

THE PRIEST



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Ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia.

Where Peter is, there is the Church.

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The first condition is this: we ourselves must interiorise the structure, the words of the liturgy, the Word of God. Thus, our celebration truly becomes a celebration “with” the Church: our hearts are enlarged and we are not therefore doing anything but “with” the Church, in conversation with God. It seems to me that people truly feel that we converse with God, with them, and that in this common prayer we attract others; in communion with the children of God we attract others ... Thus, the fundamental element of the true ars celebrandi [“art of celebration of the liturgy”] is this consonance, this harmony between what we say with our lips and what we think with our hearts. The Sursum corda [“Lift up your hearts!”], which is a very ancient word of the Liturgy, should come before the Preface [and is a] path for our speaking and thinking.

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The quote in the left bar of this Contents page is drawn from an English translation of the Holy Father’s extempore response in Italian to the question of a priest of the Diocese of Albano, Italy, during a meeting with clergy. The question concerned special attention to the theology and the celebration practice of the liturgy. A fuller extract appears in this issue at page 34. (Credit: L’Osservatore Romano, 17 September 2006, page 10)



Priestly Fraternity, 2006 ACCC Annual Conference

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the journal of the Australian Confraternity of Catholic Clergy

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Assistance to the Editor for this issue: Rev Michael Kennedy; Mrs Marie Swanson; Rev Glen Tattersall, FSSP; Mrs Maryse Usher; Rev John J Walter, PP; Rev Lew Wray. This is the first issue involving our new Associate Editor.

Chairman's Remarks

Like most priests, the pages of my breviary and missal are interspersed with my brother priests' ordination prayer cards. A look at these prayer cards with the various icons and images on them reveals quite a lot about how we priests see and approach the Ministerial Priesthood of Jesus Christ in which we participate. Common images include the following:

1. Jesus the Good Shepherd carrying the lost sheep across his shoulders. This is actually one of the earliest images in Christian art, first appearing in the catacombs of Rome. As priests, we are ultimately concerned for the eternal welfare of Christ's flock, sharing with him the burden of carrying his sheep home to heaven. The truly pastoral priest, in the image of The Good Shepherd, is one who makes decisions on the basis of what is for the true good of the sheep entrusted to him, not on the basis of what will make the shepherd well-liked and popular.

2. Jesus Christ washing the Apostles' feet at the Last Supper. I personally find the *mandatum* at the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper particularly moving and meaningful. It is a vivid reminder that authentic love for the souls entrusted to us finds expression, not so much in the great highlight events of the year, but more in the daily grind of menial and simple tasks. As Gerard Manly Hopkins says "Sheer plod makes plough down sillion shine". Christ washed his Apostles' feet as an example to them of love and humble service: "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." Similarly, it is in the small acts of kindness for our parishioners — five minutes here, 10 minutes there — that we best give them the proof of our love and an example to imitate.

3. The Blessed Virgin Mary. Oh, how beautiful the extraordinary number of priests who adorn their ordination card with her lovely image! I believe it expresses an awareness of several realities, some of which include: that the priest is a sinner who has particular need to fly to the "Refuge of sinners"; that the priest, in his sacramental configuration to Christ, enjoys a unique affinity with his Mother too; and that the Blessed Virgin is, in a sense, the personification of the Church and all that the Church is called and destined to be, so that the priest's love for Mary is inseparable from his love for the Church.

4. The most common images on ordination cards depict either the crucifixion of Christ or the priest celebrating the Holy Mass. There is, in my opinion, no better image to represent the priesthood. For in this one sacrifice, of Calvary and of the Altar, is the total gift of the Priest Bridegroom for the Church Bride. This is the reality we are called to live liturgically and actually every living day of our priesthood, and this reality was put before each of us for our free consent immediately before our ordination: "Are you resolved to consecrate your life to God for the salvation of his people, and to unite yourself more closely every day to Christ the High Priest, who offered himself for us to the Father as a perfect sacrifice?" We replied, "I am with the help of God."

I humbly suggest we all take another look at our own ordination card and renew our commitment to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Rev Fr Michael Kennedy
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This pontificate will have teeth:

a commentator's assessment of battling a "dictatorship of relativism"

John J Allen

*The author has for some years been the Rome correspondent for the **National Catholic Reporter** and has gained an independent reputation – as witnessed by the range of confidences that he is able to gain from senior churchmen and Vatican officials. His objective and insightful reporting style is captured in his 2005 book, **The Rise of Benedict XVI: the inside story of how the Pope was elected and where he will take the Catholic Church**, published in Australia by Penguin Books. A brief extract from the Preface (p. 2) and from chapter 6, "Battling a 'dictatorship of Relativism'" (excerpted from pages 171-191) is presented here with thanks to and under licence no. PM8324 from Penguin UK. Headings are mainly due to the Editor.*

Inspiring alternative models of Christian existence

... Pope Benedict XVI is a man of epic ambition who hopes to do nothing less than challenge four centuries of intellectual development in the West toward subjectivity and relativism, producing what European intellectuals who share his view call a climate of "weak thought". Like St Benedict sixteen centuries before, from whom the new pope took his name, Benedict XVI aims to inspire alternative models of Christian existence for a culture that, he believes, is too often in denial about the real meaning and purpose of human existence.

Why "Benedict"?

... Just twenty-four hours before Pope John Paul II died, the man who would take the name of Benedict XVI travelled to Subiaco, Italy, home to a famous Benedictine monastery, to receive an honour from Abbot Mauro Meacci – an honour ironically called the *Premio San Benedetto*, or St Benedict Award. The then Cardinal Ratzinger delivered a twelve-page speech reflecting on the Benedictine rule and spiritual legacy; preparing this speech on St Benedict was the last reflective piece of intellectual activity Ratzinger performed before the whirlwind of events that led to his election as pope. It is worth quoting at length what Ratzinger said on that occasion:

What we need above all at this moment of history are people who, through an illumined and lived faith, render God credible in this world. The negative testimony of Christians who spoke about God but lived against him has obscured the image of God and has opened the door to disbelief. We need people who keep their gaze directed at God, learning from there what is true humanity. We need people whose intellect is illumined by the light of God and in whom God opens their hearts, so that their intellect can speak to the intellect of others and their hearts can open the hearts of others. It is only by people who are touched by God that God will be able to return to the people. We need people like Benedict of Norcia who, in a time of dissipation and decadence, sank himself into the most profound solitude, succeeding, after all the purifications he was forced to undergo, in making the light rise again, returning to found Montecassino, the city on the hill where, amid all the ruins, he put together the energy from which a new world was formed. Thus Benedict, like Abraham, became the father of many peoples. The recommendations to his monks placed at the end of his Rule are indications that demonstrate also to us the path that leads to the heights, out of the crises and ruins. "Just as there is an evil zeal of bitterness which separates from God and leads to hell, so there is a good zeal which separates from vices

and leads to God and to life everlasting. This zeal, therefore, the monks should practice with the most fervent love. Thus they should anticipate one another in honour; most patiently endure one another's infirmities, whether of body or of character; vie in paying obedience one to another – no one following what he considers useful for himself, but rather what benefits another; tender the charity of brotherhood chastely; fear God in love; love their Abbot with a sincere and humble charity; prefer nothing whatever to Christ. And may He bring us all together to life everlasting!

The gravest problem of our time

When Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger said in his homily on the morning of 18 April 2005 [to the assembled Cardinals of the electoral college]... that the West is in the grip of a "dictatorship of relativism", it was not a spur-of-the-moment remark. It was a summary statement of one of the core concerns of his life, and, given that he did not expect or desire to be elected pope, it was also a carefully chosen expression of his own theological legacy. It was, in effect, the final challenge Joseph Ratzinger intended to leave the Roman Catholic Church before he exited the public stage.

... Ratzinger began by arguing that relativism is dangerous, in the first place, because it is false. That is, it suggests that objective truth does not exist, or at least it is unattainable by the human mind. This assumption, he warned, turns Christian orthodoxy on its head, which is premised on the idea that God has revealed the truth about the human condition in the person of Jesus Christ, and this truth is valid and binding across time, culture, and personal experience. In that light, he bluntly defined relativism as "the gravest problem of our time".

In effect, Ratzinger warned, relativism obscures the Christian claim that "Jesus of Nazareth is ... the incarnate meaning of history, the Logos, the self-manifestation of truth itself." Christianity, he argues, rises or falls on this fundamental conviction. Relativism is, therefore, not merely a modern version of ancient heresies ... which distort one or another elements of the Church's creed; it is, to borrow a phrase, "the mother of all heresies", in that it denies the possibility of objectively binding creedal statements in the first place. ...

Objectivity of truth as the burning issue of our times

To put the point a different way, it is the Church's insistence on absolute truth, on "truth with a capital T", that makes it insusceptible to being co-opted by alien ideologies, whether National Socialism, Marxism, or free-market capitalism. In typically pithy fashion, Ratzinger made the point this way: "Where there is no dualism, there is totalitarianism." By denying the existence of any transcendent truth, and of a supernatural realm in which that truth is grounded, the new pope believes, the West runs the risk of "divinising" the present, of looking for the Reign of God in there here and now. That was the basic error in Marxism, he argued, mistaking politics for eschatology. Relativism thus encourages a kind of utopian approach to politics, which ultimately, in Ratzinger's view and life experience, leads to Dachau or the gulags. ...

In summary form, then, we can say that Pope Benedict XVI believes relativism is “the gravest problem of our time” because it subverts traditional Christian teaching; because it undercuts efforts to bring the Gospel to the world; because it fosters utopian political thinking and ultimately totalitarianism; and because it compromises the basis for human rights and leads to abuse of power by the State, even over life and death. Given that diagnosis, one can understand why, for Pope Benedict, the defence of objective truth is not simply a matter of abstract philosophical interest. It is the burning issue of our times, and in an era in which relativism seems to have the upper hand and a social order built on truth is crumbling, it is up the Church to keep the candle of objective truth burning.

Countering the “dictatorship of relativism”

... Though Pope Benedict may not consciously conceive of his own efforts against the Western “dictatorship of relativism” in such explicit strategic terms, one can nevertheless expect a similar three-pronged effort during this pontificate [focusing on 1. teaching, 2. politics, 3. alternative communities [and 4. Europe]].

Teaching. ... Every battle is waged with both offensive and defensive strategies, and the teaching aspect of Pope Benedict’s reign will mark the offensive dimension of the struggle against relativism. He will try to express his ideas in positive and outward-directed language, confounding expectations of a pontificate largely built on condemnation and lament. At the same time, however, there will be challenging moments, because the Pope will not shrink from marking lines in the sand. Authentic love for humanity, he believes, implies telling people the truth, even if it’s not what they want to hear. One can anticipate that Benedict XVI will therefore sometimes be a jarring voice in the cultural conversation, on all manner of issues. ...

Politics. Benedict XVI will be forced to confront relativism not just at the level of ideas, but also in what he perceives as its real-world political consequences. In his view, these appear across a wide range of issues, from what he would consider an “assault” on the family in the contemporary West, to a lack of respect for human dignity in wars and the inequities of structural development. In that sense, one can expect Benedict ... energetically to exploit the “bully pulpit” of the papacy to try to reshape the international agenda. This will be, therefore, a very political papacy. ...

At the same, Pope Benedict’s political interests will not be restricted to what wags have sometimes called the “pelvic issues”, meaning the matters of sexuality that loom large in the Western press. This will not be a single-issue papacy, as Benedict’s vision and ambitions are much broader. ...

Alternative communities. Benedict XVI knows very well that hundreds of years of Western history cannot be reversed in the blink of an eye, and that in the short term the “dictatorship of relativism” is unlikely to crumble. For that reason, like St Benedict before him, the new Pope will see preserving islands of alternative modes of living as an essential strategy, places where the Christian vision of human existence can be lived integrally and passionately, a sort of “mustard seed” that, in a different cultural moment, can sprout and produce renewal, just as Benedictine monasticism helped lay the groundwork for the High Middle Ages. Pope Benedict is fond of Toynbee’s



John J Allen with His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI
(photo courtesy of author)

insight that the destiny of a society always depends on its “creative minorities”, and in some respects he sees the role of Christianity in the present historical moment as representing precisely such a minority. ...

At the same time, the traditionalist side of Pope Benedict’s personality means that he will be conscious of what some established religious communities in the Church, such as the Benedictines, Franciscans, and Jesuits, took as a neglect of religious life under John Paul II at the expense of the new movements. In their more bitter moments, men and women religious sometimes felt as if John Paul had given up on them, deciding that the future belonged to the [new ecclesial] movements. Pope Benedict, who chose to name himself after the founder of [Western] monasticism, will see a genuine renewal of religious life as an important ambition of his papacy. ...

Europe. Though Pope Benedict’s efforts to stem the relativistic tide will unfold worldwide, [Europe forms] ... the front lines of the struggle, and the place where his success or failure will be gauged is Europe. He is a product of the European intellectual tradition, Europe is historically the cradle of Christian culture, it is still the primary centre of institutional pastoral energy in the Catholic Church, and, in the words of one senior Vatican official, “Europe is simply too big to fail.” Addressing the demoralisation and “ecclesiastical winter” in western Europe, and the cultural crisis that Pope Benedict believes lies underneath these phenomena, will be the most crucial challenge he faces at the start of his papacy. ...

There is in Europe today, the Pope writes, a striking lack of hunger for the future. This ennui is best expressed in declining fertility rates, as children come to be seen not as investments in the future but a risk to the present, threats to take away personal liberty or material prosperity. Europe, in effect, has preserved the forms of its Carolingian self-understanding, but has lost its sense of mission. ...

A pontificate with teeth

... Pope Benedict will strive to be a man of joy and compassion, especially for Europeans, whom he believes are often mired into aimlessness and a loss of confidence in their own future. Yet being Catholic will increasingly mean being different, especially as measured against the dominant culture of secular Europe. That transmission will be a jolt to a swathe of Catholic life in Europe and elsewhere. Make no mistake: as far as Catholic identity goes, this pontificate will have teeth.



Pope Benedict XVI and Vatican II

Tracey Rowland

As remarked in August 2006 *Inter Nos* following the 2006 ACCC Annual Conference, the papers delivered by our principal speaker made a marked impression. Editing these papers has, however, proven difficult – because the theft of Dr Rowland's personal computer thrust the Editor's reliance onto a transcript of an audio tape of presentations. Thus, although the original presentations had the quality of a "paper", they are now presented as "talks" and reconstruction of citations has largely not been attempted. The headings and sub-headings are due to the Editor. I am grateful to Dr Rowland for clarifying certain portions that were unclear from the audio transcript. (Editor)

Introduction. This talk is to treat the responses of Cardinal Ratzinger – now Pope Benedict XVI – to the Second Vatican Council. It is a complex topic, and certain "stylisations" are appropriate to give an overview. The Council is often presented as an historical battle between "progressive" bishops and their *periti* who wanted Catholic teaching and cultural practices more closely to harmonise with the "spirit of the times", and "conservatives" who remained wedded to the perspective of the Counter Reformation and who at their most extreme wanted no engagement at all between the Church and the world. According to this caricature both Karol Wojtyla and Joseph Ratzinger started out on the "progressive" side, but had second thoughts after the cultural dramas of 1968. The pontificates of John Paul II and Benedict XVI therefore reflect a kind of neo-conservatism in the sense of the saying, "A neo-conservative is a liberal with a teenage daughter." Rather than follow this populist reading, I shall argue a three-pointed reading that types the participants between: (1) the Thomists who dominated the theological establishment from the period of Pope Leo XIII (these I shall term "Leonine Thomists"), (2) scholars who were mainly French and who sought a "return to sources" (often termed the "*Ressourcement* movement"), and (3) those who gathered around Karl Rahner SJ and whose perspective has been called "Transcendental Thomism". These, then, are the three factions – (1) Leonine Thomism, (2) *Ressourcement* scholarship; and (3) Transcendental Thomism.

Leonine Thomist and *Ressourcement* Groups. The intellectual leader of the Leonines was Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, a Dominican and Professor of Dogmatic and Spiritual Theology at the Angelicum from 1909 to 1959. Although he died early in 1964, a year before the end of the Council, his presence was certainly felt at the Council. These Leonine Thomists were strongly influenced by the theology of the Counter Reformation era. The French *Ressourcement* scholars were represented at the Council by the Jesuit priests, Henri de Lubac and Jean Daniélou. They wanted to revive the Church's patristic heritage which was muted by those focused on defending the faith at the bar of Enlightenment reason. They were also critical of the Thomist tradition for its inability to engage with contemporary questions, particularly existentialist questions about the importance of history and the meaning of individuality. A "nutshell" presentation of

*The author, pictured right, is Dean of the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family in Melbourne. Associate Professor Rowland's diverse undergraduate studies began at the University of Queensland, and culminated with a PhD in Divinity of the University of Cambridge. Her talk draws on her book, *Keys to the Theology of Benedict XVI* that is forthcoming from Oxford University Press.*



the *Ressourcement* stance vis-à-vis Leonine Thomism can be found in the following statement of Daniélou:

It is very plain that Scholastic theology is strange to these categories [of historicity and subjectivity] which are at the heart of contemporary reflection. Its world is the immobile world of Greek thought where its mission of incarnating the Christian message was lived out. This conception retains a permanent and ever valid truth to this extent at any rate: that it consists in affirming that man's decision for freedom and his transformation of the conditions of life are not an absolute beginning where he acts as his own creator, but rather humanity's response to a divine call itself expressed in the world of essences. And yet...[Scholastic theology] gives no place to history. And moreover, locating reality as it does more in essences than in subjects it ignores the dramatic world of persons, of universal concretes transcending all essence and only distinguished by their existence – that is, no longer distinct from one another by intelligibility and intellection but by value and love or hate.

Transcendental Thomists and *Ressourcement* Scholars.

The third group was represented above all by another Jesuit, Karl Rahner. While Rahner agreed with de Lubac's criticisms of pre-Conciliar scholasticism he offered his own alternative theological framework. Rahner's thought was called "Transcendental" Thomism because it sought to develop a version of Thomism based on Kant's analysis of human experience as "transcendental" in the sense of going behind actual experience to lay bare the conditions that made it possible. So the term "transcendental" in this context must be understood in the Kantian sense, not the medieval sense. In the latter sense, "transcendental" referred to the properties of being, such as truth, goodness, unity and beauty. When one speaks of "Transcendental Thomism" one is referring to a system of thought blending elements of Thomism with elements of Kantian epistemology. Thus, it is often summarised as having the effect of "naturalising the supernatural", of seeking a *reapproachment* with the Enlightenment and of affirming the autonomy of the secular realm.

In strategic terms, one could say that the great losers of the Second Vatican Council were the Leonine Thomists. They were defeated by an alliance of *Ressourcement* types led by de Lubac and the Transcendental Thomists led by Rahner. However, this alliance was short lived, and it did not survive the 1960s. By the early 1970s a definite cleavage had

developed between (1) a group centered around the journal *Communio*, and the figures of Hans Urs von Balthasar, Henri de Lubac and Joseph Ratzinger, and (2) a group centered around the journal, *Concilium*, based at the Concilium Institute in Holland. Although Ratzinger was one of the founding members of *Concilium* in 1964, less than a decade later, in 1972, he was a founding member of the *Communio* journal, and has maintained his association with *Communio* circles ever since.

Karol Wojtyla. One person who straddled both the Leonine Thomist and *Communio* circles was Karol Wojtyla. On the one hand his doctoral dissertation was written at the Angelicum under the supervision of Garrigou-Lagrange. At the Council, however, Wojtyla became friends with de Lubac, and invited de Lubac to write the preface to the Polish edition of his *Love and Responsibility*. He also assisted in the establishment of a Polish language edition of *Communio*. Later, as Pope, he raised both de Lubac and von Balthasar to the status of Cardinal (although famously von Balthasar did not live to formally receive the red hat). John Paul II's quarter-century pontificate ended up being supported intellectually by an uneasy alliance of Thomist and *Communio* types of whom Joseph Ratzinger was the most significant in the second category.

The *Communio* group. I now turn to a list of some of the leading players in both of those camps because I think it's important to know where people fit in and to what schools they belong. The most important place in the *Communio* camp (after the founders – von Balthasar, de Lubac and Ratzinger himself) belongs to Cardinal Angelo Scola who became Rector of the Lateran University's John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family, and later Patriarch of Venice. Also prominent are: Cardinal Marc Ouellet who is the Archbishop of Quebec City; Professor Joseph Fessio, founder of Ignatius Press and several institutions of Catholic higher education in the Americas; David Schindler, Dean of the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family in Washington; Rev. Aidan Nichols OP, who recently became the first person to hold a lectureship specifically devoted to Catholic theology in post-Reformation Oxford; Stratford Caldecott, Director of the Center for Faith and Culture in Oxford; Cardinal James Stafford; Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, Archbishop of Lyon; Cardinal Peter Erdo, Archbishop of Esztergom-Budapest; Archbishop Javier Martinez of Granada; Professor Jean-Luc Marion of the University of Chicago; Professor Olivier Boulnois of the Sorbonne; Professor Jean Duchesne, of Condorcet College, Paris; and Fr Jean-Robert Armogathe of the Archdiocese of Paris. They are the leading scholars on the *Communio* side who supported the papacy of John Paul II.

Neo-Thomists. Called thus because they do not take their Thomism "neat" – but mix it with dashes of modern philosophy – the leaders were John Finnis, Professor of Law and Legal Philosophy, Oxford University and the University of Notre Dame; Germaine Grisez, Professor of Christian Ethics, Mount St Mary's College; Joseph Boyle, University of Toronto; and William E. May, John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family, Washington. Other scholars associated with the Thomist tradition in some sense and prominent defenders of the John Paul II pontificate included Cardinal Caffara, Archbishop of Bologna; Cardinal Georges Cottier OP, Papal Theologian; Ralph McInerny; Jude Dougherty; Russell Hittinger; John Hittinger; Fr Augustine De Noia OP;

Fr Richard Schenk OP; Servais Pinckaers OP; Romanus Cessario OP; Fr James V Shall SJ; Monsignor Livio Melina; and Joseph Seifert.

These lists are by no means exhaustive but they do provide something of a "form guide" to the players. The important point to note is that the Pontificate of John Paul II was supported by an alliance of those who were in the least strongest position at the Second Vatican Council, and by the *Communio* scholars.

Difference is one of the "geneology" of the Post-Conciliar Crisis. The difference between the Thomists and the *Communio* scholars is not a difference over official Church teaching. Both reach the same conclusions about the immorality of contraception, the impossibility of ordaining women and the need for a hierarchy. However, they have different readings of the genealogies of contemporary theological crises; that is, different readings of *how* things "went wrong", of the seeds of contemporary confusions. And they therefore prescribe different remedies for contemporary pathologies.

The *Communio* scholars represent a consensus that the problem of secularisation within the Western world was in part fostered by the intellectual errors of Catholic theologians – in particular by the extrinsicist accounts of the relationship between nature and grace which came to prominence after the Council of Trent and fostered by the Thomism of people like Cajetan and Suarez. Indeed, Suarez is seen as the villain *par excellence*. This is as politically explosive as saying that Osama bin Laden has unwittingly fostered the Americanisation of Islamic culture!

This fundamental difference between the Leonine Thomists and those who were influenced by de Lubac has profound consequences for the development of a theology of culture and history and for political theory. If, as the Leonine Thomists claim, there is not *one* end of human nature, but *two* – a *natural* end and a *supernatural* end – then this has significant consequences for the openness of the Catholic faith to the Liberal tradition. This openness is often acknowledged by Thomist scholars in the context of political and economic philosophy, but most want to close the door to its consequences in the territory of sexual morality. However, the *Communio* scholars, in rejecting the two-tiered theory of nature and grace and the two ends theory of human nature, logically conclude that no culture, no political or economic order can ever be theologically neutral, as the Liberal political theorists seek to argue.

De Lubac on Grace and Nature. An excellent exposition of these two divergent political, philosophical and cultural trajectories is found in a little-known paper by Henri de Lubac delivered on a lecture tour of the United States in 1968. In this de Lubac argued that the division of all that exists into a two tiered natural and supernatural order has the effect of marginalising the supernatural as an artificial and arbitrary superstructure. The sharp dichotomy between the supernatural – the order of *grace* – and the secular – the order of *nature* – was embraced by Catholic scholars who wanted to find common ground with non-Catholics on the territory of "pure nature". The hope was that the two could work together on the basis of shared understandings about what constitutes human nature without any need to refer to Christ or other contentious theological propositions. In reference to this strategy Ratzinger rhetorically asked why a reasonable and

perfectly free human being should be burdened with the story of Christ which might appear to be a rather unintelligible addition to a picture that was already quite complete in itself. It is from this perspective that de Lubac concluded that the cumulative effect of this strategy is a conception of Christian progress according to which progress is realised in a total secularisation that would banish God from social life and from culture, and even from the relationships of private life.

The strength of this conclusion became much more evident in the final quarter of the 20th century when social divisions began to be understood in terms of radically different conceptions of human dignity and personal fulfilment. In response to this, and consistent with de Lubac's critique, Ratzinger has written that the idea of natural law as a rational law that transcends confessional boundaries and permits reason to work as the instrument whereby a common law may be posited, has become "a blunt instrument" in the Catholic Church's arsenal of arguments in conversations with secular society and other communities of faith. This is not to say that he rejects the idea of a natural law in general, merely that he rejects *this particular* approach to natural law. Secular reason alone cannot defend the Church's teachings. In his speech to the 1996 Conference of Bishops in Mexico [included in this issue of *The Priest*] there is a whole paragraph where he hoes into Immanuel Kant's notion of pure reason.

First "major point" – Ratzinger on the "nature and grace" debate. So this is the first major point that I want to make about Ratzinger and the Second Vatican Council: he belonged to the coalition which defeated the understanding of nature and grace which prevailed in Baroque theology, and there's nothing in his work to suggest that he's ever moved away from that position. He belongs to what emerged as the *Communio* school. In order to understand the *Communio* school it's important to understand the de Lubac critique of Leonine Thomism. While de Lubac didn't say that it is *all* the fault of 16th-century scholastics, he did in effect argue that the Church's own theologians are partly to blame for opening the door to secularism.

Second "major point" – rupture or continuity. The second important point is that Cardinal Ratzinger/Pope Benedict emphasises that the Second Vatican Council should not be read as a rupture with the pre-Conciliar tradition.

At a conference in Cambridge in 1979 Karl Rahner presented the alternative view which tends to have dominated in the 60s and 70s. Rahner drew an analogy between the Christian community before and after the Council of Jerusalem in 49AD, and between Catholicism before and after the Second Vatican Council, and he used the language of a decisive break to describe these two moments in the life of the Church. He went so far as to assert that the changes after the Second Vatican Council were of such magnitude that the only possible comparison is with the transition from Jewish to Gentile Christianity at the Council of Jerusalem. He added that such transitions happen for the most part and in the final analysis, unreflectively. They are not first planned out theologically and then put into effect.

In sharp contrast to a viewpoint that sees the Second Vatican Council as a "rupture" with the tradition, Ratzinger wants to avoid any pre-Conciliar and post-Conciliar dichotomy. He has stated that there are no blimps in this history; there

are no fractures and there is no break in continuity. In no way did the Second Vatican Council intend to introduce a temporal dichotomy in the Church. In his address to the Roman Curia on 22nd December 2005, Pope Benedict noted that the post-Conciliar problems have arisen from the fact that there were two conflicting forms of interpretation – what he terms the "hermeneutics of discontinuity and rupture" and the "hermeneutics of reform" – and he sides with the "hermeneutics of reform". In an earlier article on the program of reform in *Communio*, Ratzinger wrote that after the Council what was previously impossible to state was passed off as a "continuation of the 'spirit' of the Council" without having produced anything genuinely new, and that people could pretend this to be interesting at a cheap price. They sold goods from the "old liberal flea market" as if it were "new" Catholic theology. So, he's against the cheap goods from the "old liberal flea market". He has an interpretation of Vatican II as a Council of *reform*, not a Council of *rupture*.

Third major point – "Body of Christ" ecclesiology, not "People of God" ecclesiology. The third major point I want to make is that when it comes to the ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium*, our present Holy Father has been strongly critical of the "People of God" concept. He notes that this concept came into *Lumen Gentium* through the influence of Cardinal Suenens and some of his party who were concerned about clericalism. Of course he acknowledges that clericalism wherever it occurs is a problem, but he thinks that the "People of God" concept has not helped; and, in fact, has been in many ways regressive. He describes it as a reversion to Old Testament theology. He says it's not sufficiently Christological; and that he has a strong preference for an ecclesiology which emphasises the idea of the Church as the Body of Christ. The "God" of the People of God became amalgamated with the notion of a people who create and form themselves. The concept was understood in the sense of popular sovereignty as a right to a common democratic determination over everything that the Church is and over everything that she should do. As a consequence, the Church ends up appearing as a "network of groups" which as such precedes the whole and achieves harmony with one another by building a consensus. The *Wir sind Kirche* movement in Germany, Switzerland and Austria is thus the logical development of this kind of mentality.

"Christological constellation" in Ratzinger's ecclesiology. Pope Benedict is scathing in his criticism of this sociological and democratic-congregationalist interpretation of the Church stating that it can only be defended by people who have never read the texts of the Council or who confuse Conciliar texts with party platforms and Councils of the Church with political conventions. He then offers three antidotes for it. The first is to emphasise what he calls the "Trinitarian Overture" to *Lumen Gentium*. He does this in order to bring Christ back into the picture. Secondly, he focuses on the notion of the Church as the Body of Christ – a theme which is particularly strong in de Lubac's *The Motherhood of the Church* and *The Splendour of the Church*. And, thirdly, he has argued that the concept of *communio* is the most valuable concept for contemporary ecclesiology.

Explicating the "communio" concept. To understand the *communio* concept, one needs to go to de Lubac's work on the Church as the Body of Christ and von Balthasar's work on ecclesial missions. What von Balthasar does is to develop

the notion of there being a “Christological constellation” of figures surrounding Christ, and each “star” in the constellation is representative of a special mission in the life of the Church for all time. So, for example, there is the Petrine mission, the Johannine mission, the Pauline mission, the Jacobite mission and the Marian mission. The Petrine is associated with the priesthood and with the hierarchy. The Pauline is more associated with charismatic movements; the Johannine with contemplative vocations; the Jacobite with the defence of tradition; and the Marian with receptivity to God’s will. Von Balthasar’s vision of the Church is therefore like a symphony in which there are a number of different missions and a number of different spiritualities which exist in harmony providing they’re all playing to the same score.

Universalism of the Catholic Church in Ratzinger’s Ecclesiology. When it comes to ecumenical issues, there’s absolutely no shift at all, it seems to me, between Ratzinger’s interpretation of the documents on ecumenism of the Council and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith document, *Dominus Iesus*. In his essays published in 1966 Ratzinger stated unequivocally that a Catholic cannot accept the proposition that the ecumenical movement should lead to a community of separate Churches, nor the absorption of the separate Churches into the Catholic Church. He said that ever since the days of primitive Catholicism, which reaches back to the time of the New Testament, it has been considered essential to believe that the Church really exists – although with shortcomings – and that this has been reflected concretely in the visible Church which celebrates the Liturgy. The Catholic is convinced that the visible existence of the Church is not merely an organisational cover for a real Church hidden behind, but on the contrary, the visible Church is the actual dwelling place of God among the men. This was his position in 1966 and it hasn’t deviated.

Moreover, Ratzinger forcefully argues that the New Testament does not recognise a “plurality of Churches” in the sense of separated denominational communities, but only a pluralism in the sense of a multiplicity of particular churches existing within the framework of the one and visible Church of God. Again, all of this can be found in his publications in the 1960s, it’s all reiterated in *Dominus Iesus*, and it some ways it resurfaces in Ratzinger’s debates with Cardinal Kasper. You’ve probably all followed those debates, but for anyone who may have missed them, Kasper believes that when we are baptised we are first baptised into our parish community and then all these different parish communities link up to form the universal Church, and so the parish community takes ontological priority over the Church universal. Ratzinger says, *No*, it’s the other way around.

Ratzinger on Revelation: Scripture and Tradition. Another source of insight into Pope Benedict’s thoughts on the Council is in an article he published in *Communio* on the Conciliar contributions of Cardinal Frings of Cologne. The common interpretation of Cardinal Frings is that he was the head of a Liberal group from the Rhineland, aided and abetted by Cardinal Achille Leonart of Liege. However, Pope Benedict argues that Frings was definitely not a Liberal in the ordinary sense of that expression. He says that Frings acquired a reputation for Liberalism because on the second day of the Council he seconded a motion which led to a postponement of the elections for the Commissions and thus to a much greater plurality in the composition of those organs than

there would have been according to the original membership lists. There was also the speech delivered on 8th November 1963 in which Frings called for new procedures in the Holy Office. The speech is famous because in his response Cardinal Ottaviani was denied permission to speak beyond his allotted ten minutes. Ratzinger argues that in calling for new procedures in the Holy Office, Frings was not promoting theological Liberalism, but merely insisting on the separation of administrative procedure and juridical process, as well as on the right of the accused to a jury for a hearing and of the possibility of defending himself. Moreover, while he was not promoting Liberalism, he did not believe that the Council should publish a *summa* of theology. In particular, Frings was opposed to the Leonine emphasis on the 19th and early 20th century theological sources. Like the French *ressourcement* scholars and their party, he wanted to emphasise patristic and biblical thought; that is, the *whole* Tradition, not just the post-Reformation era. In the context of liturgy, Frings wanted the canon of the Mass to remain in Latin, and he was strongly in favour of Gregorian chant, but he was also in favour of more use of the vernacular in the presentation of the Scriptures. Again, these are not really Liberal positions.

Revelation as preceding Scripture and Tradition. Frings intervened extensively on the debate on Revelation which became the document *Dei Verbum*. In this context Ratzinger argues that at no point did Frings endorse the ideas of J R Gieselman on Scripture and Tradition. Gieselman was trying to reconcile the Catholic understanding of Revelation with the Protestant principle of *sola scriptura*. Ratzinger says that against the Gieselman project, Frings made the following point: When one speaks of the two sources of Revelation as Scripture and Tradition, one is correct on the level of epistemology. We experience what Revelation is from Scripture and Tradition. However, this formula is false if looked at from the metaphysical perspective. From the metaphysical perspective the sequence is reversed. Revelation does not flow from Scripture and Tradition, but *both* flow from Revelation which is their common source: for if one does not hold that Revelation precedes its objectification in Scripture and Tradition – with Revelation always remaining greater than each – then the concept of Revelation is reduced to the dimensions of the historical and the simply human. If I equate Revelation with the text so that the boundaries of the one perfectly coincide with the boundaries of the other, then it cannot grow and develop; then there is nothing living, but rather something dead. In this case Revelation is delivered up to historicism if it is subjected to human criteria. If, on the contrary, it is true that Scripture is the objectification of Revelation and that Revelation precedes it, then exegesis must look *beyond* the letter and read the text in connection with what is alive.

Ratzinger on Christ Himself as the subject of revelation: his embrace of Dei Verbum. If it is true that Revelation itself is Christ; that Christ is still alive and that he did not only live in those times – then it is clear that the subject of Revelation is precisely *Christ himself*. And, further, that he is such through his Body, the Church, with which he binds us irreversibly at the beginning. Just as de Lubac argued that there were problems with the post-16th century account of nature and grace, Frings and Ratzinger were concerned that there were

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Relativism: the central problem for faith today

Pope Benedict XVI

Cardinal Ratzinger, when Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, gave this address during the meeting of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith with the presidents of the Doctrinal Commissions of the Conferences of Latin American Bishops, held in Guadalajara, Mexico, in May 1996. This is a shortened version prepared for *The Priest*. For the full paper and unedited set of notes see <http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/RATZRELA.HTM> Headings are due to the Associate Editor.

Introduction

In the 1980s, the theology of liberation in its radical forms seemed to be the most urgent challenge for the faith of the Church. It was a challenge that required both a response and a clarification because it proposed a new, plausible and at the same time practical response to the fundamental question of Christianity: namely, the problem of redemption.

Liberation. The very word “liberation” wanted to explain in a different and more understandable way that which in the traditional language of the Church was called “redemption”. In fact, in the background there is always the same observation: we experience a world that does not correspond to a good God. Poverty, oppression, all kinds of unjust domination, the suffering of the just and the innocent constitute the “signs of the times” and of all times. And we all suffer: no one can readily say to this world and to his or her own life, “Stay as you are, you are so beautiful.”

Redemption. From this, the “theology of liberation” deduced that the situation, which must not continue, could only be overcome through a radical change in the structures of this world which are “structures of sin and evil”. If sin exerts its power over the structures and impoverishment is programmed beforehand by them, then its overthrow cannot come about through individual conversions, but through the struggle against the structures of injustice. It was said, however, that this struggle ought to be political because the structures are consolidated and preserved through politics. Redemption thus became a political process for which Marxist philosophy provided the essential guidelines. It was transformed into a task which people themselves could and even had to take into their own hands, and at the same time it became a totally practical hope. Faith, in theory, became *praxis*, concrete redeeming action, in the process of liberation.

Marxism. The fall of the European governmental systems based on Marxism turned out to be a kind of twilight of the gods for that theology of redeeming political praxis. Precisely in those places where the Marxist liberating ideology had been applied consistently, a radical lack of freedom had been produced, the horror of which now appeared out in the open before the eyes of world public opinion. The fact is that when politicians want to bring redemption, they promise too much. When they presume to do God’s work, they do not become divine but diabolical....

Unfulfilled promises. The fact that the presumption was based on what was apparently a strictly scientific method



that totally substituted faith with science and made science the praxis gave it a strong appeal. All the unfulfilled promises of religions seemed attainable through a scientifically based political praxis. The non-fulfilment of this hope brought a great disillusionment with it which is still far from being assimilated. Therefore, it seems probable to me that new forms of the Marxist conception of the world will appear in the future. For the moment, we cannot be but perplexed: The failure of the only scientifically based system for solving human problems could only justify nihilism or, in any case, total relativism.

Relativism: the prevailing philosophy

Democracy. Relativism has thus become the central problem for the faith at the present time... [it] appears to be the philosophical foundation of democracy. Democracy in fact is supposedly built on the basis that no one can presume to know the true way, and it is enriched by the fact that all roads are mutually recognised as fragments of the effort toward that which is better. Therefore, all roads seek something common in dialogue, and they also compete regarding knowledge that cannot be compatible in one common form. A system of freedom ought to be essentially a system of positions that are connected with one another because they are relative as well as being dependent on historical situations open to new developments. Therefore, a liberal society would be a relativist society: only with that condition could it continue to be free and open to the future.

In the area of politics, this concept is considerably right. There is no one correct political opinion. What is relative – the building up of liberally ordained coexistence between people—cannot be something absolute. Thinking in this way was precisely the error of Marxism and the political theologies.

Injustices. However, with total relativism, everything in the political area cannot be achieved either. There are injustices that will never turn into just things (such as, for example, killing an innocent person, denying an individual or groups the right to their dignity or to life corresponding to that dignity), while, on the other hand, there are just things that can never be unjust. Therefore, although a certain right to relativism in the social and political area should not be denied, the problem is raised at the moment of setting its limits....

Two worlds. On the one hand, relativism is a typical offshoot of the Western world and its forms of philosophical thought, while on the other it is connected with the philosophical and religious intuitions of Asia especially, and surprisingly, with those of the Indian subcontinent. Contact between these two worlds gives relativism a particular impulse at the present historical moment.

Relativism in theology: the attenuation of Christology

Different lenses. The situation can be clearly seen in one of its founders and eminent representatives, the American Presbyterian John Hick. His philosophical departure point is found in the Kantian distinction between *phenomenon* and *noumenon*: we can never grasp ultimate truth in itself, but only its appearance in our way of perceiving through different “lenses”. What we grasp is not really and properly reality in itself, but a reflection on our scale....

The Absolute. Jesus is consciously relativised [by Hick] as one religious leader among others. The Absolute cannot come into history, but only models and ideal forms that remind us about what can never be grasped as such in history. Therefore, concepts such as the “church”, “dogma” and “sacraments” must lose their unconditional character. To make an absolute of such limited forms of mediation or, even more, to consider them real encounters with the universally valid truth of God who reveals himself would be the same as elevating oneself to the category of the Absolute, thereby losing the infiniteness of the totally other God.

Dialogue. From this point of view ... affirming that there is a binding and valid truth in history in the figure of Jesus Christ and in the faith of the Church is described as fundamentalism.... On the other hand, the notion of “dialogue” – which has maintained a position of significant importance in the Platonic and Christian tradition – changes meaning and becomes both the quintessence of the relativist creed and the antithesis of conversion and the mission. In the relativist meaning, “to dialogue” means to put one’s own position (ie, one’s faith) on the same level as the convictions of others without recognising in principle more truth in it than that which is attributed to the opinion of the others. Only if I suppose in principle that the other can be as right, or more right than I, can an authentic dialogue take place.

According to this concept, dialogue must be an exchange between positions which have fundamentally the same rank and therefore are mutually relative. Only in this way will the maximum cooperation and integration between the different religions be achieved.¹ The relativist dissolution of Christology, and even more of ecclesiology, thus becomes a central commandment of religion. To return to Hick’s thinking, faith in the divinity of one concrete person, as he tell us, leads to fanaticism and particularism, to the dissociation between faith and love, and it is precisely this which must be overcome....²

Those who want to stay with the faith of the Bible and the Church see themselves pushed from the start to a “no man’s land” on the cultural level and must as a first measure rediscover the “madness of God” (1Cor 1:18) in order to recognise the true wisdom in it.

Orthodoxy and orthopraxis

In the end, for Hick, religion means that man goes from “self-centeredness”, as the existence of the old Adam, to “reality-centeredness”, as existence of the new man, thus extending from oneself to the otherness of one’s neighbour.³ It sounds beautiful, but when it is considered in depth it appears as empty and vacuous as the call to authenticity by Bultmann,

who in turn had taken that concept from Heidegger. For this, religion is not necessary.

Interreligious dialogue. Aware of these limits, the former Catholic priest Paul Knitter tried to overcome the void of a theory of religion reduced to the categorical imperative by means of a new synthesis between Asia and Europe that should be more concrete and internally enriched.⁴ His proposal tends to give religion a new concrete expression by joining the theology of pluralist religion with the theologies of liberation. Inter-religious dialogue must be simplified radically and become practically effective by basing it on only one principle: “the primacy of orthopraxis with regard to orthodoxy.”...⁵

Just actions. Knitter (1985) affirms: the absolute cannot be known, but it can be made. The question is, Why? Where do I find a just action if I cannot know what is just in an absolute way? The failure of the Communist regimes is due precisely to the fact that they tried to change the world without knowing what is good and what is not good for the world; without knowing in what direction the world must be changed in order to make it better....

Orthopraxis. However, if orthopraxis is understood in a social and political sense, it again raises the question regarding the nature of correct political action. The theologies of liberation, animated by the conviction that Marxism clearly points out to us what is good political praxis, could use the notion of orthopraxis in its proper sense. In this case it was not a question of being obligatory, but a form set down for everyone of correct practice ... that brought the community together and distinguished it from those who rejected the correct way of acting. To this extent, the Marxist theologies of liberation were, in their own way, logical and consistent.

As we can see, however, this kind of orthopraxis rests on a certain orthodoxy – in the modern sense: a framework of obligatory theories regarding the path to freedom. Knitter (1985) is close to this principle when he affirms that the criterion for differentiating orthopraxis from pseudopraxis is freedom.⁶ ...

“New Age”

The relativism of Hick, Knitter and related theories are ultimately based on a rationalism which declares that reason—in the Kantian meaning – is incapable of metaphysical cognition.⁷ The new foundation of religion comes about by following a pragmatic path with more ethical or political overtones. However, there is also a consciously anti-rationalist response to the experience of the slogan “Everything is relative”, which comes together under the pluriform denomination of “New Age”.⁸

Experience. For the supporters of the “New Age” ... the Absolute is not to be believed, but to be experienced. God is not a person to be distinguished from the world, but a spiritual energy present in the universe. Religion means the harmony of myself with the cosmic whole, the overcoming of all separations.

Inebriation. K. H. Menke ... states: “The subject that wanted to submit everything to himself now wants to be placed into

‘the whole’.⁹ Objective reason closes off the path for us to the mystery of reality; the self isolates us from the richness of cosmic reality, destroys the harmony of the whole and is the real cause of our unredemption. Redemption is found in unbridling the self, immersion in the exuberance of that which is living and in a return to the Whole. Ecstasy is sought, the inebriety of the infinite which can be experienced in inebriating music, rhythm, dance, frenetic lights and dark shadows, and in the human mass.

The gods return. This is not only renouncing modernity but man himself. The gods return! They have become more believable than God. The primitive rites must be renewed in which the self is initiated into the mystery of the Whole and is liberated from itself.

Re-editing pre-Christianity. There are many explanations for the re-editing of pre-Christian religions and cultures which is being attempted frequently today. If there is no common truth in force precisely because it is true, then Christianity is only something imported from outside, a spiritual imperialism which must be thrown off with no less force than political imperialism. If no contact with the living God of all men takes place in the sacraments, then they are empty rituals which tell us nothing nor give us anything. At most, they let us perceive what is numinous, which prevails in all religions....

Above all, if the “sober inebriety” of the Christian mystery cannot elevate us to God, then the true inebriety of real ecstasies must be sought whose passion sweeps us away and transforms us – at least for a moment – into gods and lets us perceive for a moment the pleasure of the infinite and forget the misery of the finite. The more manifest the uselessness of political absolutism, the stronger the attraction will be to what is irrational and to the renunciation of the reality of everyday life.¹⁰

Pragmatism in the Church’s daily life

Together with these radical solutions and the great pragmatism of the theologies of liberation, there is also the grey pragmatism of the daily life of the Church in which everything apparently continues normally, but in reality the faith is being consumed and falling into meanness. I am thinking of two phenomena which I consider with concern.

Democratisation. First, there is the intention, with different degrees of intensity, to extend the principle of the majority to the faith and customs in order to ultimately “democratise” the Church in a decisive way. What does not seem obvious to the majority cannot be obligatory. This is what seems to be. But which majority? Will there be a majority tomorrow like the one today? A faith which we ourselves can decide about is not a faith in absolute. And no minority has any reason to let the faith be imposed on it by a majority.

Faith and praxis. The faith, together with its praxis, either comes to us from the Lord through his Church and the sacramental ministry, or it does not exist in absolute. The abandonment of the faith by many is based on the fact that it seems to them that the faith should be decided by some requests, which would be like a kind of party program: whoever has power decides what must be part of the faith.

Therefore, it is important within the Church itself to arrive at power or, on the contrary – which is more logical and obvious – to not believe.

The other point ... refers to the liturgy. The different phases of liturgical reform have let the opinion be introduced that the liturgy can be changed arbitrarily. From being something unchangeable, in any case, it is a question of the words of consecration; all the rest could be changed.

The following thinking is logical: If a central authority can do this, why not a local one? And if the local ones can do this, why not the community itself? Community should be expressed and come together in the liturgy. Following the rationalist and puritanical tendency of the ’70s and even the ’80s, today there is weariness with the pure, spoken liturgy, and a living liturgy is sought which does not delay in coming closer to the New Age tendencies: what is inebriating and ecstatic is sought and not the “reasonable service”, τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν [“logike latreia”, (in Latin) the “rationabilis oblatio”], about which Paul speaks and with him the Roman liturgy (cf. Rom 12:1).

I admit that I am exaggerating. What I am saying does not describe the normal situation of our communities. But the tendencies are there. For this reason, vigilance is required so that a “gospel” will not be surreptitiously introduced to us – a stone instead of bread – different from the one that the Lord gave us.

Tasks of theology

...Why has classical theology appeared to be so defenceless in the face of these happenings? Where is its weak point, and why has it lost credibility?...

Exegesis. My thesis is the following: the fact that many exegetes think like Hick and Knitter and reconstruct the history of Jesus as they do is because they share their same philosophy. It is not the exegesis that proves the philosophy, but the philosophy that generates the exegesis.¹¹... Let us look at this more precisely. The historical-critical method is an excellent instrument for reading historical sources and interpreting texts. But it contains its own philosophy, which in general—for example when I try to study the history of medieval emperors – is hardly important. And this is because in that case I want to know the past and nothing more. But even this cannot be done in a neutral way, and so there are also limits to the method.

But if it is applied to the Bible, two factors come clearly to light which would not be noted otherwise. First, the method wants to find about the past as something past. It wants to grasp with the greatest precision what happened at a past moment, closed in its past situation, at the point where it was found in time. Furthermore, it supposes that history is, in principle, uniform; therefore, man with all his differences and the world with all its distinctions are determined by the same laws and limitations so that I can eliminate whatever is impossible. What cannot happen today in any way could not happen yesterday nor will it happen tomorrow.

If we apply this to the Bible, it means the following: a text, a happening, a person will be strictly fixed in his (her) past. There is the desire to verify what the past author said at that

time and what he could have said or thought. This is what is “historical” about the “past”. Therefore, historical-critical exegesis does not bring the Bible to today, to my current life. This is impossible. On the contrary, it separates it from me and shows it strictly fixed in the past.... Such exegesis, by definition, expresses reality, not today’s or mine, but yesterday’s, another’s reality. Therefore, it can never show the Christ of today, tomorrow and always, but only – if it remains faithful to itself – the Christ of yesterday.

Critical examination. To this the second supposition must be added: the homogeneity of the world and history (ie, what Bultmann calls the modern image of the world). Michael Waldstein has shown through a careful analysis that Bultmann’s theory of knowledge was totally influenced by the neo-Kantianism of Marburg.¹² Thanks to him, he knew what could and could not exist. In other exegetes, the philosophical conscience is less pronounced, but the foundation based on the theory of Kantian cognition is always implicitly present as an unquestionable, hermeneutic access to criticism. This being as it is, the authority of the Church can no longer impose from without that a Christology of divine filiation should be arrived at. But it can and must invite a critical examination of one’s method.

Revelation of God. In short, in the revelation of God, he, the living and true One, bursts into our world and also opens the prison of our theories, with whose nets we want to protect ourselves against God’s coming into our lives. Thank God, in the midst of the current crisis of philosophy and theology, a new meaning of foundation has been set in motion in exegesis itself and, not in the last term, through knowledge attained from the careful historical interpretation of texts.¹³ This helps break the prison of previous philosophical decisions which paralyse interpretation. The amplitude of the Word is opening up again....

When a strictly autonomous reason, which does not want to know anything about the faith, tries to get out of the bog of uncertainty “by pulling itself up by its hair”, to express it in some way, it will be difficult for this effort to succeed. For human reason is not autonomous in absolute. It is always found in a historical context. The historical context disfigures its vision (as we have seen). Therefore, it also needs historical assistance to help it cross over its historical barriers....¹⁴

New dialogue. Barth was wrong when ... he proposed the faith as a pure paradox that can only exist against reason and totally independent from it. It is not the lesser function of the faith to care for reason as such. It does not do violence to it; it is not external to it, rather, it makes reason come to itself. The historical instrument of the faith can liberate reason as such again so that by introducing it to the path, it can see by itself once again. We must make efforts toward a new dialogue of this kind between faith and philosophy because both need one another reciprocally. Reason will not be saved without the faith, but the faith without reason will not be human.

Perspective

If we consider the present cultural situation ... frankly it must seem to be a miracle that there is still Christian faith despite everything, and not only in the surrogate forms of

Hick, Knitter and others, but the complete, serene faith of the New Testament and of the Church of all times.

Why, in brief, does the faith still have a chance? I would say the following: because it is in harmony with what man is. Man is something more than what Kant and the various post-Kantian philosophers wanted to see and concede ... In man there is an inextinguishable yearning for the infinite. None of the answers attempted are sufficient. Only the God himself who became finite in order to open our finiteness and lead us to the breadth of his infiniteness responds to the question of our being. For this reason, the Christian faith finds man today too. Our task is to serve the faith with a humble spirit and the whole strength of our heart and understanding.

We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognise anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one’s own ego and desires. We, however, have a different goal: the Son of God, the true man. He is the measure of true humanism.

***(HE Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Homily
“Pro Eligendo Romano Pontifice”, 18 April 2005)***



Notes:

¹ Cf ... “Il cristianesimo e le altre religioni”, *Civiltà Cattolica* 1 (January. 20, 1996:107-120).

² Cf ... John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion. Human Responses to Transcendent* (London 1989)....

³ John Hick, *Evil and the God of Love* (Norfolk 1975:240f; *An Interpretation of Religion* 236-240, cf. Cf. Menke, *Die Einzigheit Jesu Christi im Horizont der Sinnfrage* (Freiburg 1995:81f).

⁴ [... see] Paul Knitter: *No Other Name! A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions* (New York 1985), cf, Menke (1995:94-110) [and...] A. Kolping ...in *Theologische Revue* 87 (1991:234-240).

⁵ Cf. Menke (1995:95). ⁶ Cf. ibid. p. 109.

⁷ ... Cf. ibid. pp. 78 and 108.

⁸ ...Michael Fuss, “New Age: Supermarket alternativer Spiritualität” in *Communio* 20 (1991:148-157) defines New Age as the result of a mixture of Jewish and Christian elements with the process of secularisation with Gnosticism and with elements of Oriental religions... Cf. also Menke (1995:31-36); J. LeBar (Ed.), *Cults, Sects and the New Age* (Huntington, Ind.).

⁹ “Das Subjekt, das sich alles unterwerfen wollte, will sich nun in ‘das Ganze’ aufbeben” (Menke 1995:33).

¹⁰ Two different expressions of New Age can be distinguished more and more clearly: the first is the gnostic-religious form that searches for the transcendental and transpersonal being and for the true self; the second one is the ecological-monistic expression that worships matter and Mother Earth and is coupled with feminism in the form of the ecofeminism.

¹¹ This can be seen very clearly in the confrontation between A. Schlatter and A. von Harnack in the end of the last century, presented carefully by W. Neuer, Adolf Schlatter, *Ein Leben für Theologie und Kirche* (Stuttgart 1996:301ff). I have tried to show my own view of the problem in the “questio disputata” edited by myself: *Schriftauslegung im Widerstreit* (Freiburg 1989:15-44). Cf. also the collection of I. de la Poiterie, G. Guardini, J. Ratzinger, G. Colombo, E. Bianchi, *L’esegesi Cristiana oggi* (Piemme 1991).

¹² Michael Waldstein, “The Foundations of Bultmann’s Work” in *Communio* (Spring 1987:115-134).

¹³ Cf. for example the collection edited by C. E. Braaten and R. W. Jenson, *Reclaiming the Bible for the Church* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), especially the article of B. S. Childs, “On Reclaiming the Bible for Christian Theology”, pp. 1-17.

¹⁴ ... To me the position of J. Pieper, *Schriften zum Philosophiebegriff* (Hamburg 1995) has better foundation and is more convincing from the historical and objective point of view.



Benedict XVI: Essentially an Ecclesiologist?

Father John Walshe

Introduction

The election of Pope Benedict XVI on 19th April 2005 brought to the chair of Peter one of the foremost theologians of the modern era. Many priests are, of course, aware of some of the more recent writings of the former Cardinal Ratzinger, where, as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, he had earned a reputation as a staunch defender of Catholic doctrine. The media persona that was projected by much of the secular press and some corners of the Catholic press was that of the “Panzer-Cardinal” – the hard unbending authoritarian German. This was not the same man that those who knew the Cardinal would describe: a gentleman, scholarly, erudite, modest, even shy, yet a warm and personable man.

The year since Pope Benedict’s election has enabled many outside of those who knew the former Cardinal personally to come to discover the true persona of the 264th successor of St Peter. But it is not my concern in this paper to make an analysis of the character of Pope Benedict. It is my aim to make some comments about the theological background of Pope Benedict. I have titled this paper “Benedict XVI: Essentially an Ecclesiologist?” This should enable you to grasp that it is my fundamental opinion that Joseph Ratzinger’s very special, and particular, contribution to this point has been as an expert in the theology of the Church. I would like to present some background to this claim by examining the formative influences on Pope Benedict. I will progress to his own writings and academic history. Finally I would like to make some application to the first year of Pope Benedict’s pontificate and to the possibilities for the emerging papal program.

Influence of Ecclesial Experience

We are fortunate that Pope Benedict has given us insight into his life and the influences upon him through his 1997 book: *Milestones*. These are memoirs covering the period 1927 to 1977. He recalls his life in the seminary in Freising at the end of the War. Everything was in flux. The seminarians had been marked by their varying experiences of the War. The older seminarians had known much suffering through their military experience. The younger men were regarded as immature and uncomprehending of the older men’s experiences. It must have made for very difficult dynamics in the seminary’s human functioning. Yet:

Despite the extreme differences of our experiences and perspectives, we were all bound together by a great sense of gratitude for having been allowed to return home from the abyss of those difficult years. This gratitude now created a common will to make up finally for everything we had neglected and to serve Christ in his Church for new and better times, for a better Germany, and for a better world.¹

Time in the Philosophate. One senses that in these years following World War II, the conviction of the very necessity of the Church was indelibly impressed upon the mind of the young seminarian, Joseph Ratzinger. Again his own words express it best:

No one doubted that the Church was the locus of all our hopes. Despite many human failings, the Church was the

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alternative to the destructive ideology of the brown shirt rulers;² in the inferno that had swallowed up the powerful, she had stood firm with a force coming to her from eternity. It had been demonstrated: the gates of hell will not overpower her. From our own experience we now knew what was meant by the “gates of hell”, and we could also see with our own eyes that the house built on rock had stood firm.³

One senses, also, that the time spent in the philosophate, was a time for catching up on all that had been going on in the intellectual world during the War. The seminarians devoured any works of contemporary writers they could get their hands on. Joseph read Le Font, Langgässer and Wiechert in German and other greats like Dostoevsky, Claudel, Bernanos and Mauriac.

A return to metaphysics. In theology he was reading, and being formed by, the writings of Romano Guardini, Josef Pieper, Theodore Hacker and Peter Wurst. In his philosophical formation, Fr Alfred Lapple was very influential. He was a professor of the history of philosophy and he encouraged Joseph to read outside of the set texts in philosophy. In this reading Joseph was grappling with the thought of Heidegger, Jaspers and Nietzsche. Through his reading he sensed a return to metaphysics amongst philosophers and even in the writers on the physical sciences. The other great movement in philosophy that was occurring after the War was “personalism”. After two great wars of destruction, with huge loss of life and social disruption, the idea of *the person* was moving to prominence. Joseph was particularly interested in the writings of the Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber. He writes:

This encounter with personalism was for me a spiritual exercise that left an essential mark, especially since I spontaneously associated such personalism with the thought of St Augustine, who in his *Confessions* had struck me with the power of all his human passion and depth.⁴

Reflections on Aquinas. While speaking of the philosophical formation of Joseph Ratzinger it is interesting to note that he was not at first drawn with enthusiasm to the thought of St Thomas Aquinas. He confesses that he had difficulty in penetrating his thinking. Aquinas’s crystal clear logic seemed to him to be too closed in on itself; too impersonal and ready-made. In later reflection he admits this was probably more of a reaction to the rigid neo-scholastic Thomism that was taught by his philosophy Professor, Arnold Wilmsen. The matters they discussed, or the theses they learnt, seemed far removed from the questions that were in the minds of young men who had lived through the horror of war.

Research on St Augustine. Ratzinger’s own philosophical approach was largely influenced by a four semester course that

he took on the history of philosophy, under Professor Jakob Fellermeier. He attributes to this his receiving a foundation in philosophy that has never left him. It is this foundation that was to be refined, queried and purified in his research into the works of St Augustine, with their neo-Platonist underpinnings.

Memories of Liturgy and prayer. In his own reflections about his days in the philosophate at Freising it is not the studies in the end that have left a lasting mark upon him. It is his memories of the liturgy and prayer, often in the Cathedral. They are his most precious moments. It is here that we can note the stress that Ratzinger would place upon the sacred Liturgy in all his writings and outlook. It is perhaps the experience of the Church at prayer that moved a young mind to place itself in a very special way at the service of the defense and promotion of the theology of the Church.

Theological Studies in Munich

In the summer of 1947, Joseph commenced theological studies at the Munich Theological Faculty. He had made a request of his bishop to undertake his theological formation there rather than within the seminary. This was quite an established German practice. As well as the seminaries in the traditional Tridentine model there were seminaries that had grown up over some centuries where the students attended the lectures in a university theological faculty. The Munich Theological Faculty was in the process of being rebuilt after the war. It had been abolished by the Nazis in 1938 because Cardinal Faulhaber had refused to approve the appointment of a Professor who was a known Hitler sympathizer.

Influential Professors. The new faculty was put together by drawing mainly on two other teaching bodies: Breslau (Wroclaw) in Silesia and Braunsberg in East Prussia. The difference in theological method was apparent in the style and matter of teaching. In this faculty were two Professors who would be instrumental in the theological formation and career of Joseph Ratzinger. They were Gottlieb Söhngen and Michael Schmaus. Gottlieb Söhngen was a native of Cologne who had taught in Breslau, and Michael Schmaus was a priest of Munich who had taught at Munster. Schmaus had become well known through his novel textbook of dogmatic theology. This would be known to later English speaking students through his series called *Dogma*.⁵

The teacher who captured the popular imagination of the students was the Professor of New Testament exegesis, Friedrich Wilhelm Maier. He was a controversial figure. Previously, in 1912, he had been removed from his teaching position because of his promotion of the two-source theory.⁶ Rather than accept the offer to move into another theological discipline, he had become a military chaplain during World War I and a prison chaplain afterwards. In 1924, in a more settled ecclesial environment, he had been able to return to the teaching of New Testament at Breslau. His earlier removal, however, was an event which scarred and coloured the rest of his life.

Caution and correctives. It is interesting to note that Joseph was able to discern in the teachings of Maier an approach that would caution the young theologian for the rest of his life. He was able to enjoy and savour the insights and the fresh approach that many aspects of the historical method

brought to Scripture study. But he was also aware that there was a corrective that was necessary. It involved the Church and her authority. In his memoirs Ratzinger states that Maier tended to see dogma as a shackle, a negation, a limit in the construction of theology. Ratzinger saw dogma as a shaping force for theology. Because of men like Maier, the Bible spoke to Joseph with new immediacy and freshness.

But the things that were arbitrary and tended to flatten out the Bible (just think of Harnack and his school) could be compensated for by obedience to dogma.⁷

Gifts of analysis and synthesis. Perhaps it was in those days of theological formation, that Joseph Ratzinger acquired the particular gifts for analysis and synthesis that were to characterize his theological work. He seemed even then to be able to take what is useful from a new insight or approach but compare it, prune it and purify it against the existing wisdom of the Church of the Ages. The influence of Maier upon Joseph was the realisation on the part of the young student that exegesis would always be a centre of his theological work. It was Maier who enabled Joseph to see Sacred Scripture as “the soul of theological studies”: an approach that would later be affirmed by the Second Vatican Council.

Influence of Söhngen. I return to the figure of Gottlieb Söhngen. He was a theologian who was concerned with the ecumenical question. He was the son of a mixed marriage. This was a catalyst to his theology taking up the debate with the works of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner. He was also well versed in the “mystery theology” of Dom Odo Casel of Maria Laach. Söhngen opened up this approach to his students.

The theology had grown directly out of the liturgical movement, and its very existence posed with new acuteness the basic question concerning the relationship between rationality and mystery, the question concerning the place of the Platonic and the philosophical in Christianity, and indeed the question about the essence of Christianity.⁸

The influence of Söhngen on Ratzinger was largely in reference to method in theology. He taught Ratzinger to use the sources themselves: Aristotle, Plato, Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, Anselm, Bonaventure and Aquinas, all the way to Luther and finally the Tübingen theologians of the last century.

The Liturgical Movement. Cardinal Ratzinger has come to be known as an expert in liturgical theory and theology. As I have pointed out he has made constant references to the formative influence of his experience of the sacred liturgy in his home parishes, seminary and the cathedral. These very positive experiences were understood and theologised in his theological formation. It was the professor of pastoral theology, Josef Pascher, who gave form and substance to Joseph’s emerging sensibilities at a time when the liturgical movement was alive and well in Germany. But it is very interesting to note his reservations about this movement. Pascher was a devotee but,

In many of its representatives I sensed a one-sided rationalism and historicism that concentrated too much on forms and historical origins and exhibited a remarkable coldness when it came to dispositions of mind and heart that allow us to experience the Church as the place where the soul is at home.⁹

A passion for ecclesiology. I sense the warmth and devotion of the Bavarian young man, who remembers the outpouring of love and faith that marked the life of the Church in his youthful experience encountering an approach to the Church's liturgy that is cold and dispassionate. This is the complete antithesis of his own experience. I am sure we shall hear in the paper that will deal with Joseph Ratzinger's Theology of Worship more on this topic.¹⁰ I simply raise the matter here because I believe the Liturgy is one of the key realities that nudges Joseph Ratzinger to have such a passionate concern for ecclesiology.

First Major Ecclesiological Work

A custom had grown up in the theology faculty of Munich for a chosen professor to set an essay topic for a theological competition. The winning student of the competition would receive the citation "summa cum laude" for his work. This prize would also enable the student to progress to doctoral work.

The People and the House of God in St. Augustine. The professor chosen to set the topic for the competition in 1950 was Gottlieb Söhngen. He encouraged Joseph Ratzinger to enter the competition. The topic that Söhngen set was "The People and the House of God in Augustine's doctrine of the Church." Joseph immediately felt able to tackle this topic as he had been reading the Fathers of the Church assiduously. He had also taken Söhngen's seminar on St Augustine. The research for this paper, the writing of it, and the subsequent development of the work into a full doctoral thesis set Joseph Ratzinger on the path to becoming a professional theologian. Even more importantly, it was his entrée into the field of ecclesiology; a field of theology that still remains a passion for Joseph Ratzinger.

Ressourcement. It was also at this time that Ratzinger read the book *Catholicism* by Henri de Lubac. It reinforced his appreciation for the Fathers of the Church and drew him into the school of "ressourcemen". He would discover the world of *nouvelle theologie*. The reading of *Catholicism* led Ratzinger to ponder the conception of faith as a *social faith*. The narrow confines of individualistic faith was not the faith of the Church. He became convinced that faith had to be lived as a *we*. As soon as he had completed reading *Catholicism* he searched for more works by de Lubac. The other work that was especially influential was *Corpus Mysticum*. This work considered the Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages. It opened up for Ratzinger an understanding of the centrality of the Eucharist to ecclesiological understanding. With these newly gained insights, young Joseph set about his research into Augustine's ecclesiology.

Volk und Haus Gottes in Augustine's Lehre von der Kirche. Joseph Ratzinger went on to win the competition for his theological essay on Augustine. All of this occurred around the time of his ordination to the sacred priesthood. He was ordained a priest by Cardinal Faulhaber in the cathedral at Freising on the Feast of Sts Peter and Paul 1951. Following ordination he commenced his pastoral assignments, first in a Munich parish and then within the seminary at Freising. At the same time he was completing his doctoral studies. In July 1953 he gained his doctorate in theology.

The thesis of his doctorate was a development of the paper that had won the theological competition of 1950. This thesis

has been published in German (Munich 1954) but alas is not available in English. I rely on commentaries about the work to make the following comments. The doctoral thesis had a lasting impression on Joseph. It drew him into a dialogue with St Augustine that has continued to this day. He wrote in 1969:

Augustine has kept me company for more than twenty years. I have developed my theology in a dialogue with Augustine, though naturally I have tried to conduct this dialogue as a man of today.¹¹

The importance of historical theology. A work that set out as simply an entry in a competition had led Joseph into the heady world of ecclesiology and historical theology. This occurred at a time when the theology of the Church and the complimentary discipline of liturgical studies were at the height of renewal. It was Romano Guardini that had declared that the twentieth century was proving theologically to be *the century of the Church*. In the preface to the work Ratzinger underlines the importance of historical theology and outlines the method that he employs in the work. This method is what is called the *hermeneutic circle*. "The phrase 'hermeneutic circle' refers to the circle of interpretation necessarily involved when understanding some work of art. According to this theory, it isn't possible to really understand any one part of a work until you understand the whole, but it also isn't possible to understand the whole without also understanding all of the parts."¹² Employing this method Ratzinger takes questions on topics that a systematic understanding of the faith has generated and then puts those questions to the theology of the past.

Vital issues for the Patristic Church. The concept of the Church as *the People of God* and *the House of God*, which had become constant themes in the contemporary ecclesiological renewal were to be applied to the writings of St Augustine. Where and how do these concepts occur in St Augustine? Ratzinger acknowledges the influence of two German Augustinian scholars: Reuter and Hofmann, whose writings assisted him. The inquiry into the works of St Augustine for evidence of the two concepts enabled Ratzinger to bind together a number of vital issues for the Patristic Church. The particular issues that he nominates are:

- the status of the Old Testament in relation to the New Testament
- the relationship of law to sacrament
- the attitude of Christians to the pagan culture

As in many other areas of theology there is a clear distinction between the early and the later thought of Augustine. His early thought about the Church is more philosophical than theological. His mature thought is the result of Augustine's own philosophical thought and the influence of, and response to, the theological outlook of Roman North Africa.

A leitmotif for Ratzinger's theology. But Ratzinger is particularly interested in what Augustine does with his theology of the Church; how he uses it. He separates two uses, one dogmatic, the other apologetic. In his rebuttal of the Donatists, for example, he uses his understanding of the Church dogmatically. In his appeal to the pagans of North Africa he uses this understanding apologetically. An example of the early philosophical argument of Augustine concerning the Church comes from the *Confessions*.¹³ Augustine laments that a momentary vision of God, which once came to him,

could not be sustained or re-created in the memory, owing to human infirmity. Because of such limitation and weakness some means of help beyond the self must be sought. This inspired Augustine to take up the Bible again and understand it anew. A profound acceptance of the sacramental nature of the Church flows from this. The Church is the place where God gives us the Invisible to feed upon in visible form, thus leading us evermore towards the Invisible until we become adults in his presence. This understanding of St Augustine's doctrine by Ratzinger marks out what will be a *leitmotif* for his theological thought: the sacramental nature of the Church and its full realisation in eschatology.

The place of love. Ratzinger discovered that it is Augustine's philosophical reflections on the concept of *faith* that is vital for his understanding of the Church as "the people of God". The Church is the necessary reality for the universality of God's involvement in human events. Ratzinger's research into the concept of the Church as the "house of God" is more complex. The early works do not employ the term. Ratzinger looks to Augustine's understanding of "love" to point to this concept. It is a highly nuanced argumentation that I will not attempt to explain here. It is the later writing of St Augustine that robustly witnesses to a theology of the Church that knows and accepts such terms as "people of God" and "house of God." An informed Catholic mind cannot read today Ratzinger's exposition of the place of love in Augustine's understanding of the Church and not see the "why" of Benedict XVI's first encyclical letter *Deus Caritas est*. The tradition of the first encyclical of a new pope indicating a program for that pontificate has continued in Pope Benedict. His program is to restate the basics upon which the faith is built when he writes:

We have come to believe in God's love: in these words the Christian can express the fundamental decision of his life. Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.¹⁴

The true meaning of love. The thought is redolent with the maturing thought of St Augustine. In his exposition of the impact on Augustine's thought of the tradition and theology of Tertullian, Cyprian and Optatus of Miletus I have the overwhelming sense of what Benedict is attempting in his encyclical. In his speculative reflection about the types of love he is wanting the true meaning of these loves to be known, purified and fulfilled through their immersion into the love of God made incarnate in Jesus Christ and found and mediated in and through the Church. It was through St Augustine's experience of the life of the Church in Roman North Africa, a tradition that was shaped by the thought of the likes of Tertullian, Cyprian and Optatus, that his own philosophical insights into the necessity of the Church were affirmed, extended and purified.

Summation of Ratzinger's insights from Augustinian ecclesiology

In summary, the insights Ratzinger gained from his careful study into the ecclesiological thought of St Augustine can be viewed from two particular vantage points. First, the contribution they make to theological method and to Ratzinger's conviction about the necessity of the Church in the theological endeavour. Second, the contribution that Augustine made in

a particular way to a deeper understanding about the Church and its nature.

Contributions to ecclesiology. With regard to theological method, Augustine's intellectual journey led him from a purely metaphysical theology to a more historical understanding of Christianity; from a purely pedagogical account of the value of historical order to a realisation of the intrinsic value of concrete form in history. And the concrete historical form of the Christian reality is the Church. Regarding the Church, the later work of Augustine as contained in *The City of God* makes a monumental contribution to ecclesiology, as Eugène Portalié's work has so significantly demonstrated. He writes:

The *Confessions* are theology which has been lived in the soul, and the history of God's action on individuals, while *The City of God* is theology framed in the history of humanity, and explaining the action of God in the world.¹⁵

Augustine's concept of charity. The Church is the key to understanding this. It is Augustine's notion of charity that is the original idea that links the reality of the Church with eschatological fulfillment. Aidan Nichols summarizes this very well when he writes:

In charity Augustine saw, beyond all the "urgencies of action", what [Erich] Przywara terms "the free festivity of love". Charity is the breath from on high of the eternal Sabbath perceptible in all the active mission of the *Civitas Dei*. From this flows, Przywara thinks, the characteristic ethos of Latin Christianity at its missionary best: humility, poverty, "indifference", qualities which make Augustine the inspiration of so many different forms of Christian life in the Western Church, from the Benedictines to the Society of Jesus. Here we have the fulfilment of the high priestly prayer of the Messiah at the Supper to the effect that his disciples may be in the world, yet not of it.¹⁶

Ratzinger is so convinced about this that it will be the position from which he will argue against many of the ill-conceived self-reforms of the Church. It will be such a conviction that will cause him to disassociate himself from the theologians contributing to *Concilium* and to take issue with the political theology of Johannes Baptist Metz. It will also inform his liturgical understanding and his criticism of attempts to make the Liturgy a celebration of the community turned in on itself.

St Bonaventure

Receiving a doctorate in theology is not sufficient to equip one to be a Professor of theology according to German practice. The process of "habilitation" is required. This involves further research work in excess of the initial doctoral thesis. Ratzinger was assisted by his mentor Gottlieb Söhngen to determine the theme for this habilitation. Söhngen was of the view that Ratzinger had done sufficient research in the patristic area to turn his thoughts to the middle ages. Because of his knowledge of St Augustine, it was deemed appropriate for him to look to St Bonaventure, who drew so deeply on the works of Augustine. As for the area of study, since he had concentrated on ecclesiology in St Augustine, Ratzinger thought it appropriate to choose the other important area of fundamental theology: revelation.

Salvation history. He was interested in whether the concept of salvation history was present in St Bonaventure and, if it

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Letting the basic ecclesial form again shine through: from the vacuity of Modernism to the re-creation of sacred architecture

Ethan Anthony

Philosophy and the emergence of Modernism

From the end of World War II through the 1970s there was little real debate among architects over the question of whether modernistic design was the style of the day or not. *It was!* and this was reflected in the favourite styles adopted by the faculties at various schools of architecture, not least in the USA. In Northeastern American schools in the 1950s the design of Swiss architect Charles-Eduard Jeanerette ruled. Architects were taught “le modular”, his unique proportional system, and informed helpfully that Jeanerette (popularly known by his nickname, le Corbusier) had based his system on the height of the average French policeman, clearly a helpful standard for Americans who on the whole were a bit taller. In the American Mid-Atlantic, Louis Kahn was pre-eminent; disciples fanning out from his Philadelphia studio to schools as far west as the University of Oregon. In the Midwest, Mies van der Rohe directed the efforts at Illinois Institute of Technology; and in the West, another Bauhaus export Richard Neutra and his disciples were dominant. To attend a school in one of these areas was to be indoctrinated into the dominant theme.

Frank Lloyd Wright was in obscurity on moral and business grounds. He had divorced and remarried, a problem for a public figure of the 1950s, in addition to being forever in debt and on the edge of bankruptcy, so he could not be the public face of American architecture. There were a few regionally important figures, but no nationally significant American architect to counter the influence of the “International Style”.

Until the later 60s and early 70s when Charles Moore at Yale began to question the dominant paradigm, when he began a crusade to question the assumptions that had led American architects since the overturn of “Eclecticism”. Moore and his fellow “Supermannerist” Venturi began to produce projects that recalled lost forms from that earlier traditionalist era. Hauntingly, forms like Chippendale tops and Palladian windows began showing up on “super-Miesian” Phillip Johnson’s otherwise conventionally modernistic designs. Something had been missing, and it was trying to reappear.

Called broadly Post-Modernism by the critics this re-invention of American architecture was a movement that reflected the revolutionary atmosphere of the 60s and 70s. It included Moore and the “New York Five” white architects such as Richard Meier and at its penultimate moment included Michael Graves who was at once its greatest proponent and its executioner through excess. His designs for Disney were too *ad populi* for the critics, who began to seek a more sophisticated outlet for their writing which they eventually found in Frank Gehry and his followers. More recently an attempt to re-tread modernistic design has brought us a crop of foreign introductions with a determined media push for

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work by pop offshoots like Liebskind, Calatrava and Moneo who produce an architecture that is suitably just out of the understanding of the crowd and just within the understanding of the critic.

The loss of an ecclesial architecture

And where is traditional architecture in the view of the denizens of pop-tecture at the helm of the museums that flock to the foreigners in herds? The traditional architects are not interested in assisting the Modernistic Meisters in executing their moon-like downtown archizones where the unaware suddenly find themselves crossing a green line into a spooky alien landscape more similar to Disney’s “Tomorrow Land” than to the formerly American City that once stood there. The only counter to this has been the recent Neo-Traditionalist movement in UK and USA. American universities like Notre Dame and Miami have been in the front of giving traditional architecture a voice. Notre Dame alone among the others has been willing to consider religious architecture seriously.

There is a common view that traditional buildings are too difficult or expensive to build “today”. Further this is reinforced in the modernist view by the idea that traditional concepts like beauty and order are outdated and need to be broken for a new philosophical order to emerge. St Augustine wrote that the components of beauty – symmetry, order and proportion – were attributes of the divine within earthly reality. Chaos and disorder represented the destructive action of evil on the world. The Church in Augustine’s era went further, adding representations of the Saints and leading Church figures and scenes from the daily life of the people. Interspersed among these domestic scenes were scenes from the Bible and the life of Christ, carved into the stone parts of the building, painted on the walls or as frescos, mosaics or tapestries. The church became a living repository of history with its walls and windows covered with its stories.

Political movements and the power of architecture

The Reformation changed this in most of the world outside the Vatican walls with a religious iconoclastic movement with the intent to clear away all memory of the past. Beginning in 1517 with Martin Luther’s protest movement continuing on through Henry VIII and Cromwell up to the French Revolution, secular forces stripped the meaning from architecture to discourage resistance among the population. This began a slow change that saw religious architecture decline in importance up to the present day when it is no longer taught in most architecture schools and few churches raise important architectural issues. The architecture of the

Church has gone from “mother of all the arts” to irrelevant in 500 years.

The 17th and 18th centuries brought the “Enlightenment”, an intellectual movement among the educated of Europe based on scientific thinking. Rational thought derived from the study of nature replaced traditional understandings of the structure of the universe that had been based on an incomplete understanding and the lack of wider communications. The printing press made it possible to disseminate scientific understanding broadly. Suddenly “democracy” was the new “God” in the life of the people. Democracy was the standard the people could use against the tyranny of the rich, the educated and those with political power. The powerful could be rejected at the ballot, and according to the rationalist, there was no longer any need for God. By the nineteenth century God, according to Marx, was the “opiate of the masses”, and no matter that the Democrats rejected Marx they accepted his rejection of the Church.

As Rousseau conceived of Democracy in a way that imposed no limits on its power, which put Man in place of God as a sovereign, the controller of existence. “Throw off superstition and the old power structures, let reason rule, and the perfectibility of man was possible” – or so the revolutionaries believed. The revolutionaries’ Promethean ambitions meant they had to eradicate the spiritual and institutional power of the Church, since it made rival claims for human allegiance. “These priests ... must die because they are out of place, interfere with the movement of things, and will stand in the way of the future,” Georges Danton pronounced in a spirit typical of the revolutionaries.

The 18th century intellectual believed that reason and scientific thinking could solve any problem. The Church as the result of famous persecutions such as that of Galileo, which

were broadcast around the globe, became identified as the “old way”. The more the Church tried to preserve its power through support of the old traditional ways, the greater the public relations problem became. In 18th century America, Thomas Jefferson believed the Church had become corrupt over the centuries, a belief he acted upon by the publication of his own Bible consisting solely of the words of Christ. Jefferson felt that the church as a corrupt institution should not be the centre of the new Republic he was forming, and instead placed the library as the center of his campus for the University of Virginia. The architectural style he chose for the University was secular and based on classical Greek and Roman motifs. To Jefferson the ancient civilizations had been ideal, intellectual citadels; modern civilization – especially Europe – was decadent and corrupt. Thus his architecture in was based on the Roman Republican model, as promoted by Andreas Palladio in his folios of drawings of Roman ruins.

The rule of reason naturally extended beyond the political realm. Once the revolutions in America and France were an established fact, the focus of the Rationalist philosophers could move to new areas. Literature and the arts soon came under their axe as well. In the 16th through 18th centuries, the arts reflected the end of Church leadership of culture. When the property of the Church was seized across Europe, it was no longer able to continue its role as the dominant patron of the arts. Patronage of the arts shifted to the families who controlled the wealth in the new order. Merchants, bankers and government ministers began to commission paintings and since they were no longer for churches they no longer featured religious subject matter. Instead subjects began to be political, social commentary or for the pleasure of viewing. Architecture was pressed into service in Renaissance Europe, using Roman themes to convey a sense of imperial power.

Seminarians in Australia

The numbers of diocesan seminarians in Australia have for some years now shown recovery. The aggregate data, however, conceal the paucity of seminarians for most dioceses. Overwhelmingly, the numbers of diocesan seminarians for Australia are captured by just 4 dioceses. In order of seminarians as a proportion of Catholic population, the rank ordering is as follows: Wagga Wagga, Perth, Sydney, and Melbourne. In each of these dioceses, vocations leadership is exercised by priests of the ACCC. (Ed.) (Relevant websites: www.wagga.catholic.org.au / perthcatholic.org.au / sydney.catholic.org.au / corpuschristicollege.org/)

***Seminarians of
Corpus Christi
College,
Melbourne,
process into
St Patrick's
Cathedral,
Melbourne.
(photo credit:
B Shaeffer)***





Los Angeles Cathedral, LA, USA, above
photo credit: Kevin Sherman

Interestingly, even the pictured people capture the loss of an ecclesiastical sense in their dress. (Ed.)

Into the spiritual vacuum thus created stepped the Communists and Socialists within a century and the Fascists fifty years later. All three political movements, recognising the power that art and architecture had held over the popular imagination under the domination of the Church, employed both to popularise their movements and to create a substitute for the Church in their societies. Fascist architecture added heroic depictions of the peasant and worker elevating the common man they wished to seduce to heroic even “Godly” status – the female Goddess of fertility and the male God of the family, the father. The destruction of the Church had left only the manipulative Fascist holding a mirror up to the public eye in its place. The state, disguised as a popular national consciousness, substituted national days of celebration in place of the Feast and Saints’ Days the people had celebrated. Nazi architecture was an integral part of the National Socialist Party’s plans for a new order. Hitler like Jefferson admired Roman culture, but was aware of the fact that the German people had conquered Rome and therefore was not truly Roman. He looked more to the ancient Greeks he fantasised as the source of the Germanic people.

Los Angeles Cathedral, LA, USA, interior, below
photo credit: Kevin Sherman

The iconoclastic intentions of the architect (or iconographic lack of comprehension of the architect!) are starkly seen. (Ed.)



Autun Cathedral, France, above

photo credit: Ethan Anthony

The architecture is clearly ecclesiastical, and thrust upward.

Post WWII trends

After World War II with the defeat of Fascism, the dominant order has been modernism based largely on German models promulgated by German expatriates, Gropius and van der Rohe. Now a new generation of modernistic architects has sprung up following what is affectionately known as helicopter-wreck architecture. This architecture claims to be about dismantling our assumptions again ... another iconoclastic movement – yet there are no icons remaining to be removed, the temple is bare! Perhaps the most obvious example of this bare anti-icon state of affairs is the Cathedral of the Angels in Los Angeles, California designed by Spanish architect-celebes Rafael Moneo (pictured top left).

This building is large and imposing, and as the Cathedral web site explains “What historically took centuries to construct was accomplished in three years”. In a sign of Titanic aspirations, the Cathedral was built directly over the San Andreas Fault and mounted on thousands of shock absorbers capable of withstanding all but the most violent earthquakes. The web site goes on to extol the Cathedral’s other virtues; designed by a Professor (no mere “architect”! – “dynamic”, “virtually no right angles”, “contemporary”, “reflecting the diversity of all peoples” – all words that say as well, *not* traditional, *not* religious, *not* specifically or discernibly Catholic. In all these the new Cathedral is

Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain, another great hill cathedral, below, is undergoing contemporary completion consistent with its original design.

photo credit: Ethan Anthony



Church at Monserat outside Barcelona, Spain, presents a vibrant liturgical space that communicates warmth and welcome, and contrasts with the alienation of a modernistic church. The article moves to show the re-creation of such liturgical architecture by the author in contemporary USA.

photo: Ethan Anthony



“Storefront” style of a modernist church is exemplified by this photo drawn from Steelcase, USA. There is no hint of the purpose of the building or use of the building.

conventional and mirrors the same trend in Jewish architecture to eschew all visible signs of religion: the “temple” as shopping mall or movie theatre. The Cathedral description continues with a mention of the many diverse nationalities that make up the Los Angeles area and it is notable that the physical form of the Cathedral is “egalitarian” in that it ignores all of the National and Ethnic groups mentioned. Instead the architect thought that placing the Cathedral close to a highway he thought of as the modern equivalent of a river was honoring the tradition inherent in medieval cathedral placement because “ ... many medieval Cathedrals were built close to rivers.”

I have seen precious few Cathedrals built by rivers and it is not incorrect to say those locations were typically avoided due to their propensity to flood nearly every year. The photograph of Autun Cathedral, above right, shows its commanding location on the top of the hill on which the town is built. No river here!

It is beyond obvious that the architect is bankrupt in imagination, when what we see in San Francisco is the best analogy he can summon for the design of a great cathedral. The south entry is not only anti-liturgical, but worse! it is just weird. One feels one is entering the back door until one finds that there is no front door! The interior of the Cathedral, as seen in the photo bottom left, is another exercise in contradictions. The layout is liturgically correct, but the space is cold and featureless. Perhaps the urge to avoid intimidating or alienating anyone at all has required the removal of everything symbolic save a few unrecognisable saintly figures and a sterile crucifix, all in impeccable taste and certain not to offend. The colour pallet is a warm yellow monotone, but the colourants in the concrete can not overcome the coldness and sterility of the design aesthetic which feels more like a “prison” than a “priory”

Contrasting the “modernist” and “traditionalist”

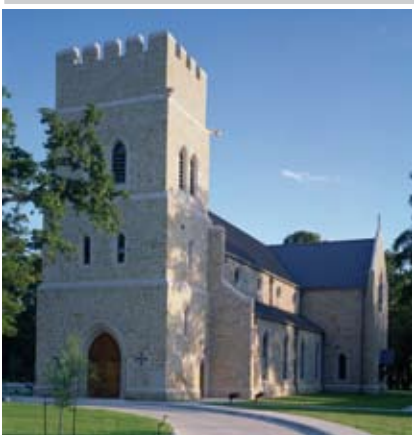
The left and right photographs at the top of the next page are intended sharply to contrast the irreconcilable trends of “traditionalism” and “modernism” in church architecture. The Renaissance church at Monserat (opposite, above left) outside Barcelona provides an example of the liturgy expressed throughout the space and a feeling of incredible warmth and welcome. Despite Napoleon burning the monastery and murdering 80 monks this monastery has endured and prospered into the modern era. But the modernist’s church aesthetic is normally less distinct (see Steelcase illustration opposite, above right). Usually it appears as an adaptation of the shopping mall as shown above. Anonymous aluminum storefront graces the exposed steel frame and brick thin wall veneer one would expect to see in a neighborhood theatre. Here there is absolutely no hint of the purpose or use of



St Philomena's Catholic Church, Long Beach, CA, USA, presents the more commonly modified “shopfront” aspect with an austere cross to mark it as some kind of ecclesial building.



St Andrew's-by-the-Bay Catholic Church in Maryland, USA, has only the “coal tippie” cross to identify it as a church.



The Catholic Church of Our Lady of Walsingham, Texas, designed by the author presents a structure that is unmistakably “church”.



The photo, above, of a church proposed for a new town in Florida, USA, shows a model of an attempt to incorporate the liturgy in a modern design and fails on account of excessively literal interpretation.



*The “Millennium Church” in Rome, Richard Meier’s adaptation of the “sails” of Sydney Opera House, creates a beautiful architectural space without reference to religion.
photo credit: Andreas Jemolo*

the building. One expects a business office perhaps an advertising firm. Sometimes, as seen in the photograph of St Philomena Catholic Church, Long Beach, CA, USA (second left previous page) a bare cross is the concession to “ecclesiastic” architecture.

Another contrast is Sagrada Familia in Barcelona is building today and looks forward to finishing their church (see below right on page 18). Another great Cathedral (on a hill overlooking the city, and not on a highway or “urban river”)! the construction under way today follows the spirit of the original without violating the original ideas or forms, even though it is under the supervision and design of a new architect.

These European examples may be set against the less exciting and architecturally conventional American example of St Andrew’s by the Bay in Maryland (third photo in the left panel of the previous page) that presents an aesthetic that is borrowed from the coal tippie and the cross-bearing cage in front just gets the point across that this is church. Without it, the point might have been lost entirely. Here again the fenestration is aluminum storefront, aluminum windows, and featureless brick walls. Contrast this with another contemporary American church, the Catholic Church of Our Lady of Walsingham, in Texas (bottom



Siena Cathedral in Italy, above, also in white! presents an immense contrast with the modern examples shown left, and those entering the immense square view an immensity of gar-goyles, saints and great men who look down on the visitor.



*Siena Cathedral in Italy interior, above, impressively shows many Saints and Doctors of the Church forming a living frieze along the walls, complementing lively painted panels.
photo credit: Ethan Anthony*

photo in the left panel of the previous page). The contrast is dramatic! This church, though it could have been the source for the modern interpretation, has far more character that identify it as a *church* and that reflect the liturgy on its surface. The windows here have a gothic top which are drawn from a form which is demonstrably religious and part of a centuries-long conversation about the Church. The form of the roof clearly delineates the aisle and nave and the fenestration also reflects the interior function something that cannot be said for the modern counterpart.

Occasionally an attempt is made to incorporate the liturgy in a modern design that fails on account of excessively literal interpretation. The design for a church in a Florida new town (as seen in the top left panel panel, above) is a perhaps broad interpretation of a Cardinal’s hat! The addition of the traditional three door entry pasted onto the front adds to the overall impression that the design is an amalgam of images pasted on to a solid. Proto-buttresses are flying and a “rose” window has been punched into the top of the hat far too small and high to be seen. This attempt nods to tradition while placing itself squarely in the modernesque. Exemplifying a secular Jewish approach to



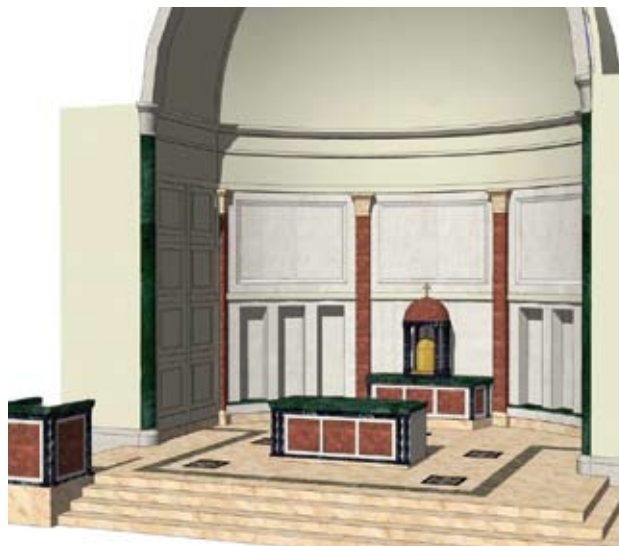
St John Neumann Catholic Church, Tarragut, Tennessee, USA, under construction according to the author's design, combining a fresh look and feel with reverence and awe.

ecclesiastical architecture, Richard Meier's adaptation for the Millennium Church in Rome of the sails of the Opera House in Sydney, Australia, proves once and for all that it is possible to have beautiful sculptural form with no reference whatever to the church or to religion (as seen in the second photo in the left panel of the previous page). As a contemplative space it is unparalleled and one would love to see it as a parish hall next to a real church.

The Cathedral in Siena (top photo in the right panel of the opposite page) is still extraordinary and alive after 1000 years. This one is white, too, but *vive la difference!* The presence on the square is immense with gargoyles, saints and great men looking down on us. And the interior (as seen in the second photo in the right panel, opposite page) is no less impressive, with the Doctors of the Church and many Saints forming a living frieze along the wall to complement alternating bands of marble and lively painted panels.

Doing better today!

Work in progress by the author shows that we can do the same things today. The illustrations of recent HDB / Cram and Ferguson work seen at the top left and right, above, show that it is not necessary to have a wildly different form to achieve a fresh look and feel and to do so with reverence and awe. Working on St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Tarragut, Tennessee, using a Romanesque form, I have looked to the churches of Burgundy as inspiration, because they are some of the earliest and most direct examples of the style. Following Borromeo's rule, elevations are in uneven numbers. The three doors enter a Narthex space that spans the width of the nave and aisles. The liturgical west front features a great rose window that will have scenes from the life of St. John Neumann. The dome over the crossing represents the traditional emphasis on the crossing representing the heart of Christ. The tower is engaged because it is functional in many ways. The air conditioning equipment is located in an attic above the vaulted ceiling and the cooling equipment is located in the tower just below the bells where it is not visible. Some of the detailing of the masonry such as the blind arched cornice and round arch top windows reflects



Interior model of St John Neumann Catholic Church, Tarragut, Tennessee, USA, showing central tabernacle, symmetrically placed altar, and ambo on the "Gospel side", all in marble.

Romanesque traditions. The tympanum over the main door will feature Jesus and the Little Children in a bas relief to be sculpted and then cast in stone by sculptor Danielle Krcmar.

Although not as elaborate as the last photograph (this page, below), St John Lateran Basilica in Rome, it can be seen that as we work on modern churches that express the Catholic liturgy we have before us the classical example of such a church that began as an Imperial palace and has been modified continuously for 1700 years. The original basilica form which has been so influential in the design of churches throughout that time can be clearly seen in the Tennessee example. The Baldachino too is there and the apsidal end and the clerestory windows. All can be found even when the decoration lacks the great carvings and moldings of the Renaissance. Despite the difference in surface, the basic form shines through unaltered. The rendering of the Sanctuary of St John Neumann shows the same formal liturgical elements endure here 1700 years after St John Lateran was built. Through this continuity the Church continues to shine through the centuries and through temporal changes the fundamentals remain the same.



St John Lateran Basilica in Rome – an inspiration reflected in the basic design of St John Neumann, Tennessee, USA, in the Ethan Anthony's design seen at the head of this page.



Why I love being a priest

Father Gregory Jordan, SJ

Retrieving milestones along the road

Queensland saw an act of vandalism this year that grieved many conscious of the significance of traditions in Australian history: parties unknown poured weedkiller on that legendary national icon, the so-called Tree of Knowledge at Longreach, under which the Australian Labour Party is said to have been born. It was the State of Queensland that elected the world's first Labor Government, and the news shocked and saddened those who value our origins and their symbols. The question was: would the tree survive? The experts speculated, some saying that it would surely die, others expressing the hope that the flood of poison could be neutralised and new growth be seen once more.

You men here this night, my brother priests, and future priests, are the green wood in that Tree of Life which is the Church, who stubbornly resist the floodtide of poison attacking that Tree of Salvation: the poisons of heterodoxy and heteropraxis. For centuries there have been those who have confidently predicted the church's demise, ignoring Christ's promise to be with her until the end of time, or his prediction that the Gates of Hell would not prevail against her. Humanly speaking there is ample evidence of their pessimistic view, like the decline of Mass attendance to something like 13%, so that in places only 10% attend Mass – one in ten! Where are the other nine? They are not coming back to thank Christ for their healing as did the Samaritan!

But then they scarcely feel the need for healing, so thorough has been the invasion of Catholic institutions by secular thought and morality, the "tyranny of relativism". In Europe the disaster is if anything worse, though the Holy Father seems to have singled out Australia of all places as signal in its decline of faith. In the face of that dramatic decline, you are the men who cling to Life, resisting the lethal cocktail of the ideas, moods, fashions of our time. You are producing fruit, and it is fruit that will last. Many of you are "pruned already", as Our Lord says, "by my word" – in your daily encounter with Scripture in prayer, in the Mass and the Office of the day. And I would add you have no doubt been pruned by the adverse treatment you have received, to the point of calumny itself. Well, you are in good company, and Our Lord tells you, "Rejoice, I tell you; dance for joy, because your reward will be great in Heaven." Nor should we ever forget that any suffering we endure on account of our fidelity to Christ and His Church will certainly produce fruit. If this has not yet happened with some of you, then be sure that it will do so, as Our Lord himself predicted. All you have to do is remain faithful. Persevere.

When looking for evidence of the Church's demise, apart from the decline in Mass attendance I have already instanced, the commentators will invariably point to the decline in vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and the shortage of priests. What especially distresses me however are reports of low priestly morale, of priests making heavy

Rev. Gregory Jordan spent many years working with students at St Leo's, the Jesuit College in the University of Queensland. Some of his varied ministries in "retirement" are captured in his stirring ACCC 2006 Conference "dinner talk" here presented.



weather of it as they live out their vocation, and that is why my first thought was to address you tonight on *Why I love being a Priest*. I am not sure what entitles me to speak to you on this topic tonight. Basically I knew I wanted to tell the world "Why I loved being a priest". I certainly would like to tell those confreres of mine in the priesthood what a blessing it is share in the eternal priesthood of Christ Our Lord. Furthermore, as I recount a milestone or two on my road to and in the priesthood, I am sure you will discern how others contributed to the nurture of a priestly vocation.

Early years

My experience of priesthood has been in three main stages:

First, growing up in a small country town parish conducted by Diocesan priests.

Secondly, four years of boarding school with the Marist Fathers.

Thirdly, and this time much more intensively, almost fifty years as a member of the Society of Jesus.

The only Parish Priest I ever had, Father Michael Joseph Bleakley, a magnificent orator, had the practice of coming down to the altar rails after Communion – on the men's side, as it happened, with all the boys in the front pews – to read aloud for us all the Prayers After Communion. What do you think would be the effect of this language, of this rhetoric, on a boy not yet ten?

O my Jesus, you have given yourself to me; now let me give myself to you.

I give you my body that it may be chaste and pure.

I give you my soul that it may be free from sin.

I give you my heart that it may always love you.

I give you every breath that I shall breathe, and especially my last.

I give you myself in life and in death that I may be yours for ever and ever. Amen.

All are simple words, eighty-three of them, and all but four are monosyllables. There is no hint of a "Vouchsafe", or a "deign", or a "humbly prostrate in supplication". The words are so basic as to be almost commonplace: give, breath, body, soul, life and death. Yet when fused together what incendiary rhetoric they become to put into the mind of a young boy, to fire his heart and soul to give himself body and soul to Christ Our Lord. Only quite recently I have come to realise that those words encapsulate the "Theology of the Body" of John Paul II. They are a spousal formula. Were they perhaps

too advanced a rhetoric for the immature, or were they not setting before him the highest spiritual ideals to which he might aspire: I wonder if I could do that? Those words were a template stamping his thought, his imagination and his affections early in life with the outline of all the sanctity there was. They pushed the boundaries of possibility. They were also – little did I know it then – a superb preparation for the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius, which culminate in the Act of Offering that concludes his Contemplation For Obtaining Love:

Take, Lord, receive, all my liberty; my memory, my understanding and my will. You have given them all to me; now let me return them all to you to do with as you will. Give me only your grace and your love, for these will be enough for me.

That first Act of Offering prepared me too for the Prayer for Generosity:

Lord, teach me to be generous; teach me to serve you as you deserve:

To give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labour and not to ask reward, save that of knowing that we do your Holy Will.

Those three prayers stand in a continuum, a direct line extending seventy years. I wish I could say that I always lived according to them, but this much I can say: I found in them a framework that gave shape focus and direction to my life. Of course I can well remember being told by a Brother or Nun looking around the classroom teaching the Ten Commandments and saying “Now, that’s all you’ve got to do to get into Heaven”. This offering of a bare minimum necessary for salvation certainly underlined the essential task of life on earth but in no way did it weigh down the spirit aching for the wild adventure of self-offering.

Serving the altar

Meanwhile Sister Mercia prepared us meticulously for First Confession and First Holy Communion. Meticulously, but not scrupulously. Her instructions were clear, so that we approached these Sacraments for the first time untroubled. She gave us a familiarisation “confession” in the confessional, and a practice Communion with unconsecrated hosts [“communion breads”]. I well remember that as she came along the altar rails she had the hosts in an old Edmond’s Baking Powder tin, bearing their trademark motto, “SURE TO RISE”. Was this preparing me for the Mystery of the Resurrection?

When aged ten a Marist Brother, my best teacher ever, selected a group to train as altar servers. He instructed us most thoroughly, introducing us to the courtesies of the sanctuary: the head bow as opposed to the profound; the position of the hands, the reverent upright genuflection as opposed to the wobbly bob; how to conduct yourself when you make a mistake. The effect was to inculcate in me a sense of order and propriety, all focused on the Holy One in whose court we were privileged to serve. On one occasion I failed to please at the ablutions by offering Father Bleakley the towel still folded tight instead of opened for his convenience. He casually clipped me over the ear. I was not the slightest bit fazed by this technical assault. Two generations later I would have been encouraged to sue, but

then I happily finished serving the Mass glad to be privileged to do so. Father Bleakley was indeed washing “his hands among the innocent”.

Five of us became good friends, of whom four were destined to enter a seminary, two of us being ordained. In fact from the age of approximately five I had felt very comfortable with the prospect of being a priest or a brother. When I was seven my father died. There were ten children in the family, I being the last, and a particularly strong family it was. They and others like my teachers sustained me, but I must note here a phenomenon I have observed down through the decades; namely, that death, illness or similar misfortune in early life is followed again and again by a priestly or religious vocation. The youngster losing a parent, or put in plaster for six months or the like – forced to watch from the sidelines, compelled to repeat a year, and so lose old friends and make new ones – perhaps gains insight into the transitoriness of this world, and begins to aspire to what is permanent, even eternal. A vocation is then a distinct possibility.

Secondary schooling

For my Secondary Schooling it was my greatest privilege to be educated by the Marist Fathers, who gave me the best religious formation then available in Australasia. Out of some sixty in the final year twelve entered the priesthood. My favourite teacher, Father Kevin Maher, SM, a published poet, coached me in public speaking. He first gave me Evelyn Waugh’s life of Campion written just ten years before, and then R. H. Benson’s book on Campion, *Come Rack! Come Rope*. These two books made me a Jesuit. I finished Benson’s enthralling novel at home on holidays in my room at the front of the house. I was flooded with emotion as I came to end of his story and his final words from the gallows. Tears stung my eyes at the thought of the nobility of this, my new-found hero, this jewel of England so unjustly and so brutally executed: a man of whom the world was not worthy. For me it was a defining moment. I threw the book down and wandered rather aimlessly through the house to the back, possibly to tell Scotty my dog. My mother was in the kitchen, looked up, saw my eyes stung with tears and asked a little sharply, “Have you been smoking?” There you have it, the story of my life – from the sublime to the ridiculous. One day cock-o’-the-walk, feather duster the next. Though my father had been a tobaccanist I had never smoked. You have to laugh and this was only one of many laughs on my path to the altar; and if you want to make God laugh, *Tell him your plans!* Don’t get me wrong: plan we must, short term and long, but always remaining flexible in case our HQ switches to Plan B.

Our Christian Doctrine text was a course written by our famed Prefect of Studies, Fr Clifford Bowler, SM. It was really a mini-course for seminarians, a compact coverage of philosophy and theology designed for secondary pupils. I devoured it.

Early in Sixth Form I came across a copy of *The Imitation of Christ* in the school bookshop and pounced on it. No matter how much doctrine we learnt in class, it was clear that the Divine Person of Christ was central to our lives. Each night after the evening meal I slipped up to the Chapel and read a

Continued on page 37

Updating the Principles of the Liturgical Movement for a New Liturgical Movement

Dom Charbel Pazat De Lys, OSB

The author is a Benedictine monk of L'abbaye Sainte-Madeleine du Barroux in France. The original paper (in French) was delivered in July 2001 at a Liturgy Conference held at the Abbey of Notre Dame, Fontgombault, France, in the presence of the then Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger when Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and was later published in the English translated proceedings of the conference edited by Dr Alcuin Reid, **Looking Again at the Question of the Liturgy with Cardinal Ratzinger: Proceedings of the July 2001 Fontgombault Liturgical Conference** (St Michael's Abbey, Farnborough, 2003). The paper here published is revised and translated from the original French especially for **The Priest** by Professor David Birch (Deakin University, Melbourne) at the invitation of the Editor, with the cooperation of Dom Charbel. The full set of footnotes is available in Reid (Ed.) (2003). Where passages are quoted from Magisterial texts, the Vatican website English translation is given rather than a translation of the French version used in the original paper. Sub-headings are due to the Editor.

Introduction

In order to recreate a new liturgical movement, we are encouraged, not only by your Eminence [Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger] in a personal capacity, but also by the Magisterium of the Church, given that *Liturgiam Authenticam*¹ refers to, “considering and endeavouring to prepare for a new period of renewal”. A “new period of renewal” assumes that there was a “first period of renewal” – undeniable, although in some respects this earlier period did not achieve its aims. Much has been discussed [at this conference] about this and I do not wish to cover this same ground. Firmly looking at the future, I propose here certain poles of reflection, which may result in establishing the lines of a new liturgical movement. To cause movement, a magnet is necessary, and every magnet has a positive pole and a negative pole. Two words can characterise them: *rupture* and *irruption*.²

The negative pole: rupture

It is undeniable that what we call “Western civilisation” – or what there is left of it – has been profoundly marked by the old Liturgy given that, “the Liturgy itself generates and shapes cultures.”³ One can easily see that civilisation does not change by itself in a few years, or by committee meetings and office work. The result [of the changes to the liturgy] is that [in the words of Cardinal Ratzinger] “for many of the faithful the internal unity with what had gone before is no longer recognisable... Today, after all that has happened, one might ask: is there a still a Latin rite? Certainly, hardly any consciousness of it exists.”⁴ This is born out by Father Gelinéau – not exactly someone short on integrity – saying that, “In truth, it is a different [*autre*] liturgy of the Mass. It

The founding monastic community of the classical Roman rite, dating from the 1970s, was raised by to abbatical status Pope John Paul II in 1989 (see, www.barroux.org). The nearby nuns of the Abbey of Notre Dame de l'Annonciation received abbatical status in 2005 from Cardinal Medina as envoy of Pope Benedict XVI.



must be said, without beating about the bush: the Roman rite as we have known it exists no more. It is destroyed.”⁵

Triple spirit of rupture in the first Liturgical Movement.

In effect, it appears that the first Liturgical Movement has resulted in a triple spirit of rupture. This is manifested first by those who deliberately wish for a rupture with the past – with history. And then with two forms of “excessive conservatism”, opposed in their goals, but similar in their reasoning. There are those who hold that the old Roman liturgy represents the culminating point of liturgical progress – unsurpassable and untouchable; and there are those who think the same about the new postconciliar forms – as if any reform of the reforms necessarily represents a retreat. In both cases a logic of rupture is assumed⁶ – and this unthinkingly connects its proponents to a position inherited from the Enlightenment, where history is seen no longer as a chain at the end of which we find ourselves, but as a shelf from which we serve ourselves, where, in the end, Man and his reason are the criterion of choice.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of *Ecclesia Dei*, Pope John Paul II said,

To guard the treasure which Jesus confided to her and facing the future resolutely, the Church has the duty to reflect continuously on her link with the Tradition which has come to us from the Lord, through the Apostles, such as it has been established all down through history.⁷

Renovation, innovation. This position allows for a better understanding of the profound significance of the fact that,

Nuns of the nearby Abbey of Our Lady of the Annunciation, whose web site may be accessed from the monks' site.



through the centuries, the Church has always promulgated renovation and often reprobated innovation.

I am not in favour of any logic of rupture in any sense,⁸ for [as Cardinal Ratzinger wrote],

If the liturgy no longer allows the universal unity of the Church and her history – the mystery of the living Christ – to come to light, then, where does the Church manifest her spiritual nature ... and because a community does not exist in itself, but rather it always and only springs from the Lord himself by faith and unity, the disintegration of the Church, which is torn apart by opposing proponents involved in all sorts of cock-eyed quarrels, becomes inevitable in such conditions.⁹

Mentality of rupture. Far be it for me to question here, either the good intentions of those involved in this, past or present, let alone the intrinsic value of diverse Magisterial texts. Yet, is it not possible to see that even these interventions, including that of *Mediator Dei* (despite the benchmarks given in Part I) seem to have been insufficient for clearly defining, and directly stigmatising, not one or another flagrant abuse; but, rather, the general mentality of *rupture* – which mentality of rupture is then put to the service of a range of ideologies by inappropriately authorising one or other criteria for reform approved by the Popes.¹⁰

The difficulty does not lie principally and directly in the different forceful ideas running throughout the liturgical movement – simplicity, intelligibility, the full signification of rites and formulae, active participation, returning to sources, community aspect, increased biblical emphasis, etc. The difficulty lies in the fact that the same key idea can open very different doors, depending upon the code of application. As Dom Guéranger once remarked, “The indiscrete re-establishing of the ancient usages, sometimes *equivalent to innovation*, could produce the same effects.”¹¹

What are the correct codes of application of criteria for liturgical reform? These effects, we have seen, are forms of rupture. If, then, we wish to know what constitutes this “organic continuity” in the same rite (as wished for by the Council) and reiterated by the Congregation for Divine Worship¹² then the question that must be asked is, “What are the right codes of application for the criteria of reform?” This is what a new liturgical movement must consider, firmly and precisely. And to do this, it is not sufficient to make lists of the wreckage provoked by bad codes of applications. Nor is it sufficient – although useful – to take each of these forceful ideas, one by one, and to explain how each one was deficient. Rather, it is necessary to determine why and how one arrives in choosing erroneous codes of application. It is especially necessary to explain – and in a rigorous manner – how to find the true codes of application for principles of reform. For in these troubled times, the *sensus fidei*, the *sensus Ecclesiae*, and the *sensus pietatis* are certainly always valuable indicators, but too general to create united choices in the actual reforms.

“Intrinsic” principles, not “extrinsic” principles, required for New Liturgical Movement. If, for example, we take the criteria “return to antiquity”, *Mediator Dei* outlines

some possible benefits and some harmful excesses.¹³ But beyond the general and *extrinsic* principle of obedience to the Holy See, how do we find the next *intrinsic* principles which permit us to make a judgment, when the question legitimately arises – for example in the case which says that it is not necessary to return to antiquity, and, in another case, that it is? How far do we go? But that is not all, because even having answered this first question, there comes in its wake a second. *In concreto* our aim should not be simply to return *in abstracto*, on paper, to a particular ancient element, but rather to come back to it, that is to say, to rediscover *the totality* of the conditions which gives this element its value. But under what conditions, by what means and time? It is the answers to these questions that will give us the next intrinsic principles. This will demand hard work but at the same time will be one of the most valuable aids to future clarification of the Magisterium, as it will also be to a *new* liturgical movement freed from the ambiguities of the first.

Appreciation now widespread that liturgical change was too quick. However, before authoritative answers have been given to all these questions, is it not necessary to agree on one thing, historically obvious to all? Changes have been too quick. I must point out that among my own Professors,¹⁴ even the least likely suspects of fundamentalism amongst them, this view is almost unanimous. So, a new liturgical movement must resolutely discard precipitousness, and this also means it should refuse to be seduced by the pretext of urgency. But when only time makes the choices, urgency is prevented. It is useful to appreciate the reflections of Cardinal Congar here:

Reforms are difficult operations. *Impatient men*, having too feeble a sense of Tradition, putting their particular idea before all else, risk turning what they do into sectarian movements. Some conditions are necessary for a reform to be effected without schism; the primacy of charity and pastoral usefulness must be put before the *spirit of the system* and pure intellectual deduction; a care for communion with the whole, for we are also all obliged to seek the approval of central moderating organs, in order eventually to pass beyond the positions held right now, inadequate as they are according to the exigencies of a full catholic Tradition; *patience*, keeping clear of formal demands and the haste which wants everything done straight away; the search for a renewal of the living application of the principles in a new situation, not the mechanical substitution of other modes of thinking or of doing other anterior things; good sense.¹⁵

A key “intrinsic” principle enunciated by Pope Pius XII. All of the discussion so far contains some elements of a globally negative reflection – namely, how not to make the same errors of the first liturgical movement again. But from this point on, how can we begin to take a positive step in the work of finding the “next intrinsic principles”? Pope Pius XII gives us an indication in *Mediator Dei* saying,

Three characteristics of which Our predecessor [Saint] Pius X¹⁶ spoke should adorn all liturgical services: sacredness, which abhors any profane influence; nobility, which true and genuine arts should serve and foster; and universality, which, while safeguarding local and legitimate custom, reveals the catholic unity of the Church (#188).

It is the first of these characteristics – *sacredness* – to which I specifically turn in the next section.

The positive pole: irruption

It is common to say today that we need to return to the sacred. A former pastor Michel Viot, recently converted to the Catholic Church, has said: "It is necessary to give back to people the sense of the sacred; it is necessary that sermons talk about the inner life, about the life of the invisible world."¹⁷ From that perspective I do not believe it is rash, following Professor Heinrich Pfeiffer, to approach this question phenomenologically by suggesting that something is sacred when it reveals the *irruption* of the transcendent – of the supernatural. When it is then a matter of the Catholic liturgy then something is sacred when it reveals the *irruption* of the Trinity into this world.

"Irruption" in the liturgy as the action of God. This point alone already gets us a long way. Because to reveal is to communicate. One must then define what will condition the sacred in each mode of expression available to man, because *irruption* is a notion that implies many things. First of all, it presupposes distance, because nothing makes an irruption if it is already present – if it is without distance. Is it not necessary, then, to discard the tendencies – naturalistic, rationalist, fideist – which declare the distance between the natural and the supernatural as non-existent, uninteresting, unknowable, inexpressible, or insurmountable? Furthermore, this position then requires a re-education in metaphysics to a realist metaphysics which enables us truly to attend to the *being* of things in a world of pure ideas or of pure relations.¹⁸ An *irruption* (if it exists) is situated on the same plane and is therefore without true distance and unable to express the transcendental. Moreover, if the Divine *irrupts* into the world – we do not "make" this happen. Nor do we transport ourselves into His domain: it is the Divine who comes to us; who imposes Himself on us; who precedes us.

"Interruption" and "eruption". I think this position is generally accepted, as Cardinal Ratzinger has already insisted many times.¹⁹ But let me say now that the notion of *irruption* is related to that of "interruption", which is itself a different thing from separation. If we take this word in an analogical sense – a sort of stopping point in the natural course of things (an in-between) – this will then be a key which can help in what follows.

"Languages" of sacred liturgy, and the manner of "interruption". In effect, what we need to find is the common denominator that enables different modes of expression to explain an *irruption* of God. As an object of research this would be essential for the liturgical movement. My proposition for such work is as follows: might not the common denominator of the sacred be a certain form of "interruption" – an in-between? Trying to make more concrete what might, at first, appear to be too abstract. We find many languages in sacred liturgy, besides verbal language, sung or spoken. There are the languages of gesture, colour, architecture and art; those of smells, lights and of the choice of specific liturgical objects and their materials. In all of this, what might constitute "interruption"?

Sacral language. In this manner, *Liturgiam Authenticam* (#27) calls our attention to translations, and so, to proclaimed

language, saying,

If indeed, in the liturgical texts, words or expressions are sometimes employed which differ somewhat from usual and everyday speech, it is often enough by virtue of this very fact that the texts become truly memorable and capable of expressing heavenly realities. Indeed, it will be seen that the observance of the principles set forth in this Instruction will contribute to the gradual development, in each vernacular, of a sacred style that will come to be recognised as proper to liturgical language. Thus it may happen that a certain manner of speech which has come to be considered somewhat obsolete in daily usage may continue to be maintained in the liturgical context (#27).

Do we not find here all the issues discussed so far? A certain interruptive point in relation to common language, more easily expressing the transcendent, and, in fact, by this, constituting a sacred style, which is proper to the liturgy? Defining things thus, then the value of Latin as a sacred sign presents itself without difficulty. As *Liturgiam Authenticam* also says: "Consideration should also be given to including in the vernacular editions at least some texts in the Latin language ..." (#28).

Architectural orientation of the church. So, if we come to architecture, doesn't the same principle apply? For when we have a round church, with an altar more or less central, with a side door, circular pews, and tiered as is in cinemas, where is the "interruption" which reveals an encounter – not a meeting with one's neighbour over the way – but [an encounter] with a marvellous Being who comes from elsewhere and creates an *irruption* in front of us and in us? In the idea that some have of a *Domus Ecclesiae*, which stands in counterpoint to a *Domus Dei*, the only thing that counts is the interrelation of the participants. Consequently, the priest is just one of the elements of this relation, and the place of the things around the altar have hardly any importance. If, on the other hand, we have a church that, from the great porch to the apse is oriented to the East, where the altar and its sanctuary create an interruption in this orientation, then something is said about the *irruption* of God into our world and our life. Something is said of this encounter and of these nuptials that make the Christian church a *Domus Thalami* [a bridal chamber of the Lord].

Multi-faceted language of "irruption". It not the same with colours (liturgical; gold), clerical dress, vestments (quality), windows (stained-glass), gestures etc.²⁰ It is not the possibility of preciousness, as such, which is interesting, but only this value of *irruption* which reveals something of God. To believe that all these elements were common only because of a devotion mixed up with a taste for luxury and superstition – is that not to forget the signs that are carried by these elements? Because,

The Sacred Liturgy engages not only man's intellect, but the whole person, who is the "subject" of full and conscious participation in the liturgical celebration. Translators should therefore allow the signs and images of the texts, as well as the ritual actions, to speak for themselves; they should not attempt to render too explicit that which is implicit in the original texts. For the same reason, the addition of explanatory texts not contained in the *editio typica* is to be prudently avoided (*Lit Auth* #28).

The “language” of “irruption” is not necessarily explicit.

In the quotation above from *Liturgiam Authenticam*, it is clear that each of the different liturgical languages discussed so far is not sufficient in itself. A language which is more explicit does not mean that it communicates better, because detailing the infinite is to reduce it. I think that what produces a full communication of the sacred, of the divine *irruption* – what produces the interruption of a truly supernatural encounter in a purely natural universe – is the totality and equilibrium of these languages united together.²¹ And is it not here that sacred silence intervenes? For far from being an empty pause, silence is rather like an amplifier, or (if one prefers) a “sound mixing” of all the other languages. Is it not this silence which decodes, translates and communicates to us in the unique language of the impressions of the soul, all the coded information contained, as if in a cipher, in those other languages?

The classical Roman rite as a model of model. Finally, let me say one more thing. In order to rediscover the spirit of the sacred, a model exists, and this is the old Roman liturgy. Is it not one of the paradoxes of the postconciliar era to have wished (it is said) to return to the pure Roman rite of the 5th century, while borrowing such a large amount from other liturgies, Latin or not? At a time when the thirst for the sacred drives so many souls to Eastern religions, is it not time to re-propose *this* model of the sacred and of continuity?

The Essential Role of the Classical Liturgy²²

I would like, then, to signal here the place of the traditional Liturgy within the perspective of a new Liturgical Movement. In the first place, it must serve as a beacon and haven for those who feel they can sail no further amongst the thousands of liturgies in present use. The faithful, whilst waiting for the results of the “reform of the reform,” have the right to conserve or to rediscover their faith in contact with this age-old treasure, which should present itself to them as a privileged manifestation that the Church is “holding its course.”

Stability of the classical Roman rite. In the second place, even for those who always attend the new Liturgy, it should serve as a point of reference. In effect – as the good God writes straight with crooked lines – the permanence of the classic rite offers an irreplaceable witness to the continuity of the Church and her Liturgy, because this rite has never suffered from the congenital ambiguity of the [recent] Liturgical Movement and its manifestations “in the spirit of the Council”, and this allows us to find the right way to make correct, practical, choices and to rediscover the true spirit of a Liturgy in “organic continuity” with its past.

Finding continuity in development. In the third place, the traditional Liturgy constitutes an indispensable element for a “reform of the reform”. I have, I hope, demonstrated the existence of a break in development, and insisted on the need for continuity, in order to respect the very nature of Liturgy. Now, as I have just said, this continuity is visible in full today only in the classical Liturgy, which should, in my view, from this point on, serve as a “matrix” for a future unified restoration, if, and when, and in whatever way, the Magisterium judges opportune. Certain people might object that, since the classical Liturgy is only used in a restricted

number of places, it is difficult to see how it could concretely function as the matrix for a new Liturgical Movement and for new reform. But it is also necessary to recognise the evidence, also concretely, that there is not at this time an actual “rite of Paul VI”, which is universally celebrated in a uniform way for *it* to serve as a reference point. It is more appropriate, therefore, to take from one of these two rites, a base whose continuity is more incontestable.

An organic process of grafting on a living tree. For all these reasons, it is truly becoming urgent to give to those priests and faithful who wish to use the classical rite, the freedom to do so. And, of course, I do not know when, by grafting the Roman rite back onto its original trunk, liturgical unity (and not merely canonical unity) of that Rite, will be achieved. But as I have already said, we must not dream of a new form of clericalism which, in the course of five or ten years, brutally imposes a new change, whatever its nature. As recent history has proven to us, this would likely result in a third Roman rite – even another schism!

Studies to be Done and / or Synthesised²³

All of this leads me to believe that, in the near future, and for many years to come, it is going to be necessary [for the two rites] to live together. But for any new liturgical movement to develop, it is also going to be necessary to re-study all of these things in depth and to reflect on them, from both an organic and practical perspective, in order to give to all levels of the hierarchy, the means and concrete directives which would enable the sacred – the unique style of the Unique Spouse – to be regained, from the parish to the Curia. Some suggestions for what needs to be addressed follow.

1. A list and classification of the criteria of liturgical reform, with chronological relations.
2. A list of erroneous liturgical applications denounced in the Magisterium.
3. A list of the cultural, theological and ideological data which have caused modifications in the liturgy.
4. A study of the various currents of the origins of the first liturgical movement.
5. A study of the enduring themes, the origins and the theological impact of what Dom Guéranger calls “the anti-liturgical heresy”.
6. A study and application of the Catholic concept of Tradition in the liturgical domain, and its sociological and anthropological impact.
7. A study and application of the “sign” in the liturgical domain; its theological importance; its link with Tradition and with cultural and historical data, both universal and local and its sociological and anthropological impact.
8. A study and application of the concept of organic continuity, of its theological consequences and of its sociological and anthropological impact.
9. A bringing together of the different *general* criteria of the reform, or the conservation, of the liturgy, presented in different texts of the Magisterium, in order to avoid contradictory interpretations.

10. A study of the next intrinsic criteria of liturgical reform, and of their conditions for application.
11. In a full and comparative study of the texts and ritual, to put, honestly, the question of whether the traditional rite, with various additions and applications but without radical change, could correspond to the expectations in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

Conclusion

Engaging with the liturgy is the same as engaging with Christ himself, and if I wanted to summarise the equilibrium to be attained in the two poles of reflection to which I have referred, then there is no better way than to repeat the formula of Saint Leo, on the hypostatic union: *Non commixtionem passus, neque divisionem*.²⁴ After that, my practical conclusion would be a call, not only for a courageous patience, but also, from my humble point of view, a call for more study – and serious studies – in order to make the prayer of Saint Francis de Sales our own.²⁵

My God, give me patience ... to accept what cannot be changed.

My God, give me courage ... to change what can be changed.

My God, give me wisdom ... to discern one from the other.

Notes

¹ *The Fifth Instruction for the Right Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council: On the Use of Vernacular Languages in the Publication of the Books of the Roman Liturgy* (2001).

² [These are the French words used by Fr Charbel and are retained here because they more powerfully resonate with the original Latin verbs *rumpere* – to break, and *irrupere* – to burst in/break in, than do most English translations of the terms. DB]

³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para. 1207.

⁴ Joseph Ratzinger, *La Célébration de la Foi*, Tequi, 1985: 82. [English translation: *The Feast of Faith: Approaches to a Theology of the Liturgy*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1986.]

⁵ Père Gelinéau, *Demain la liturgie: Essai*, Cerf, Paris 1979:11. [English translation: *The Liturgy Today and Tomorrow*, Darton, Longman & Todd & Paulist Press, London & New York, 1979.]

⁶ Joseph Ratzinger, *Ma vie. Souvenirs 1927-1977*, Fayard, 1998 [when talking about the interdiction on the use of the old Missal] uses the phrase *a opéré une rupture dans l'histoire liturgique* [English translation *Milestones: Memoirs 1927-1977*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1998, pp. 147-148].

⁷ John-Paul II, address [on the 10th anniversary of] *Ecclesia Dei*, 26 October 1998.

⁸ [I have translated the French inclusive “we” used by Fr Charbel throughout his paper, with “I”. In so doing I am conscious of the traditional Benedictine protocol of a Monk not referring to himself individually as “I”, and also of the inclusive “we” still favoured by French scholarly discourse, and I wish Fr Charbel no disrespect in changing a practice rarely seen now in the English academic world. DB]

⁹ Joseph Ratzinger, *Ma vie. Souvenirs 1927-1977*, Fayard 1998 [English translation *Milestones: Memoirs 1927-1977*, p. 149].

¹⁰ For example, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* several times refers to the principles of a “true and authentic liturgical spirit” but it does not seem to define this.

¹¹ *Institutiones Liturgiques*, second edition 4 vols, Paris, 1878 onwards, vol. III p. 504.

¹² *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, para. 23; *Liturgiam Authenticam*, para. 4.

¹³ See Part I no V.

¹⁴ [At the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy in Rome.]

¹⁵ *L'Église, une sainte...*, pp. 143-144 as quoted by Jean-Guy Pagé, in *Qui est l'Église?* vol. 2, *L'Église, corps du Christ et communion*, Bellarmin, 1985.

¹⁶ [Apostolic Letter (Motu Proprio) *Tra le sollecitudini*, November 22, 1903.]

¹⁷ *La Croix* 16th July 2001, in an interview with Jean-Marie Guénois, p.16.

¹⁸ See, *Fides et Ratio*, paras. 22 & 46.

¹⁹ See, *La Célébration de la Foi*, Téquì, 1985 [English translation: *The Feast of Faith: Approaches to a Theology of the Liturgy*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1986].

²⁰ For example, the problem of the mutual shaking of hands for the *pax*: there is no “interruption” in relation to the way this gesture is used in the world, even with enemies.

²¹ Cf, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2655.

²² [This section was placed as appendix 1 in the original paper.]

²³ [This section was placed as appendix 2 in the original paper.]

²⁴ The Antiphon [for the *Benedictus*] from Lauds for the Feast of the Circumcision. [The full antiphon reads: *Mirabile mysterium declaratur hodie: innovantur naturae, Deus homo factus est id quod fuit permansit, et quod non erat assumpsit: non commixtionem passus, neque divisionem*. A wonderful mystery is declared today: is renewed by a birth; God is made man and remains what he was, and takes on what he was not: suffering neither intermingling nor division.]

²⁵ Quoted as being from Chesterton in *Una Voce*, no. 210, January/February 2000, p 6.



We have come to believe in God's love: in these words the Christian can express the fundamental decision of his life. Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction. (Deus caritas est, n. 1)

Editor's Corner

Many thanks to those lay readers who kindly supplied the back issues of *The Priest* missing from our archives!

Any reader who would like to extend the gratis support that the Editor draws upon in respect of the ACCC web page and other electronic communication, kindly contact the Editor, outlining your skills!

There has been a welcome increase in donations income with the payment of “dues”. Your Editor retains records of donations by person, and they are part of his list to offer holy Masses where other obligations do not obtain. Please be aware that your donations fund not only requested subscriptions from the Pacific Islands and other mission countries, but also fund our “no charge” subscription policy for seminarians who are associate members.

Please also remember that the Editor will consider reader contributions for publication, from both clerical and lay readers – although this is more difficult where there is not electronic communication for the editorial process.

Please also consider the Confraternity when drawing-up your “will”. Our National Chairman would happily discuss terms and conditions for bequests of money and/or ecclesiastic goods. See insert slip for further details. Again, many thanks to Mrs Robyn Dixon of Ignatius House Services for excellent help with this issue. (Editor)

Where have all the boys gone?



Sanctuary servers at Ss Peter and Paul Cathedral (now “Old Cathedral”), Goulburn, during the 1960s

“It helps me get closer to God; it helps me to concentrate; I like helping the younger boys; it is good to serve the liturgy; I appreciate the fellowship; the thurible is beautiful; I like the seriousness and the discipline”

(Reply of a 16-year-old to the question about why he likes serving the sanctuary) (Ed.)

The lead photograph was taken in Ss. Peter and Paul Old Cathedral, Goulburn, during the 1960s – a church that is now typical of most substantial churches in Australia, with some desultory sanctuary serving by a few men of senior years and some children, mainly girls. The typical dress in such settings is poorly fitting and poorly maintained albs – a garment that traditionally served as an under-garment (under a vestment), and that has now become something of a “unisex” vestment, and a vesture that has displaced choir dress. The boys in the lead photograph are shown wearing soutanes (cassocks) with surplice and with altar footwear (not the now common running shoes!). The astonishing thing is that within only a few years of photographs of this era, the traditional server outfit was widely displaced by poorly home-made and ill-fitting albs that well-matched the tawdry vestments that were quickly replacing classic vestments, as the era of “dumbing down” gathered pace. Why did all this happen so quickly?

An adequate answer to this *Why* is elusive. I do not know a single priest of my diocese who straddles the two recent eras (of before and after the cultural shifts that surrounded Vatican II) who has a serious interest in liturgy in the aesthetic sense. Almost to a man, they seem happy in the kind of vestment introduced to Australia with the outdoor Masses of the 1986 visit of the late Holy Father (a short and quickly machine made article of coarse synthetic cream with a red stripe as the only adornment), or with home-made style things that often are adorned with garish and poorly executed appliqué designs. A vestment maker friend of mine calls this “holy poverty” (he is being ironic, not commendatory!). Everything bespeaks of the impoverishment of the liturgy.

What has this to do with *Where have all the boys gone?* It seems to me that it has *much* to do with the departure of boys from the sanctuary and the failure to attract boys to the sanctuary. The style of liturgy and the things that surround the manner of liturgical celebration now typically lack seriousness. That is not to say that they typically are comic. “Boring” is a dreadful word to use of the Sacred Liturgy, but, sadly, it often fits. Dignified execution of the liturgy is rare. At best, the concern now typically is with “minimalism”. Everything reflects this minimalism, and a general “protestant” air prevails in church design (or re-design – “wreckovation” as it is sometimes aptly called),

Dear brother priests, I ask you ... to show a special care for altar boys, who represent a kind of “garden” of priestly vocations. The group of altar boys, under your guidance as part of the parish community, can be given a valuable experience of Christian education and become a kind of pre-seminary. Help the parish, as a family made up of families, to look upon the altar servers as their own children, like “olive shoots around the table” of Jesus Christ, the Bread of life.

(Pope John Paul II, Letter to Priests, Holy Thursday 2004, para. 6.)

church furnishings, attire and deportment of ministers, hymnody, etc., etc. This is what I mean by a typical “lack of seriousness”.

There is nothing for boys to execute that seems serious, that seems a matter of professionalism, that requires the numbers that form a cohesive and disciplined group. Often, too, it is a “being up front” matter, where the congregation can be eyed – something that more appeals to girls, at least passingly. And the priests do not take a serious attitude toward the boys. There is little cultivation of boys; little attention to boys; little time spent with boys; little demonstration that they are assisting in a serious matter – the glorification of God in the sacred liturgy of the Church.

One thing that confuses me in understanding these changes is that most Catholic laity prior to Vatican II experienced what might be called “low Mass”, and the “solemn Mass” was not much experienced. This perhaps, in part, explains why so few priests of the “transition generation” show much aesthetic interest in liturgy or aesthetic training in matters liturgical. Yet, however, the lead photo is arresting because it illustrates not a “half dozen servers’ outfits” that may be donned when serving a “low Mass”; rather, it shows a very large number of well made and generally well fitting outfits. (The author has a few worn examples now in possession.) This indicates a strong commitment to the boys who serve the sanctuary and to the importance of that service. This *commitment* is now widely lacking. Few priests and laity put in the time and resources to train

and nurture boys in this way. There are exceptions, but they are rare.

What is still possible is illustrated in the footer photograph that shows boys ranging from 10 to 20 in my church. They all present in “short back and sides” haircuts of disciplined youth and with black shoes (not all well polished, I admit), and they are enthusiastic about their “proper” altar servers’ gear! They are great fun “boys” (in inverted commas, because the age range spans “men”), but the tenor of their serving is “serious”; serious business that they want to do well, and serious business that involves them as a disciplined *group*. I don’t say that they all have a deeply spiritual attitude in what they are doing, and their interests may be somewhat “boys’ interests”. But I do say, as the documents of the Church teach, that this is an important and necessary work in the cultivation of vocations to the Sacred Ministry, as well as important for nurturing boys who will be fine natural fathers and who will raise fine Catholic families, and whose sanctuary service edifies the People of God and glorifies God with the worthy celebration of the Sacred Mysteries.

Where have all the boys gone? is a complex question, and the retrospective “answers” here canvassed are far from complete. Also the prospective answers (the answers that look forward to understand the future) are not complete. But “a picture speaks a thousand words”, and so the header and footer pictures are left to “speak”

Editor



It is altogether laudable to maintain the noble custom by which boys or youths, customarily termed servers, provide service of the altar after the manner of acolytes, and receive catechesis regarding their function in accordance with their power of comprehension. Nor should it be forgotten that a great number of sacred ministers over the course of centuries have come from among boys such as these. (Redemptionis Sacramentum 2004, para. 42)

Vocations will certainly not be lacking if our manner of life is truly priestly (Pope John Paul II, 13 March 2005)



Sanctuary servers in the Editor’s church, Christ the King, Taralga NSW, 2006 (Editor on far right)

problems with the understanding of Scripture and Tradition and Revelation. The best place to find an account of this is in a work he wrote in the 1960s entitled *Revelation and Tradition*. It was co-authored by Rahner, but there are discrete essays in the work by Ratzinger. Another contemporary author who has been critical of the Suarezian position in a manner consistent with Ratzinger's critique is the American Jesuit John Montag. He argues that here, as with nature and grace, the thought of Suarez represents a radical distortion of classical Thomism.

So, I think one important part of Ratzinger's work, which has not been very widely discussed, is his enthusiastic embrace of *Dei Verbum*.

Ratzinger's shift in position on Episcopal Conferences.

In his essays on the Council written in the 1960s Ratzinger also made the point that Frings was critical of episcopal conferences being treated as juridical institutions in their own right. Frings believed that while episcopal conferences are a good idea, they're just like conferences of any other group of people in society; it's an opportunity for bishops to get together and to share their problems with one another, but the Bishops' Conference should not be perceived as having any special juridical status in the life of the Church. The power of the Ordinary in his own diocese should be paramount. Initially, at the time of the Council, Ratzinger didn't take that position. This is one example of where he really does do an "about turn". Frings warned that there was a danger that if a Bishops' Conference had a permanent secretariat, then bishops of smaller dioceses would become dependent on the secretariat, and the diocese would no longer be run by the bishop but by some distant bureaucracy.

Ratzinger on *Gaudium et spes*. In the context of *Gaudium et spes*, Ratzinger describes some of the language of Part 2 as Pelagian, and he also criticises the treatment of conscience and human freedom. He actually says that the treatment of the theme of freedom is one of the least satisfactory in the whole document; and in the context of conscience he made a "proto-Pell" sort of complaint. What he finds unsatisfactory is simply the way the concrete form of the claim of conscience is dealt with, the insufficient account taken of the limits of conscience. He also notes that while much is made of Aquinas's thesis of the obligatory force of an erroneous conscience, this thesis is nullified by the fact that Aquinas is convinced that error is culpable. In subsequent papers, Ratzinger has written at length about the notion of conscience and in effect he says, "Yes we must follow our conscience, that is true; but if our conscience permits us to do something which is wrong we are still culpable." The locus of the defect is in the formation of the conscience.

Ratzinger on "conscience" in *Gaudium et spes*. In Ratzinger's final summation on the contribution of Cardinal Frings to the Second Vatican Council, he draws a parallel between Frings and the Venerable John Henry Newman. He observes that both wanted to lead the Church beyond all external obedience to authority, and to a trust which has the source of its strength in the insight of a belief in conscience. This relates to another theme which we find in Ratzinger's contemporary works – his criticism of "moralism" – or what von Balthasar called the disposition of a Kantian-Jansenism. Balthasar's cousin, Peter Henrici SJ, describes the disposition as the mentality by which

the practice of Christian life consists largely of duties that are performed because one is obliged to do so. Moved by a kind of Christian Pharisaism, Christian existence is viewed as a meritorious achievement that God commands and by virtue of which one is able to please him. Pope Benedict wants to change the emphasis in Catholic ethics away from *duty* – which is very Kantian – towards *love*. He's not saying that duty is irrelevant, but he thinks that there's something very sad about the practice of the Catholic faith when people show no joy in it and no understanding of why certain practices are either highly commended or proscribed. He believes that ethics and liturgy go together and that the two have become separated.

Notwithstanding Ratzinger's criticism of the treatment of conscience and freedom in *Gaudium et spes*, he of course remains in favour of much of the document, especially those earlier sections about marriage and family life to which Karol Wojtyla contributed, and above all to the theology of para 22. This paragraph is intensely Christocentric and appears to have been taken word by word from de Lubac's book, *Catholicism*. It is said that Pope John Paul II quoted this one paragraph more than any other in his homilies. Both John Paul II and Benedict XVI interpret *Gaudium et spes* from the perspective of paragraph 22. Its meaning is often summarised in the sentence that the human person has been made in the image of God to grow into the image of Christ. Once this paragraph is taken as providing the hermeneutical key to the rest of the document, the danger of reading the document in a Pelagian mode is reduced.

Summarising Pope Benedict on Vatican II. In summary, like Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict believes that it is his duty to implement the Council. He is not hostile to the Council as such. But unlike with John Paul II, one does find numerous criticisms of the ways that different ideas were presented in the Conciliar documents in the pre-papal works of Pope Benedict. In particular one finds very direct criticism of the People of God concept. But there's no way that he sees the Council as either a long-term disaster for the Church or alternatively a kind of rupture in the Church's tradition. There's no rupture of the tradition with a capital "T"; but there certainly is, in a sense, a rupture with dualistic/extrinsicist elements in pre-Conciliar Thomism (especially in the presentation of nature and grace, faith and reason, scripture and tradition) and a rupture with the pedagogy of scholastic manuals. He is very strongly in favour of what has now come to be called the *Communio* position.

The final point I would make is simply that in the context of ecumenism he was always very strongly aware of the Church as herself the universal sacrament of salvation. He has never at any time had any sympathy for understandings of the Church that would reduce her to a purely human entity, and that solidity is reflected of course in *Dominus Iesus*.

That's a very compressed re-statement of the sweep of issues covered in this talk....



Presentation of this paper would not be possible but for the assiduity of Rev Fr John J Walter is taping Conference proceedings, and the astonishing typescripting of the tape by Mrs Marie Swanson of Toowong Office Services. (Editor)

was, to see if it had any relationship with the idea of revelation. Interestingly, the second examiner Fr Michael Schmaus, rejected the thesis.¹⁷ The upshot of it all was that the thesis was reworked. The early sections with which Schmaus was in disagreement were omitted and the third section on Bonaventure's theology of history was expanded. The thesis was re-submitted and the public lecture that concluded the habilitation process was given and the faculty granted the habilitation. The thesis was published and is available in English translation.¹⁸

The nature of revelation. The key point of disagreement between Ratzinger and Schmaus concerned the nature of revelation. Ratzinger argued that St Bonaventure presented the view that God reveals himself, and that revelation is to be understood as the *act* in which God encounters human beings, rather than as merely propositions about God. Ratzinger's position was to be completely vindicated in the teaching of *Dei Verbum*, the Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation of the Second Vatican Council.

Salvation history and metaphysics. The core of Ratzinger's work on Bonaventure concerns the problem of the relationship of salvation-history to metaphysics. This was an area that was becoming crucial in the dialogue that was beginning to take place between Catholics and Lutherans. Once again, using the hermeneutic circle, Ratzinger turned to St Bonaventure to assist. And, as one contributor to the website, *Ressourcement: Restoration in Catholic Theology*, recently said about this whole issue, "What better way could there be to do so than interrogating a Scholastic theologian of the high mediaeval period who was, at the same time, an upholder of the salvation-historical approach?"¹⁹

Life as a Professor of Theology

Upon receipt of his habilitation Father Ratzinger was named a lecturer at the University of Munich, and on 1st January 1958 he was named Professor of fundamental theology and dogma at the College of Philosophy and Theology in Freising. In his *Memoirs* Ratzinger speaks very candidly about the human struggle he had with the actions of Schmaus. He even states that the distance between himself and Schmaus resulted in his coming closer to Karl Rahner. The gulf between himself and Schmaus was healed in the 1970s and he considered him a friend.

Early years of teaching. In 1959 he took up the position of ordinary professor of fundamental theology at the University of Bonn, and his first years as professor are captured very well by Gianni Valente writing in *30 Giorni (30 Days)* in March 2006:

If there was a distinctive feature to Ratzinger's lectures, it had nothing to do with a particular display of academic erudition. The language had a limpid simplicity that allowed the core of the questions faced, even the most complex, to be glimpsed with immediacy. Roman Angulanza, one of the first students from the times in Bonn, says: "He had reformulated, as it were, the way of giving lectures. He would read the lectures in the kitchen to his sister Maria, who was an intelligent person but hadn't studied theology. And if the sister showed she liked them, it was the sign for him that the lectures were all right."²⁰

The professorship in Bonn was followed by appointments to Munster in 1963, Tübingen in 1966 and Regensburg in 1969. During this time he made considerable contributions to the theological community. He was the author of articles, books and addresses that made a considerable contribution to theological insight. He was the theological advisor to Cardinal Frings of Cologne during the sessions of Vatican II, and he was named as a *peritus* to the Council. He was very influential in the protracted process that brought the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum* to fruition. His own remarkable scholarship in this area was crucial.

Post Vatican II experience

He became aware during the course of the Council of a change occurring amongst theologians and even bishops. Many theologians began to think that *all* was open to question. There seemed to be nothing stable. An anti-Roman attitude entered into the minds of many theologians. Even the bishops were beginning to suffer a crisis of identity. Since theologians had played such an important and specialised role at the Council, many bishops began to think they could not curtail theologians. The alternate *magisterium of the scholars* was being promoted. Amongst fellow faculty members, Ratzinger sensed the tensions and disagreements that were now "par for the course". The Existentialist influence of Bultmann and Heidegger that had been so real in the German world before the Council was now considered bourgeois, and was replaced by Marxist analysis. Ratzinger had always been critical and chose carefully from the thinking of the Existentialists. He particularly rejected, and fought against, their reductionist ideas about the idea of God.

Marxist messianism. This was nothing in comparison to the Marxist thought which took over. Theology was politicised into a Marxist messianism. At first this movement was one advocated by the students and he expected the faculties to resist it and counter-argue, but within a short period the faculties were the very centres of its promotion. It was at this stage that the scholarly question marks that Ratzinger had over some theologian friends were confirmed as being real and serious differences. From here one can see a mutual distancing between Ratzinger and the likes of Küng, Rahner and Metz. On the other hand he was drawn into friendship and scholarly association with Lutheran theologians who like himself were wanting to bear witness to a common faith in the living God and in Christ, the incarnate Word (eg, Jürgen Moltmann, Ulrich Wickert and Wolfgang Beyerhaus).

The move to Regensburg. Despite this tumultuous time Ratzinger was able to produce his most widely read work. In 1967 he realised the dream he had had for over ten years of delivering a lecture series for students of all faculties under the title *Introduction to Christianity*.²¹ This later became the book translated into seventeen languages and read to this very day. Then, in 1969, Ratzinger accepted an offer that had been made earlier to take up the Chair of dogma in Regensburg. He did so, he states, to remove himself from the controversial atmosphere of Tübingen so that he could further develop his theology in peace in a less agitated environment. He did not want his theology to have to be a counter response to error. It was also in this period at Regensburg that Ratzinger became a member of the International Papal Theological Commission. This commission brought together some of the finest theological minds that had been active at the Council.

Ratzinger describes its membership as rather “liberal”. Yet many of these theologians were having the same misgivings about the way theology was changing. Men such as Henri de Lubac, Phillipe Delhay, Jorge Medina, Le Guillou, Louis Bouyer, and Hans Urs von Balthasar were fellow travellers. Ratzinger believed that Yves Congar tried to be a conciliator and mediate amongst the opposites. Rahner on the other hand “for the most part allowed himself to be ‘sworn in’ according to the progressive slogans, and allowed himself to be pushed into adventuresome political positions difficult to reconcile with his own transcendental philosophy.”²²

The group of theologians who were intent on doing theology on the basis of proper sources and methods were then brought together under the leadership of von Balthasar to produce the international theological journal, *Communio*.

Ecclesiology

All of us are aware of the many articles, addresses and books that Joseph Ratzinger has produced, especially those in the period after his appointment as Prefect of the Congregation for the Faith. These works are the fruit of the earlier research and academic work of Ratzinger. In his professional theological career he has written on a range of theological and liturgical topics. By far and away the most frequent and dominant area has been that of the Church, closely followed by the theology of Revelation. It would be impossible in the time allotted me to enter into a detailed analysis of Ratzinger’s ecclesiology now. That is a paper on its own. But I will make a summation now of the legacy that he has made thus far, and as we know there is more to come as the now Pope Benedict makes his contribution to the papacy. As Zachary Hayes OFM, has written so clearly:

The ecclesiology helps clarify the positive possibilities together with the limits that he would place on all these areas of discussion. Independently of his work at the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, Ratzinger stands out as a major Catholic theologian whose work represents an important contribution to Roman Catholic theology in the modern era.²³

The Papal Agenda

Many commentators have been trying to make predictions about a possible papal agenda or program for Benedict XVI. We have heard the extremes from the agenda of a pope in jackboots who will stomp over the heads of dissident theologians and bishops, to the agenda of continuing without alteration the agenda that John Paul II had initiated. But what are the indicators at this juncture of Benedict’s agenda? I am of the conviction that he will do what he believes to be necessary for the Church of this time. His convictions about the sacramental nature of the Church, about the need for Christ to hold absolute centrality in the life of the Church and for the Church to carry out her mission unapologetically for the sake of the world, will see the agenda for this papacy be a “return to the basics”. The first encyclical letter *Deus Caritas est* is not a warm fuzzy cop-out on the part of the Pope, but the signal that all that he learnt about the heart and nature of the Church from his dialogue with Sts Augustine and Bonaventure needs to be affirmed and applied in the Church today. We will see a teacher pope explaining to an uninformed Church community the wonder and reality of life in Christ. Like his theology, he will take us back to the sources. He will pose the questions that we have today to the Tradition that is ours.

Catechetical instruction. The shape of the Curia that Benedict will have is in major formation now. He is a careful, thoughtful planner. Nothing will be done that is a knee-jerk reaction. His convictions about what is necessary today are indicated to us by his choice of topic for the Wednesday audience catechetical instruction. For the first months of his pontificate he continued and completed the series that Pope John Paul II had commenced on the Psalms. When this series was concluded Benedict chose the theme of *Christ and the Church* as his own new topic. So every Wednesday he has dedicated his catechesis to these themes. This series will be interrupted when he deems it necessary to reflect on a particular liturgical season or feast. The Liturgy, seasonal and sanctoral cycle are very much part of the agenda of his catechetics. The following comment from his first catechesis in this series gives us insight into what the Pope is about:

A slogan that was popular some years back: “Jesus yes, Church no”, is totally inconceivable with the intention of Christ. This individualistically chosen Jesus is an imaginary Jesus. We cannot have Jesus without the reality he created and in which he communicates himself. Between the Son of God-made-flesh and his Church there is a profound, unbreakable and mysterious continuity by which Christ is present today in his people. He is always contemporary with us. He is always contemporary with the Church, built on the foundation of the Apostles and lives in the succession of the Apostles. And this very community, in which he himself is always with us, is the reason for our joy. Yes, Christ is with us, the Kingdom of God is coming.²⁴

Questions about the Council. Another important address that invites careful reading is the Christmas address that Benedict gave to the Roman Curia on 22 December 2005.²⁵ It is a traditional address where the pope makes comment about the events of the year that is concluding, and further, makes very clear comment about the misinterpretation of the Council. He reflects on “What has been the result of the Council?”, “Was it well received?”, “What in the acceptance of the Council, was good and was inadequate or mistaken?” He goes on to make explicit reference to the dark shadows and problems, and singles out what he calls “the hermeneutic of discontinuity.” This places a split between the Church since the Council, and the Church before the Council. Vatican II – like Councils before it – must be read *within* the great Tradition of the Church that preceded it. There is one Church. The optimism that was displayed towards the world has been misplaced. A correct relationship to the world that involves *discernment* is the right path. It is an address that in itself offers a whole papal program.

Fundamental convictions. Lastly, we are awaiting the post synodal document on the Blessed Eucharist. Pope Benedict is well published in his thoughts about the sacred Liturgy. I am sure that this awaited document will add another piece to the program of Pope Benedict. From his earliest writings he has expressed his conviction about the centrality and importance of the Sacred Liturgy. This will most certainly be a key aspect of his papacy. In short, I detect that the fundamental convictions that a young Father Joseph Ratzinger had about the Church, theology and the Liturgy have never left him. In the course of the decades of professional academic life, episcopal ministry, prefecture of a Roman congregation and now as successor to the Apostle Peter, these fundamental convictions have been more finely honed and will be at the service of the Church as Pope Benedict XVI confirms his brothers in the faith.

Notes

- ¹ Ratzinger, J (1998), *Milestones: Memoirs 1927-1977* (Ignatius Press, San Francisco) p. 41-42.
 - ² [A reference to Hitler Youth, where "After passing all of the tests, each boy was entitled to wear the brown shirt bearing the *Jungvolk* insignia with a leather shoulder strap and the coveted Hitler Youth dagger bearing the inscription *Blut und Ehre* (Blood and Honor)." In December 1936 The Law concerning Hitler Youth was passed, requiring the compulsory education of German youth aged 10 and above (excluding Jews) to be educated solely through the Hitler Youth and thereby bringing to an effective end organisations like the Catholic Youth Organisation. See Walter S Zapotoczny "Rulers of the World: The Hitler Youth", <http://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/wwii/articles/hitleryouth.aspx>].
 - ³ *Milestones*, p. 42.
 - ⁴ *Milestones*, p. 44.
 - ⁵ Schmaus, Michael (1969-84), *Dogma*, Volumes I-VI. (Christian Classics & Sheed and Ward, Westminster & New York) 6 volumes.
 - ⁶ [This was first developed in 1838 by Christian Hermann Weisse and argues that the *Gospels of Matthew* and *Luke* used the *Gospel of Mark* and a lost document generally referred to as *Q* as their sources. This contrasts with the earlier Augustinian hypothesis *Matthew → Mark → Luke*].
 - ⁷ *Milestones*, p. 52.
 - ⁸ *Milestones*, p. 56.
 - ⁹ *Milestones*, p. 56.
 - ¹⁰ [by Fr. Glen Tattersall FSSP to be published in the next issue of this journal]
 - ¹¹ Ratzinger, J (1969), *Glaube, Geschichte und Philosophie. Zum Echo auf Einführung in das Christentum*, quoted in Nichols, A (1988) *The Theology of Joseph Ratzinger: An Introductory Study*, (T & T Clark, Edinburgh) p. 27.
 - ¹² http://atheism.about.com/library/glossary/aesthetics/bldef_hermeneuticcircle.htm.
 - ¹³ Cf, St Augustine, *Confessions*, VII, 10, 16.
 - ¹⁴ Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas est*, n 1.
 - ¹⁵ Eugène Portalié, "Augustine of Hippo", Jacques Maritain Center, www2.nd.edu/Departments/Maritain/etext/augustin.htm. For a shorter version of this work see "Works of St. Augustine of Hippo", *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, vol II 1907, on line edition 2003, www.newadvent.org/cathen/02089a.htm.
 - ¹⁶ Nichols (1988), *The Theology of Joseph Ratzinger*, p. 50.
 - ¹⁷ See, *Milestones*, p. 108.
 - ¹⁸ Ratzinger, J (1971), *The Theology of History in Saint Bonaventure* (Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago).
 - ¹⁹ <http://nouvelletheologie.blogspot.com/soo5/11/ratzinger-why-bonaventure-and-why.html>.
 - ²⁰ Gianni Valente (2006), "Tradition and Freedom: the Lectures of the Young Joseph", <http://www.30giorni.it/us/articolo.asp?id=10284>. For extracts see <http://www.ratzingerfanclub.com/blog/2006/05/pope-benedict-xvi-roundup.html>.
 - ²¹ Cf, Ratzinger, J (1969), *Introduction to Christianity* (Seabury, New York).
 - ²² *Milestones*, p. 143.
 - ²³ Zachary Hayes, "Joseph Ratzinger: Theological Legacy", www.ctu.edu/Learn_at_CTU/Reflections_and_Readings/Pope_Benedict_XVIx_Joseph_Ratzinger_.html.
 - ²⁴ Benedict XVI, Wednesday Catechesis of 15 March, 2006. *L'Osservatore Romano* N12- 22 March 2006, p. 11.
 - ²⁵ See, www.vatican.va/.../benedict_xvi/speeches/2005/december/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20051222_roman-curia_en.html.
- (Article sub-headings are due to the Associate Editor.)



Ars celebrandi

Pope Benedict XVI

The text below is drawn from an English translation of the Holy Father's extempore response in Italian to the question of a priest of the Diocese of Albano, Italy, during a meeting with clergy. The question concerned special attention to the theology and the celebration practice of the liturgy.

(Credit: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 17 September 2006, page 10)

The first dimension is that *celebratio* is prayer and a conversation with God ... The first condition is this: we ourselves must interiorise the structure, the words of the liturgy, the Word of God. Thus, our celebration truly becomes a celebration "with" the Church: our hearts are enlarged and we are not therefore doing anything but "with" the Church, in conversation with God. It seems to me that people truly feel that we converse with God, with them, and that in this common prayer we attract others; in communion with the children of God we attract others ...

Thus, the fundamental element of the true *ars celebrandi* ["art of celebration of the liturgy"] is this consonance, this harmony between what we say with our lips and what we think with our hearts. The *Sursum corda* ["Lift up your hearts!"], which is a very ancient word of the Liturgy, should come before the Preface [and is a] path for our speaking and thinking. We must raise our hearts to the Lord, not only as a ritual response but as an expression of what is happening in this heart that is uplifted, and also lifts up others.

In other words, the *ars celebrandi* is not intended as an invitation to some sort of theatre or show, but to an interiority that makes itself felt and becomes acceptable and evident to the people taking part. Only if they see that this is not an exterior or spectacular *ars* – we are not actors! – but the expression of the journey of our hearts that attracts their hearts too, will the Liturgy become beautiful, will it become the communion with the Lord of all who are present.

... Things can only go better if the Eucharistic Prayer is said well and with the correct pauses for silence, if it is said with the interiority but also with art of speaking.

It follows that the recitation of the Eucharistic Prayer requires a moment of special attention if it is to be spoken in such a way that it involves others. I believe we should also find the opportunities in catechesis, in homilies and in other circumstances, to explain this Eucharistic Prayer well to the People of God so that they can follow the important moments – the account and the words of the Institution, the prayer for the living and the dead, the thanksgiving to the Lord and the *epiclesis* – if the community is truly to be involved in this prayer.

Thus, the words must be pronounced properly. There must then be an adequate preparation. Altar servers must know what to do; lectors must be truly experienced speakers. The choir, the singing should be rehearsed; and let the altar be properly decorated. All this, even if it is a matter of many practical things, is part of the *ars celebrandi*.

But to conclude, the fundamental element of this is the art of entering into communion with the Lord, which we prepare for as priests throughout our lives.





Priestly encouragement of young religious vocations

From the Editor. For seven years now, this journal has given prominence to the promotion of young vocations to the sacred ministry of the Church. It is time now to take a further focus. A few years back, on a 25th anniversary of an ordination when I was viewing photographs of that ordination in my church, I was shocked to notice that the religious present were all peripheral in the photographic record of that event. It seemed to me to disclose the perspective of a generation of priests and bishops who have shown little alertness to religious life and to vocations to religious life. That especially shocked me because my own priestly vocation was prompted by a religious woman, and my vocation has matured with the loving support of religious women (rather than of priests nor bishops). My perception thus is one that sees religious vocations as integral to priestly vocation. But it is a “two-way street”, a symbiotic relationship, and it is commonly through priests that God calls forth and nurtures vocations to religious life. I thus want through this journal to encourage priests in the essential work of promoting and nurturing religious vocations. This is an urgent work. Religious life in Australia is in crisis. For a whole generation, it has largely been adrift, and few bishops or priests have given much serious attention to the needs for renewal. It is to this topic that I now turn.

“The cover of the book”. The lead photograph is selected off the websites of religious congregations of women that are growing in the USA. There is no where in Australia where one could take such a group photograph of “active” or “apostolic” religious. One of the things that is prevalent in the USA “success stories” is the religious habit. Clearly, it is now passé to push back the veil so that it sits like a hat on the head and shows off the hair (oh! for the return of secure forehead caps, and the end to fiddling with the veil, which is as annoying as a priest who fiddles with his whiskers!). The first-generation of habit revisions of the 1960s and 1970s now look decidedly dated period pieces. Properly interpreted, the revisions then were to shed period pieces (quaint aspects of religious wear that were, say, 19c or, say, 19c French), rather than to move to a different ephemeral quaintness. Most religious in Australia have shed *any* habit, and would probably scorn these remarks, but their scorn will die with them. The fact remains that the habit is part of what defines religious life (*Code of Canon Law* #669.1). It follows from this fact that priestly support needs to encourage a *ressourcement*, a return to sources, so that young people – especially young women – may encounter enduring forms of religious life and respond with the gift of self.

Marketing “the book”. The lead photographs are supplied because congregations have “marketed” themselves using the contemporary media. This has its pitfalls. Religious

founders often fled “the world”, rather than engaged “the world”. Whether electronic communications and marketing are properly engaged or not depends really on its *purpose*. Mother Angelica’s EWTN network is a quite worldly business, and successful, but its purpose is “other worldly” – and that is probably the crucial point, “other worldliness”. Mother the Venerable Teresa of Calcutta engaged worldly means also, but for the purpose of funding her works of mercy, and “other worldly” purposes. The reason why I put electronic marketing up-front is because that is precisely where young people of today may start looking. Moreover, because most grow up without *any* exposure to classical religious life, electronic means may be their *first* encounter. Electronic media is of strategic significance in our era, and even the most reclusive monasteries often have sophisticated and highly pictorial websites. (The enclosed Tyburn nuns have probably received more Australian vocations than any other congregation, and the Tyburn website exemplifies the points made above – www.tyburnconvent.org.uk)

Such site sophistication and “busy-ness” could easily become counter-productive, and go against its purposes. What the site communicates needs to be controlled by the religious congregation; but, except where there is a sufficient core of in-house skills, it needs to be *outsourced* for viability. Even a simple public domain e-mail address can be overwhelming, with much “chat” communication and even waves of “spam” distracting religious from living religious lives. Priests need to be alert to this, and to be channels for linking-up lay expertise available from their parish congregations, so that modern communications can serve the growth of religious congregations or houses, without the damaging effects of busy-ness and distraction on the lives of the religious there being promoted/marketed.

What’s in “the book”. Prior to the modern period, religious life had to cater for the illiterate and poorly literate. With the rise of universal literacy, the need for a class of religious saying only the Little Office of Our Lady diminished. The Divine Praises in the recitation of the Daily Office and Holy Mass are able more clearly to stand out in the lives of religious. Yet what is striking in the declining religious congregations is the abandonment of the chapel and choir for the prayer room (and the television room!), and the altar and tabernacle of God for coloured candles and “nicely arranged” bright soft cloth (what I call “Jezebel cloth”!). Scandalously, it is now not unusual for priests to arrive at clergy conferences without their breviary! (*not* ACCC Conferences!). Any priest visiting a religious house needs to make his mark by public observation of the Divine Office, and, with added emphasis, by dignified



Header photographs on both pages are of “active” religious sisters, drawn from the web pages respectively of the Carmelite Sister of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus of Los Angeles (www.carmelitevocation.homestead.com), and novices of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, Michigan, USA (www.sistersofmary.org) (postulants appear without veils). For Conventual Dominican Sisters in Australia, see <http://users.dragnet.com.au/~veritas/>. (Credit: www.religiouslife.com)

celebration of the Sacred Mysteries. One priest told me that he said to religious sisters about to gather around the altar for the celebration of Mass, “I am not about to conduct a cooking demonstration, Sisters; you may return to choir!” Better, however, not to celebrate Mass if it is not to be a worthy celebration. The congregations that are growing are those that place the worthy celebration of the liturgy at the heart of their lives. Since religious sisters (and, please God, religious brothers also) cannot supply Holy Mass, worthy conventual celebration of the Sacred Mysteries is a key ministry of priests to religious. Where opportunity offers, this needs to be a priority in priestly life.

“The book” in the world. The recovery of religious life and of women’s religious life is being led by monastic houses, and since the monastery is the most primitive form of religious life, this is to be expected. Missionary works and works of mercy have however mainly been undertaken by religious, especially in “mission fields” and in eras of change leading to social displacements and greater needs for works of mercy. Nowadays the mission fields are “at home” and in an era of welfare state failure and bureaucratic strangling, the “apostolic life” takes a new urgency. This, I believe, is well recognised by our present Holy Father who in Part II of *Deus Caritas est* gives some prominence to the need for the Church’s works of charity to be led and implemented by consecrated persons. A cursory look at contemporary CEO and executive job advertisements for “Catholic charities” displays organisations that operate on corporate business models and where the competitive commercial salaries are commensurate with the market sector. The rise of Catholic education and Catholic welfare was predicated on sacrificial religious lives that provided the freedom for service delivery along lines different from government and market sectors. This freedom needs to be retrieved, and urgent needs retrieval.

The signs of retrieval are barely present in Australia. Often enough in the history of the Church, the catalyst of dynamic change was not the hierarchy, but of charismatic religious. Rarely, however, have these lead religious been able to flourish without priestly support. So many priests nowadays are without vision. Only this year I was speaking with a priest of my diocese who has a sister in religion and who said, “Your [parish] convent has, of course, been sold”, and who was astonished to hear my reply, “Far from it; it has been refurbished and will, please God, be inhabited by observant religious as soon as I win episcopal approval!”

Priests must be pro-active in a vision of apostolic works

by religious, and must preach for consecrated apostolic vocations. Without this priestly vision, the hard path of recovery seems unlikely to be trod.

“The book” in community. Many secular (diocesan) priests are effective with little by way of regular clerical community. Rarely will apostolic religious be effective without a regular conventual life and apostolic work that is a work of community. Most congregations in Australia that are formally of apostolic religious, in practice live as though at best they were secular institutes. Observe the lives of the typical “sister parish coordinator”, the sister “pastoral associate”, the sister “director of mission”, etc., and these lives never reproduce themselves; there will be no subsequent generation of such “sisters”.

It is well that priests make this recognition and choose collaboration only with those who by the manner of their lives give promise of future generations. Priests act counterproductively for the recovery of religious life when they take a convenient half-generation-only collaboration that draws a religious away from works that are works of a religious congregation. Clergy who engage such collaboration are actually being partner to religious decay. Priests (and bishops) have to make this recognition, and confine collaboration with religious to kinds that promote authentic apostolic religious life and work. To do otherwise is to collaborate with the decline and death of apostolic religious life. This is what has been happening, and this has to cease. This is a necessary pre-condition to priestly assistance in promoting future apostolic religious.

Postscript. A great tragedy of our era is of religious women and men who are now aged and who have lost or been deprived of the dignity of religious. There are many women who have lived long and heroic religious lives who are confined by and worn down by a small set of those who are 10 or 20 years younger than themselves and who ham-fistedly and year-by-year “reform” the congregation to a deformation that bears no resemblance to its founding charism. It is difficult to see how priests can lift the burden of these aged victims whose lives are controlled by an ideologist set. I have strung out a “book” metaphor in this article, and used it to cover but some of the needed strategic actions of priests. But I don’t know how priests may do something effective to help these aged religious women (mostly women). It is however something that we should continue to think and pray about; they need our kindness and respect. (Editor)



section, absorbing its challenging spirituality. I still have it, and I hope I have something too of the purity of its spirit.

The priests who taught all our classes were superb men, dedicated to their school apostolate. They encompassed the entire range of personality from the eccentric bookworm to the footy jock in a collar; but priests they were, and unmistakably so. Why I did not enter the Marists is a mystery, and anyway, too long a story. I applied to the Jesuits in Australia.

When I left New Zealand the following January for the Jesuit Novitiate I did so with the words of Campion's Brag still ringing in my ear, still firing me for the life ahead, as it fires me still:

My charge is of free cost

- *to preach the Gospel*
- *to minister the Sacraments*
- *to instruct the simple*
- *to reprove sinners*
- *to confute errors*
- *in brief to crie alarme spiritual against foul vice and proud ignorance wherewith many my dear countrymen are abused.*

The language is only slightly of another era. Otherwise it is simple, direct and passionate. Campion saw clearly the crisis of his time: a magnificent Church crumbling in two generations, not unlike our own time, though for different reasons. What a superb Mission Statement it would make for us now! All that is missing is "collaborative, inclusive ministry" and "consultative Pastoral approach." – those weasel words that you soon learn are dropped the very instant you depart from the party line.

Jesuit formation

My years of Jesuit formation saw little contact with diocesan clergy. My reintroduction to them was in Sydney where I had my first appointment and was soon elected to what was then called the Senate of Priests, and then to its executive which was chaired by the then Father John Heaps. Coming from the classroom as I did, the men on the Senate impressed me by their earthy realism, mixing as they did with all walks and ranks of life, inside the Church and often outside in civic encounters, mixed marriages and the like. I respected them for it, and liked them for it. The battle-lines in the late 60s and early 70s were not yet drawn, and I was protected from the skirmishes that indicated what would grow into a guerrilla war, in which the dissident insurgents were to capture the nerve-centres of power. Then, I enjoyed their company and admired them for their service all in continuity with my original experience of the clergy as a boy in my home parish.

Years later I was to be appointed to Brisbane, finding myself on the Council of Priests, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, and Dean of my Deanery. That all came to an end when my Provincial asked me to serve a six-month term as an assistant to the Papal Nuncio in Canberra, which I happily did. On my return however I was quietly informed that since I had worked for the Pope's Man in Australia, I would no longer be acceptable to the clergy. I was astonished. I had been no more than a sort of temp you get from an agency, a dogsbody

polishing the Nuncio's written English. Still, when one door closes another opens, and with the assignments that have come my way I have never been busier.

Joy of Mary

Out of many spheres of ministry I might speak of there is one particular area that I wish to instance; namely, the world of Marian Devotion. I can remember with the utmost clarity as a toddler being summoned to sit on my mother's knee for her to teach me the Hail Mary, giving me the foundation of Marian Devotion, connatural to a Catholic. A famous New Zealand priest, a close friend of the family, came to visit and told us of the appearances of Our Lady to three peasant children at Fatima, previously never mentioned in Church or school. We listened intently. Throughout the war, all those at home prayed the Rosary every night after dinner. With four brothers, a brother-in-law, and cousins, all away at the war, we prayed nightly for their return sound in mind and body. All returned except for one cousin, but the nightly recitation of the Rosary was formative.

The revival of popular devotions in the Archdiocese of Brisbane dates from two events: the establishment of the Pauline Fathers near Canungra, and the visit of the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima in 1995. At the first I was the occasional preacher, having just returned from Czestochowa. At the second I celebrated the public Mass in the Botanical Gardens River City Stage with 17 concelebrants and 2,500 joyful people in a candlelit procession. What struck me, and is still with me, is how radiant the faces of the people were. I established the Fatima Mass on the thirteenth of each month, and am Chaplain to a wonderful group of devotees of Our Lady, the Apostles of Mary. This work is particularly important for ethnic groups, as it enables them freely to express their love of Our Lady and their joy in serving and praising her. I believe that devotional life is necessary for the survival of Catholicism. Needless to say I have heard this sort of work sweepingly dismissed as superstition, and sometimes the accusation is true, and we must deal with that; but I persist in believing that there is a role for devotion to Our Lady to play in the faith life of all Catholics. In the case of men, I believe that it tempers the natural egotism of the male, not to mention his tendency to violence. I happily serve, and the people grow in numbers and in faith, hope and charity. My engagement in these and similar devotions flows directly from that first Hail Mary learnt on my mother's knee.

Instrumentum Christi

I ask myself again why I have told you all this. I could have strung together some fine passages from *Pastores dabo vobis* or from the Maundy Thursday *Letters to Priests* of Pope John Paul II; or from Cardinal Ratzinger himself. Priests can and must find them, read them, digest them. That will put the spiritual calcium into your priestly bones, and equip you for the fight, keeping you strong and focused in your priesthood, but it is something else I want to say to you good priests tonight. The stories I have selected to tell you in this brief sketch of my early days tell me one thing: the template of a vocation can be set *very early in life*, and in that the role of the priest is *critical*. Learn that everything you do can be a planting of the seeds of a vocation. Every gesture you make, every syllable you utter is stamped with your priesthood, because you are priestly in your very being.

Your priesthood is not an outer garment you can throw off at the end of the day, or the start of a holiday.

The Sacramental Character of Holy Orders is not to be thought of as an external mark scoring the surface. Rather it is something that floods and transforms the entire person, now configured to Christ, enabling you to say “I absolve you”, and “This is **my** Body, ...This is the Cup of **my** blood...” Here then is Christ speaking in and through you. You are the *instrumentum Christi*. Only you are not a robot speaking with a recorded voice. You are not a lifeless mask such as Greek actors donned to play their role. You are living individuals to whom Christ has said, “I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full.” These are surely the most positive words ever uttered by a man, and they are supremely addressed to priests who are configured to Christ, who **is** life.

I have been moved to speak as I do because I am increasingly aware that many of our brother priests groan under the burden of their priesthood. It is a grief I carry that they do not go with joy to the altar of God. Of course priesthood is a burden (as is marriage, parenthood, and one’s daily work), but as Our Lord says, “My burden is light, my yoke is easy.” It is not a pretend burden but a real one; it is not a pretend yoke, yet it is easy. That is, it is perfectly shaped and finished by the craftsman so as to fit easily across my shoulders, so that I can run all day under that yoke and not have it rub me raw. Christ knew about yokes and would have fashioned them. He detested the burdens the Scribes and others laid on the backs of men. How grievous it must be for him to see priests with dissident views impose needless burdens on themselves, and so open the door to disaffection.

We can be sustained by the conviction, which we know we must never abandon, that while I labour in the ministry as if the results depend on me, I know in my bones that it is God who gives the increase. We end with gratitude in our hearts and praise of God on our lips.



Contemplative nuns

Some sites for Australia are the Carmelite nuns at Lismore, Launceston, Gelorup, & Ormiston, that may be accessed from: www.carmelite.com/nuns/ Poor Clare Colletines at Bendigo may be accessed from: www.ozvocations.catholic.org.au/ Tyburn Benedictine nuns, Riverstone, NSW, may be accessed from: www.tyburnconvent.org/

As in Australia, contemplative women’s orders are leading the growth in the USA, and notably the monastery founded by Mother Angelica PCPA of EWTN fame (see below).



Novicing is a great opportunity to make happy the families of entering young women and to help them find a place in the new life of their daughters. As the photos of the [www site of the Monastery of Our Lady of the Angels](http://www.monasteryofourladyoftheangels.org) show (see our back cover), the ceremonies of novicing also appeal to the romanticism of young women, romanticism that matures into stable and sober religious vocations. Why less so in Australia?

More examples of growing “active” congregations of religious women in the USA

Newly professed members of the Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia (www.nashvilledominican.org). For Australia, see our own Conventual Dominican Sisters (see <http://users.drag-net.com.au/~veritas/>)



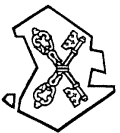
Franciscan Sisters of St George the Martyr is an international order that is now growing in the USA with strong engagement in health care and educational apostolates, and the Mother House in Alton, Illinois (see, www.altonfranciscans.org). Why not in Australia?



Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist are another teaching Dominican congregation that started in the USA under the late Cardinal O’Connor of New York, and now has its Mother House in Ann Arbor, Michigan (see, www.sistersofmary.org). For Australia, see Conventual Dominicans, above.



Sister Servants of Mary of the Sick are yet another growing international congregation of “active” religious women present in the USA, and, as their name implies, focus on care of the sick, in Kansas, New Orleans, New York, Los Angeles (see, www.sisterservantsofmary.org). Why not in Australia? – The Little Sister of the Poor here need vocations! (www.littlesistershome.org)



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***An article in this issue treats vocational growth for women's active orders (rather than
contemplative orders, as this photograph shows): see inside for photos of growth of
active women's orders and an article on priestly encouragement of vocations.***