was revealed by a study by Professor Eleanor Maguire of the Institute of Neurology, who investigated these two very distinct types of memory – the factual and autobiographical (see Fig 4). Two groups of subject, young and old were asked first to recall the knowledge of certain facts (that, for example, the sun is 92 million miles from the earth) and then autobiographical (such as their starring in the school Nativity play). (Fig 3). Here we note first that large overlapping areas of the brain are

involved in both tasks suggesting that these two very distinctive forms of knowledge must share many of the same neuronal circuits. Then it would appear, however, that as we get older the existing forms of memory are memorised and recalled in different parts of the brain. This is profoundly puzzling.

The most striking feature of memory is its fixity – the ability to recall instantly and effortlessly facts and events from forty years or more ago. But the impression conveyed by these scanning techniques is precisely the reverse: even the simplest memory involves overlapping tracts of the brain, the localisations of which are surprisingly fluid, shifting from one part of the brain to another.

Next we turn to 'free will', the powerful impression that our freely-chosen thoughts can influence our actions; as noted, Professor Colin Blakemore insisted this must be an illusion generated by the brain. This would seem to contradict not just our everyday experience but specifically the rationale of psychotherapy, which is predicated on the assumption that mental states can be influenced for the better by thinking and reflecting on them. Psychiatrist Professor Jeffrey Schwartz of the University of California has demonstrated this in a study of patients with obsessive compulsive disorder in whom brain imaging studies identified increased activity in the part of the frontal lobe known as the caudate nucleus. Following ten weeks of cognitive therapy their symptoms of OCD were much improved, paralleled by 'normalisation' of their abnormal brain activity.

As Professor Schwartz himself has put it: "We have demonstrated the sort of changes that psychiatrists might see with powerful mind-altering drugs, but in patients who had changed the way they thought about their thoughts." So, *contra* Professor Blakemore, non-material thoughts can, it would appear, influence the physical structure of the brain.

Finally we turn to the human mind's power of reason by which it makes sense of the world which, as we all know, is inextricably linked to the faculty of language that allows us to 'think' by assigning words to objects and ideas and then applying grammatical rules to the arrangement of those words. Darwin in his influential *Descent of Man* insisted that human language evolved from the grunts and groans by which our primate cousins still communicate with each other. But language cannot just be an evolved module of the brain when, as will be recalled, the simplest of linguistic tasks such as associating the word 'chair' with the word 'sit' involves activation of the brain virtually in its entirety. Further investigations would reveal that, as with vision, the brain fragments words into their constituent parts with specialised areas involved in naming letters or words – posing precisely the same problem addressed by David Hubel as to how they might be reintegrated back together into a flow of conversation.

The five cardinal mysteries of the mind

So what to make of this? Neurobiologist Robert Doty, reflecting on the findings of these brain imaging studies, has drawn attention to what he describes as "The five cardinal mysteries of the mind". They are:

- The mystery of subjective experience – how the monotonous electrochemical biology of the brain should give rise to the infinite variety of the subjective experiences that fill our lives, from the scent of a rose to the cadences of a Bach cantata.

- The mystery of free will – how our nonmaterial thoughts and intentions impel us to take one course of action rather than another.
- The mystery of the richness and accessibility of memory. Here Robert Doty observes: "This facility to sort with alacrity amongst the items of a lifetime, pursue in milliseconds obscure, half-forgotten episodes and their cascading associations defies credible clarification".
- The mystery of human reason and imagination by which, through the faculty of language, we make sense of the world in which we live.
- The mystery of the sense of self – with its distinctive character and personality that may change and mature over time but remains in essence the same.

And now here is the crunch: these may be mysteries to science but they are certainly not to ourselves. Indeed, there is nothing we can be more sure of than our subjective experiences, memories, free will, powers of reason and sense of self. That unbridgeable gap between the limitations of those objective investigations of the workings of the brain and our personal knowledge of our everyday experiences eliminates any possibility of there being an adequate scientific explanation for the relationship between brain and mind.

And as that is the case, the materialist assumption that the sense of self and free will can only be an illusion generated by the brain ceases to be tenable – and so by inference the non-material soul must be for real.

This London Newman Lecture 2015 was delivered at Heythrop College on March 12th

Dr James Le Fanu is a general practitioner and a journalist, with a regular column in the *Daily Telegraph*. He has also written books, including *Why Us? How Science Rediscovered the Mystery of Ourselves*, published by HarperPress.

The Edinburgh Affair

The Council of the Association has decided to publish in this Journal ***the letter which I wrote to the Very Reverend Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh***, on December 16th 2014.

The letter was written only after all efforts by the officers of the Newman Edinburgh Circle to effect a dialogue between the Archbishop and themselves had proved fruitless. As a lay Catholic association we are aware of the dignity of the Archepiscopal office and I was conscious when writing to His Grace of the respect owed to that office. It is, therefore, surprising and saddening that my letter has drawn no response from the Archdiocese, not even an acknowledgement.
I now propose to draw a veil over this issue which has occupied an immense amount of my time in my year as President.

Gerald Williams

March 23rd 2015

The Newman Association
c/o 18 St Clair Close,
Oxted, Surrey, RH8 9JP
The Most Reverend Leo Cushley
Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh
100 Strathearn Road
Edinburgh EH9 1BB

December 16th 2014

Dear Archbishop Cushley

The Council of the Newman Association has viewed with concern your letter of July 11th to Arthur Skelton of the Edinburgh Newman Circle. Arthur and his colleagues are disappointed not to be offered the opportunity of a local dialogue, and we would like to make the Association's view clear. We have delayed writing to you until now to enable local resolution of the issue.

Firstly we appreciate and value your office as Bishop with responsibility for sound teaching in the local Church. The letter from the CDF must have placed you in a difficult position.

Nevertheless the Newman Association seeks to promote an educated laity – a laity which can hold its own in debate with a largely faithless modern world. Inevitably that means raising questions, and holding debates in areas of Christian belief. How else may ***the expression*** of Church teaching be made more credible to those outside the Church? Where speculative ideas are put forward we suggest that a counteracting more orthodox view should also be argued. It is likely that an edited version of Joe Fitzpatrick's talk will be included in *The Newman**. If so, rejoinder articles or letters will be welcome.

We are surprised to be admonished about offering a platform to Professor Tina Beattie. Her views may offend some Catholics, including Newman Association members. However such a ban is likely to be counterproductive, seen as unfair in the absence of a clear judging process and just create publicity unfavourable to the Church.

In addition, in relation both to Joe Fitzpatrick and Tina Beattie, the history of doctrinal condemnation in the Church has not always been a happy one – the experience of Blessed John Henry Newman is a case in point!

Our greatest concern is the way in which the CDF responds to complaints from unnamed persons. Surely complaints should be referred in the first instance to the local bishop. If the matter cannot be settled locally then the CDF can reasonably become more involved. The current procedure brings the Church into disrepute among fair-minded people.

As you know, our Edinburgh Circle has sought to resolve matters locally, but we understand that a meeting between the Circle and your representatives was withdrawn. Its members feel hurt and bewildered by this rebuff. Short of a local dialogue we do not see that we can give any fuller response to an anonymous complaint. However we hope you will recognise the good faith of the Association, and that we may enjoy your support and blessing in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Gerald Williams

(President, The Newman Association)

* Editor's note: This text appeared in the January 2015 issue under the title *How Genesis Supports Darwin: A New Interpretation of Genesis 3*.

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor of *The Newman*

Joe Fitzpatrick's article on Genesis and Darwin presents an intriguing hypothesis on Adam and Eve's breakthrough to human self-awareness after eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge. I am no theologian, but I am not persuaded that this hypothesis is adequate to account for the human condition. It fails to account for the presence of sin in the world; evidently in ourselves as we recognise our tendency to pursue immediate gratifications at the expenses of truth, justice and mercy; and evidently in the wider injustices in the world, societal and personal. Perhaps the hypothesis is not necessarily a contradiction of our Christian faith, but I think Joe Fitzpatrick has to do more to explain how crucial Christian doctrines of sin and redemption and the Incarnation of Jesus Christ fit in with his insights. Darwin's thesis may explain much of the physical development of the world, but seems to contribute little to our moral understanding.

This said, I am disturbed by the attitude of the CDF in its apparent readiness to accept anonymous denunciations and in ignoring the Church's own principle of subsidiarity by not asking local bishops to make proper enquiry before issuing denunciations.

The failure of Archbishop Cushley to reply to our President's reasonable letter is also unfortunate, to say the least. In acting so high-handedly to discourage heresy, the institutional Church risks alienating lay witness, or even encouraging some to look elsewhere for spiritual sustenance.

Anthony Baker
St Albans
March 2015

To the Editor

On reading the *Lineamenta** I was reminded of a long-ago flurry of letters in *The Tablet*. A sympathetic and much-loved *pastor ignotus* had written of a delightful day spent in the company of a couple with young children. Readers responded with the shocking indictment that he had not a clue about family life. How could he have had? Similarly the Synod fathers are like travel writers describing a country they have never visited; they seem to miss something essential (of course we should do no better ourselves if we attempted to describe the life of celibate priests).

The reality of parents' lives is unimaginable for those who have never experienced the unrelenting demands on time and attention, an inconsolable baby who won't stop crying (we are mentally programmed to find this unbearable), the headstrong self-will of the tiniest child which has to be tamed, and the never-ending anxiety for our offspring's safety and wellbeing. There are huge compensations; parents see the world afresh through an infant's curiosity and delight in every new object encountered. We rediscover play and there is so much sheer fun in living with children.

The Magisterium's unquestioned mantra about every marital act being open to the transmission of life harks back to Augustine's view that only this intention diminishes the sinfulness of the act. Jews and Muslims have a much more positive view. But love-making is always procreative in that it strengthens the parental bond which is the bedrock of family life. Does the fact that so many of the Vatican II generation have rejected the teaching of *Humanae Vitae*, and that their children never seem to give it a thought, not challenge the Hierarchy to reconsider?

The transition from single to shared life demands tremendous and continuous adjustment. Lay people are scandalised that those who fail, and attempt to do better in a second marriage, alone of all 'sinners' are excluded from receiving the Eucharist. The Hierarchy adheres to the letter and fails to see that so-called irregular unions, including remarried divorcees and same-sex couples, may manifest tender love and faithful commitment which indicate that these also are blessed by God.

It seemed to me that the aim of the original questionnaire was not so much really to know about couples' experience as gently to persuade them to follow Church teaching; the writers are compassionate and never judgemental; many caring pastors genuinely walk with couples, but what is needed is full and honest communication between the Hierarchy in Rome and married people.

Josephine Way
Swansea

*Preparatory documents published by the Vatican last December in anticipation of the second stage of the Family Synod in October 2015.

An AGM in North Wales – June 13th

The Wrexham Circle is organising the Newman Association's annual general meeting this year; it will take place on Saturday, June 13th, not in Wrexham itself but in two very attractive locations nearby in North Wales. The AGM itself will be held in Gladstone's Library in Hawarden (pronounced Harden) and in the afternoon members are invited to reconvene at St Beuno's, the Jesuit spirituality centre near St Asaph, where the Rev Michael Burgess will give a talk entitled *Gerard Manley Hopkins and Priest-Poets*.

The Victorian Prime Minister William Gladstone was born in Liverpool and later lived at Hawarden Castle. After the end of his fourth and final term as Prime Minister, in 1894, he decided to donate his enormous library of books, amounting to 32,000 volumes, to a new institution to be built a short distance away in the village, supported by a bequest of £40,000. After his death in 1898 at the age of 88 more money was subsequently raised by a public appeal for a national memorial and in 1902 an imposing building was opened known as St Deiniol's Library. Since then it has been a residential centre for writers and other scholars and the location for regular literary festivals. It was renamed Gladstone's Library in 2010.

The day's timetable

At Gladstone's Library	
11.00	Annual General Meeting
12.15	Lunch
13.30-45	Transfer to St Beuno's
At St Beuno's	
14.00-15	Arrive
14.30	Talk by the Rev Michael Burgess
15.15	Tea/coffee
15.30	Q and A session
16.15	Mass

St Beuno's College, now known as St Beuno's Ignatian Spirituality Centre, was built in 1848 as a theological study centre for Jesuits. In 1926 the theology students were moved to Heythrop College (then in Oxfordshire) and St Beuno's took on a more specialist role. Today it is a retreat house and also provides courses in Ignatian spirituality.

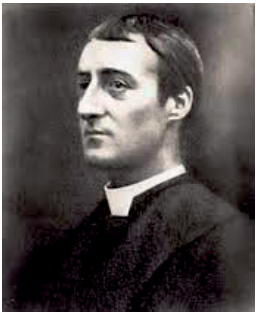
Michael Burgess, an Anglican priest, was born in the north-east of England and served in parishes there and Cornwall. Subsequently he was appointed to the staff of Gladstone's Library and he is now Rector of two parishes in the Chester diocese. He

St Beuno's Ignatian Spirituality Centre

is a member of the Gerard Manley Hopkins Society which was founded in 1987 to celebrate the work of the poet; it stages an annual festival in Ireland.

Gerard Manley Hopkins was received into the Roman Catholic Church in 1866 and two years later entered the noviceship of the Society of Jesus. He lived at St Beuno's between 1874 and 1877 studying theology in preparation for the priesthood. While resident there in tranquil North Wales he wrote many of his poems including *The Wreck of the Deutschland* which described a disastrous shipwreck off the Kent coast in 1875.

Away in the loveable west,
On a pastoral forehead of Wales,
was under a roof here, I was at rest,
And they the prey of the gales:



Gerard Manley Hopkins

Looking towards Gladstone's statue

A limited number of ensuite bedrooms are available at Gladstone's Library. Members wishing to stay there should contact Jane Jones at enquiries@gladlib.org or telephone 01244 532350.

For satnav purposes the relevant postcodes are, for Gladstone's Library, CH5 3DF, and for St Beuno's, LL17 0AS.

Barry Riley

The Newman Association……is it Worth Saving?

A Residential Conference for Newman Circle Officers to consider the future of the Newman Association

Introduction

Following the success of previous Circle Officers' Conferences, Newman Council has decided to organise another conference for officers, this time a residential one in Hinsley Hall Leeds from 10/11th October2015. The theme of the Conference is to consider whether The Newman Association and its Circles survive, and indeed thrive, going forward, or stay as we currently are, with a stable but slowly declining membership, with an older age profile, and with most Circles relying on a small number of committed activists to keep their Circles functioning.

Aims and Objectives of the Conference

- to determine whether members want the Newman Association to survive and consider its immediate, medium and long term future
- to determine what changing role the Newman Association may need to play in the parishes of the future
- to determine what role evangelisation should play in the Newman Association's mission
- to reappraise the relationship between Circles and Council
- to provide opportunities to network and discuss solutions to shared problems

During the Conference the following topics Circle Matters, Financial Affairs, The Bigger Picture, will be discussed focussing on the questions as detailed below. The emphasis of the debate will be on looking at ways to ensure that the Newman Association moves into the future as a viable, sustainable, relevant and dynamic organisation. How can this be achieved?

Circle Matters

How do Circles decide their programme? Is it to attract new members, sustain their membership, challenge or maintain the status quo?

How do Circles attract new members?

Would we attract more members if we debate more contentious/topical issues eg married priests feminist theology, same sex marriage? (Some Circles may do this already.) Is this a way of increasing or losing members?

How ecumenical are Circles?

Should pro-active ecumenism be a goal of Newman Circles and the Association?

Financial Affairs

Is Council spending the Association's monies in the right way?

Should we sponsor academic scholarships?

How do we use legacies?

Is the current system of paying back membership fees etc the most appropriate/fairest way of ensuring the survival of the Newman Association and the Circles?

The Bigger Picture – A Changing Role for the Newman Association

Should we stay as we are, 'grow old gracefully' and maybe wither on the vine, without a plan to prevent this, knowing that for the short to medium term we serve a purpose for our current membership? Should this knowledge be sufficient to sustain the activists who keeping their Circles going?

Try to attract younger members to keep the Association alive? If so how?

Should we reappraise our role within parishes and be more outward looking?

Should we make evangelisation the centre of our role? The present theme of the Church is evangelisation, in particular the New Evangelisation. If the Newman Association is to both give and receive from the Church, what part should the Newman Association play in the Evangelisation movement? Will we not only survive but thrive if we recognise the Newman Association's role in the Church's mission of the New Evangelisation?

Should we have a more campaigning role?

Should we relook at the rules and allow full membership for non Catholics?

Some Circles have stronger ecumenical ties than others. What can we learn from these? Do Circles with stronger ecumenical links have a younger age profile?

Is it imperative that the Newman Association stay as a Catholic organisation or should we actively pursue the idea of becoming a much more pioneering/ecumenical Christian organisation and determine to branch out and actively include other denominations?

Should we eventually "close down" the Newman Association as it is today and reform/restart it as a new interdenominational Christian Association?

By the close of Conference we aim to answer this question

CAN WE BEGIN TO ARTICULATE A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE NEWMAN ASSOCIATION?

Carole O'Toole

Each Circle will be asked to send two representatives to the Conference and it is intended that the above themes and questions will be discussed by the representatives with their membership prior to attending. Letters will be sent to Circle chairs and secretaries with the full programme nearer the date of the Conference. Council is suggesting that Circles might consider holding a special meeting to discuss the aims of the Conference and its intended outcomes with as many members as possible.

Ushaw Study Day, 'Catholic Perspectives on Poverty'

The Study Day on March 21st at Ushaw College, Durham, was partly sponsored by the Newman Association.

Jonathan Bradshaw (Professor of Social Policy at York) looked at the question of how to define poverty and austerity. Recently in UK we had seen a surge of antipathy to austerity based on several 'presumed rights'. Nevertheless there was actual real poverty. For example, the UK had a high under-5 mortality rate; in the North East (at least) poverty was correlated with child health.

He discussed how poverty could be defined. Was it the lack of physical necessities, and incomes less than the minimum subsistence level? He looked at concepts such as 'transmitted deprivation' and the underclass. "Who are the poor?" Prof Bradshaw asked. The definition could apply to some 53 per cent of households (most having a worker in the household) and some 13 per cent of older people. The Blair government missed its targets but nevertheless did a lot to help the situation. Currently, he said, there was too much emphasis on employment, whereas most poor children were in families that worked. Vicious sanctions led to food banks; we were not 'all in it together.'

Fr Richard Finn OP (an historian of early Christianity) looked at the historical perspective. Early Christians had been concerned with 'poor relief' and, although Julian the Apostate belittled them, nevertheless he set up relief services in 'opposition' to what the Christians had done. Makarius Magnes, a fourth century author, had argued that Job had relinquished his goods to the poor, rather than having had them taken from him. Jerome had argued that possessions need not be dispersed but that their fruits were to be used (for those in need).

Those who gave away their goods and those who retained them to give away the fruits were seen, in a vision, to be of equal merit. Cyril of Alexandria clarified voluntary poverty and recognised the evil of involuntary poverty. There is a law of brotherhood, but wealth makes men contemptuous. The trickle-down theory is unsubstantiated. Voluntary poverty should not be destitution. Religious poverty should, at its best, provide much relief to the poor (see the harmful effects of the reformation). We need to get used to sharing more, said Fr Finn. The danger of using up resources was never explained and the 'Live Simply' campaign was to be commended.

The Right to Shelter

Alison Gelder, Chief Executive of Housing Justice, spoke on the human right to shelter – this being a legal right and not a form of charity. Last year some 6,000 people slept on the streets of London, and there were some 61,000 in temporary accommodation, including 8,700 children. 80 per cent of people are unaffected. We were fighting poverty in an age of austerity, said Ms Gelder. We must not forget Human Dignity and the Common Good.

What can Christians do? The Church, she said, is in all its members: Christian NIMBYism was to be avoided and there was an obligation on us to support the poor. Parishes could, and should, act – perhaps becoming involved in providing such facilities as night shelters and food banks, many of which would require us

to cooperate with other bodies. Some people might have a spare room to offer for a lodger. Overall there was a shortage of housing and a shortage of funds. Local authorities resented any sort of 'interference' and the government was only interested in the outcome, finding it easy to blame the workers, not the bosses. In the end this might provide be a good opportunity for the Church to flourish.

Sr Helen Alford OP gave us an historical overview of the field. Although we were opposed to 'insatiability' our civilisation now depended on it. The economist John Maynard Keynes in 1928-30 had thought the problem, by now, would be how to occupy our leisure and that the drive to capitalism would just fade away. However, the motivational structure has got stuck. Mandeville defined vice as an innocuous natural quality and greed and acquisitiveness were now tolerated, even encouraged. The idea of social good as an achievement, she said, had been lost. The true (postwar) welfare state finally disappeared in the 1980s; although we still saw good as to be done and evil avoided, unfortunately politicians always appealed to the lowest common denominator.

Ian Jessiman

Responding to the Challenge of Climate Change

As many Newman Association (N.A.) members will be aware, the subject of climate change is very much in the public domain this year, with a U.N. conference on this theme due in Paris in December – this following the publication of the 5th. U.N. Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report in late 2014. Indeed, in anticipation of this important event, a papal encyclical on climate change is anticipated in June or July. It was, therefore, particularly helpful to be able to attend the John Ray Initiative (JRI) and A Rocha U.K.[1] conference in March, at Redcliffe College in Gloucester, when the theme was as in the title of this article/report – see The Newman, issue No. 94: Jan. 2015, for a notice about the conference.

As might be expected, the conference was fully booked well ahead of the date for it, and participants were treated to a rich series of reflections on *Climate Change and Biodiversity, Climate Change and Human Migration* and T*he Political Theology of Climate Change*. The respective speakers were Dr. Mike Morecroft of Natural England (and a Senior Visiting Research Associate at Oxford University), Professor Allan Findlay, Professor of Population Studies at the University of St. Andrews, and Professor Michael Northcott, Professor of Ethics at the University of Edinburgh.

In advance of the conference participants were notified of a thoughtful paper produced for Epiphany 2015, *Climate Change and the Gospel: Why we in the church need to treat climate change more urgently* by Bishop David Atkinson[2]; and, as part of the day's activities, a series of thought-provoking seminars on different aspects of the climate change theme were held. One seminar *Recent developments in the science of climate change* was led by the JRI President, Sir John Houghton – a great opportunity to be

updated by one of the leading figures on the subject[3].

From the perspective of The Newman Association, the conference offered several points of contact with the Association's initiatives to highlight environmental matters over the years. Most helpfully, Bishop Atkinson's paper cited as distinctive to his theme the work of Dr. Robert Murray S.J., formerly of Heythrop College, author of *The Cosmic Covenant* (1992) and one of the lead speakers at the N.A.'s 1990 London conference *Creation, Christians and the Environment*[4], out of which grew the Association's Environment Interest Group. On that occasion, Dr. Murray, being an Old Testament scholar, spoke about *The Biblical Background* to our understanding of the natural order and our responsibilities under God for it.

Similarly, Sir John Houghton kindly contributed to the N.A.'s 2004 Hereford conference *Faith and the Environmental Imperative: responding to 'The Call of Creation'* (hosted jointly with Christian Ecology Link, now Green Christian)[4] – his theme on that occasion being *Global Warming & Climate Change: a challenge to scientists and Christians*. Clearly there are overlaps between the N.A.'s environmental interests and work and that of other Christian organisations such as JRI and A Rocha. This timely Gloucester conference was certainly a helpful reminder to reflect further along these lines, as well as many others, by way of a robust response to 'the challenge of climate change'.

Robert Williams, Convener of the N.A. Environment Interest Group

1 See websites: www.jri.org.uk and www.arocha.org

2 See: http://operationnoah.org/resources/climate-change-gospel/ Bishop Atkinson attended the Gloucester conference.

3 The 5th edition of Sir John Houghton's Global Warming: The Complete Briefing (CUP) is due out in June 2015.

4 Copies of reports of these two Newman conferences are available from the Convener of the N.A. Environment Interest Group.

Spirituality Page

By Anne Duddington

Two saints and two poets joyfully reflect on "the infinite possibilities that are born of faith".

May there today be peace within.
May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.
May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.
May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.
May you be content knowing that you are a child of God.
Let this presence settle into our bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.
It is there for each and every one of you.

St Teresa of Avila, 1515 - 1582

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Lord, as I read the psalms let me hear your heart singing. As I read your words, let me hear you speaking. As I reflect on each page, let me see your image. And as I seek to put your precepts into practice, let my heart be filled with joy.

St Gregory of Nazianzus, 329 - 389

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I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.

Rabindranath Tagore, 1861 - 1941

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Lord, grant us eyes to see
Within the seed a tree,
Within the glowing egg a bird,
Within the shroud a butterfly:
Till taught by such, we see
Beyond all creatures thee,
And hearken for thy tender word
And hear it, "Fear not: it is I".

Christina Rossetti, 1830 - 1894

Save the date

Ecumenical Conference, November 14th

Learn to Learn - Receptive Ecumenism in Action is the title of a conference, sponsored jointly by the Newman Association and the National Board of Catholic Women, to be held on **November 14th, 2015 at Christ the King Community Centre, Coventry**. Bishop William Kenney of the Birmingham diocese has agreed to chair the opening session.
The conference is intended to be both informative and to offer the opportunity for shared practical experience. It follows the Association's sponsorship last year of a one-year fellowship in Ecumenical Theology at the University of Durham.
The conference fee is £30 (£25 before September 1st) from Kevin Lambert c/o Diamond House, 13 Stoney Road, Coventry CV1 2NP. *Cheques are to be made payable, please, to the Coventry Circle of the Newman Association*.
Further details will be included in the September issue of *The Newman*.

Concerning Circles

New Members

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

Mrs J. A. Cannon (North Merseyside), Br. A. F. Chincotta (Manchester & N. Ches.), Rev. S. Crocker & Mrs J. A. Elland-Crocker (Wimbledon), Mr R. G. & Mrs S. V. Dean (Rainham), Mrs E. Dooley (Wimbledon), Mr A. & Mrs J. Fletcher (Edinburgh), Mrs M. M. Hall (Tyneside), Mrs A. King (Wimbledon), Mr D .MacLaren (Glasgow), Mr T.P. & Mrs E. A. MacNamara (Cleveland), Ms B. Marcou (Wimbledon), Dr A. Poliandri (Wimbledon), Mr R. Renton (Glasgow). Mr M. & Mrs E. Wood (Surrey Hills).

Requiescant in Pace

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

Mr W. G. Aspell (Coventry), Mrs N. P. Bryant (Manchester & N. Ches.), Mr A. J. Bunting) (unattached), Fr N. Jacobson (Hull & E. Riding), Dr A .E. McCarthy (Birmingham),Mr P. Pinto (Hertfordshire), Mr J. Proctor (Manchester & N. Ches.), Mr N. A. Simpson (unattached), Dr C. C. S. Slorach (Glasgow).
Fr Jacobson was the Chaplain to the Hull & East Riding Circle.

Circle Programmes

Aberdeen Contact: Margaret Smith, 01224 314566

7 May	AGM + Cheese & Wine	

All Circles

13 June	National Newman AGM (with a tour of Gladstone's Library in Hawarden)	
	Gerard Manley Hopkins	*Michael Burgess*

Birmingham Contact: Winifred Flanagan, winifredflanagan@gmail.com

16 May	A Celebration of Religious Sisters and Brothers	*Fr Denis Carter*
8 June	AGM and Supper	

Cleveland Contact: Judith Brown, 01642 814977, browns01@globalnet.co.uk

20 May	AGM and supper
June/ July	Summer Event

Coventry Contact: Steve Ferguson, 02476 674733. stephen.ferguson@cantab.net

26 May	Preaching	*Fr. Fabian Radcliffe*
16 June	Mass and AGM and Party	
June	Ramble	

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

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

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

15 June	Thoughts on the Family for the Synod	*Laura Byrne and Lydia Henry*
3 September	Who, What and Why is Newman Today?	*Fr Nicholas Schofield*

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

Glasgow Contact: Arthur McLay, mclay@btinternet.com

28 May	Circle AGM

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

12 May	Newman's 'The Dream of Gerontius'	*Jack Scrutton*
28 June	Garden Party	
5 July	A presentation on St John Southworth	*Anna Marie Micallef*

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

11 May	Experiencing 'Church' in Toxteth	*Fr Nicholas Postlethwaite CP*
1 June	End of Life Issues	*Reverend John Lansley*
18 June	Quiet Day	*Fr John Twist SJ*
6 July	AGM followed by talk 'Idolatry'	*Canon Albert Radcliffe*

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

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

North Merseyside		Contact: John Potts, john_potts41@hotmail.com
SE Circles		
North Staffordshire		Contact: Vincent Owen, 01782 619698
Rainham		Contact: Marie Casey, bmcasey@btinternet.com
Surrey Hills		Contact: Gerald Williams, guillaume30@btinternet.com
TBA	CAFOD	*Martin Brown*
TBA	SVP	*Ingrid Phillips*
Tyneside		Contact: Maureen Dove, 01912 579646, maureenanndove@btinternet.com
Wimbledon		Contact: Bill Russell, 0208 946 4265, william_russell@talktalk.net
22 May	TBC	*Prof Tina Beattie*
Worcester		Contact: Heather Down, 01905 21535, hcdown@gmail.com
21 May	'Hopes and Aims'	*Professor Karen Kilby*
June	Summer Outing	
July	House Mass and Supper	
Wrexham		Contact: Maureen Thomas, maureenthomas@uwclub.net
29 May	Medieval Monastic Gardens	*Maureen Thomas*
26 June	The RE Curriculum in Secondary Education	*Mrs Heidi Roe*
Jul/Aug	Summer Social TBA	
York		Contact: Judith Smeaton, 01904 704525, judith.smeaton@btinternet.com
18 May	AGM followed by 'The Synod on the Family'	*Rev. Dominique Minskip*

Newman Association AGM at Gladstone's Library, Hawarden, on June 13th

full details on page 36