

# Under Attack

JOURNAL OF THE  
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 35 2014





Raheen as it is today, from the street: [Wikipedia commons](#) (See *Archbishop Mannix: Home life at Raheen*, this Journal, 51)

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ISSN: 0084-7259

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**Cover image:** Marists under attack in New Caledonia: later sketch by Fr Verguet (see book review, p 110) (General Archives of the Society of Mary)

# Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society

Volume 35 2014

## Contents

Paul Collins, Jeremiah Francis O’Flynn 1786-1831 . . . . .	3
Janice Garaty, The Carlow Connection: The contribution of Irish seminarians in 19th century Australia . . . . .	10
Michael Moran, The Melbourne parish of Richmond: a letter of 1933 . . . . .	22
John de Luca, Disharmony among bishops: on the binding nature of a papal <i>motu proprio</i> on music . . . . .	28
Damian John Gleeson, Monsignor Peter Byrne and the foundations of Catholicism in Strathfield . . . . .	38
James Franklin, Gerald O Nolan and Michael Gilchrist, Archbishop Mannix: Home life at Raheen . . . . .	51
Richard Connolly, A funny way to go to Rome . . . . .	65
John Challis, Recollections of a Perth Movement Chaplain, 1952-1958 . . . . .	75
Bernard Doherty, The Road to Schism: Yves Dupont and the Latin Mass Society of Australia 1966-1977 . . . . .	87
<b>Book reviews:</b>	
Edmund Campion, <i>Australian Catholic Lives</i> , reviewed by Michael Costigan	108
<i>Verguet’s Sketchbook: A Marist Missionary Artist in 1840s Oceania</i> , ed. M Duffy and A Greiler, reviewed by Peter McMurrich . . . . .	112
Carole Walker, <i>A Saviour of Living Cargoes: The Life and Work of Caroline Chisholm</i> , reviewed by Irene Franklin . . . . .	115
Kelvin Canavan, <i>St Benedict’s School, Broadway: a History of a Catholic School 1838-2012</i> , reviewed by Graham English . . . . .	118
Val Noone and Rachel Naughton, eds, <i>Daniel Mannix: His Legacy</i> , reviewed by John Carmody . . . . .	123
William Martin Morris, <i>Benedict, Me and the Cardinals Three: The Story of the Dismissal of Bishop Bill Morris by Pope Benedict XVI</i> , reviewed by Bernard Doherty . . . . .	128
Commentary: When a non-Romanised bishop confronts Rome, by Michael Costigan . . . . .	132
David Ranson, <i>Between The “Mysticism of Politics” and the “Politics of Mysticism”: Interpreting New Pathways of Holiness in the Roman Catholic Tradition</i> , reviewed by Robert Gascoigne . . . . .	137
<i>Asiana Centre Sydney, Australia 1963-2013 Golden Jubilee and Australian Catholic Chinese Community Diamond Jubilee 1954-2014</i> , reviewed by Carmen Kong . . . . .	139

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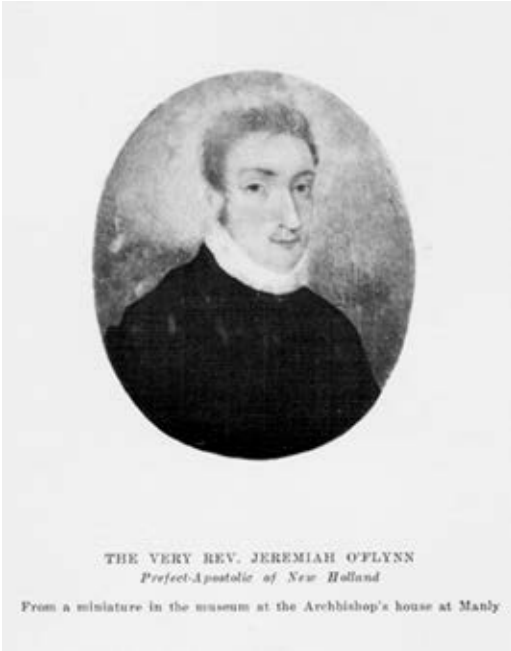
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## JEREMIAH FRANCIS O'FLYNN 1786-1831

Paul Collins\*

O'Flynn's life spanned and intersected the beginnings of the modern world when the lineaments of the culture in which we live today were beginning to emerge. He played an albeit small roll in major events such as the opening-up of the new world in Australia and the United States, the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean and the massive expansion of Catholicism in the nineteenth century. The amazing extent of his travel was a very early example of a vast movement of people across the world. O'Flynn's resentment and opposition to high-handed church leaders and bishops revealed a man willing to challenge authority, a very modern phenomenon. But at heart, for most of his life, he was an unsettled man, someone who was unable to put



down roots anywhere. His story is one of wanderlust, of a man who once he started travelling became almost incurably restless. He was, in the sense of canon law, a classical vagus, a wandering priest, an 'ecclesiastical tourist' as the Irish called such priests. But in the end at the age of thirty-nine he found a home and stability in Silver Lake, Pennsylvania. Michael Hayes told his priest brother that, despite the brevity of O'Flynn's time in Sydney, 'he has gained great estimation by his labours in his sacerdotal functions'. The same could be said of his time in the upstate Pennsylvania. In other words he had been a good priest. Despite the brevity of his life that, in the

end, was the real test of his character. (Paul Collins: *A Very Contrary Irishman*, Melbourne: Morning Star, 2014).

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\* Paul Collins has a Master's degree in theology from Harvard University and a Doctorate of Philosophy in history from the Australian National University. He is an historian, broadcaster and writer and has authored 14 books as well as being a commentator on Catholicism and the papacy.

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**O'FLYNN CHRONOLOGY**

**1781**

11 February: Daniel Flynn (tenant farmer) marries Joanna Mead in Tralee, Co Kerry

**1786**

15 January: Birth of Jeremiah O'Flynn near Tralee. He always preferred 'O'Flynn'

**1795**

1 June: Birth of Joanna Flynn (sister)

**1804**

Early 1804: Enters Franciscan School, a kind of minor seminary, in Killarney

**1810**

June-December: Enters Saint Susan's Trappist Monastery, a French émigré community, established at East Lulworth in Dorset in 1794

**1811**

January-December: Novitiate at Saint Susan's

**1812**

January-December: Professed monk at Lulworth taking the religious name 'Francis'

**1813**

13 March: Received minor orders from Augustin Lestrange, Abbot of La Trappe

26 March: Ordained sub-deacon by Bishop William Poynter, Vicar Apostolic of the London District

27 March: Ordained deacon by Poynter

29 March: Ordained priest by Poynter

25 April: O'Flynn Departs Gosport for Martinique in a party of monks led by Lestrange. Originally bound for Canada, only Lestrange had a passport from Colonial Office for the strategic colony of Martinique

April-June: Shipboard dispute and/or fight between Lestrange and O'Flynn

Early June: Arrival in Martinique where the party was arrested by British governor

June-August: Martinique

August-October: O'Flynn Leaves for island of Saint Lucia

4 November: O'Flynn arrives and settles on Saint Croix (now US Virgin Islands)

Mid-November: Becomes pastor of Christiansted assisting an Irish priest Henry Kendall

**1814**

January-December: Ministry on Saint Croix  
31 May: Death of Kendall. It is now doubtful if O'Flynn has faculties to act as a priest

**1815**

Mid-February: Arrival of Pierre de Glory, an arrogant French priest, who tries to displace O'Flynn. This leads to disputes in parish  
Early-April: Glory departs for the French island of Guadeloupe  
24 October: Faculties granted to O'Flynn by the Vicar General of Bishop Carroll of the diocese of Baltimore. Baltimore had jurisdiction over Saint Croix

**1816**

Late-April: Following further disputes over faculties O'Flynn departs Saint Croix  
Mid to late-June: O'Flynn arrives in Rome (via London on Post Office Packet ship). He falls in with and gains support from influential Irish priests in Rome  
18 July: O'Flynn is absolved by Pope Pius VII and becomes a secular priest  
19 August: New South Wales enters the picture via the Irish Franciscan in Rome, Richard Hayes, whose brother Michael lives in Sydney  
9 September: O'Flynn appointed Prefect Apostolic of 'Bottanibé' (Botany Bay) by the Congregation of Propaganda Fide  
Late-September: O'Flynn arrives in Cork where he meets the priest John England who advises him to make sure he gets the approval of the Colonial Office before he goes to NSW  
October-November: Visits the O'Flynn family in Tralee  
Mid-December: Arrives back in London

**1817**

7 February: O'Flynn avoids Bishop Poynter, whom Propaganda had ignored in O'Flynn's appointment. O'Flynn presents a petition to Colonial Office requesting permission to go to NSW  
10 February: O'Flynn meets Poynter who is unwilling to recommend him to the Colonial Office  
26 February: Poynter meets Colonial Secretary Bathurst. Discusses the O'Flynn case



- 28 February: O'Flynn formally refused permission to go to NSW by Colonial Office Under-Secretary, Henry Goulburn
- Early-March: O'Flynn seemingly accepts the decision and thanks Bathurst and asks for return of his 'trunks' (apparently already loaded on a ship)
- 27 March: O'Flynn has now clearly changed his mind and he invests a surprised Archbishop Daniel Murray (Dublin) with 'vicarial authority' for NSW
- 30 March: Letter from O'Flynn to John England announcing departure for NSW
- 31 March: *Duke of Wellington* sails from Gravesend. O'Flynn aboard
- 13 April: *Duke of Wellington* departed the Downs
- Early-May: *Duke of Wellington* arrives Funchal, Madeira
- Late-June: *Duke of Wellington* arrives Rio de Janeiro (there about 2 weeks)
- Mid-August: *Duke of Wellington* arrives Cape Town (there about 3 weeks)
- 21 October: *Duke of Wellington* arrives Hobart Town. O'Flynn received warmly by Lt. Gov. William Sorrell
- 1 November: *Duke of Wellington* departs Hobart Town
- 9 November: And arrives in Sydney Town. O'Flynn meets Michael Hayes
- 10 November: O'Flynn attends a vice-regal reception at Government House. He meets Governor Macquarie and tells him his letters from the Colonial Office are coming 'on the next ship'. Macquarie is suspicious.
- 28 November: Unwilling to allow him to stay, Macquarie's secretary Campbell instructs O'Flynn to depart on the *Duke of Wellington*
- 1818**
- Late-January: An attempt to arrest O'Flynn was foiled by Catholics hiding him in a 'skulking place in the bush' (Macquarie)
- 9 February: Letter from 76 Catholic officers and men of the 48th Regiment to Colonel James Erskine. Macquarie accuses O'Flynn of 'interfering' with the soldiers of the 48th Regiment.
- 5 May: Campbell instructs O'Flynn to depart on the *David Shaw*
- 16 May: O'Flynn arrested and held in Sydney Jail
- 19 May: Deportation order issued

- 20 May: O'Flynn departs Sydney on *David Shaw* to England via Cape Horn
- Mid-November: *David Shaw* arrives at Dover Roads
- About 20 November: O'Flynn ashore in London
- 8 December: O'Flynn in London asks Bathurst for permission to return to NSW
- 18 December: Permission refused by Bathurst
- 1819**
- 18 February: O'Flynn mentioned in House of Commons debate by Henry Grey Bennet informed by anti-Macquarie clique. Response by Goulburn
- Late-February: O'Flynn departs London for Haiti. Why Haiti? Reason unknown
- 30 March: Arrives in Port au Prince and is appointed parish priest of capital by President Jean Pierre Boyer
- Mid-April: O'Flynn dismissed as Prefect Apostolic by Propaganda
- 18 May: O'Flynn writes to Propaganda concerning his Haitian mission
- 1820**
- 6 May: O'Flynn still calls himself 'Prefect Apostolic of New Holland'
- 1821**
- 29 March: Pierre de Glory (see 1815), now a bishop, suddenly arrives in Port au Prince with a party of French seminarians
- 1 April: Glory ordains three priests
- 7 August: Glory's vicious 'pastoral letter' Concerning the priest Flynn
- Mid-August: O'Flynn returns to Port-au-Prince
- 20 August: Glory and four students depart for US; are shipwrecked and drowned
- 30 November: O'Flynn still in Port-au-Prince
- Mid-December: O'Flynn leaves Port au Prince and retreats to Cap-Haitien
- 1822**
- Mid to late-January: O'Flynn arrested by Boyer and deported from Haiti
- Early-February: O'Flynn arrives in Philadelphia
- Late-February: He moves into Saint Mary's, Philadelphia where he meets the infamous Irish priest William Hogan
- 1 April: Hogan goes to trial for assault and rape. Eventually acquitted

- July 16: O'Flynn concelebrates the funeral Mass of Latin American hero Manuel Torres at Saint Mary's most likely in English
- Mid-August: O'Flynn leaves Saint Mary's and Philadelphia
- 5 September: O'Flynn arrives in Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands
- Late-1822: O'Flynn leaves Saint Thomas and arrives in Dominica
- 1823**
- Throughout 1823: O'Flynn ministering in Dominica
- 1824**
- January-July: Ministering in Dominica
- By 5 August: O'Flynn deported by British Governor from Dominica and arrives in New Haven, Conn.
- Mid-August: O'Flynn refused faculties to minister in New Haven by Boston Diocese
- About 27 August: O'Flynn refused faculties to minister in New Haven by Boston Diocese
- About October: O'Flynn returns to Philadelphia. Refused faculties by Bishop Conwell
- Late-1824: O'Flynn meets Robert Rose and Thomas M Morris in Philadelphia and hears about land for sale in Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania
- 1825**
- Early-1825: O'Flynn makes his first visit to Susquehanna with Rose and Morris
- 1 June: He buys 100 acres with a log cabin near Silver Lake for \$400
- 1826**
- January-December: O'Flynn living quietly in Silver Lake
- 1827**
- March: O'Flynn visited by his brother-in-law Thomas Fitzgerald Eventually Fitzgerald and O'Flynn's sister Joanna and family move to Silver Lake
- Late in the year: O'Flynn requests faculties from Philadelphia to minister to increasing Catholic population in the Susquehanna region
- 1828**
- About February: O'Flynn granted faculties by diocese of Philadelphia
- About June: Saint Augustine's Mission, Silver Lake, operative
- 2 October: O'Flynn celebrates the first Mass in the vestry of incomplete church
- 1829**
- January-December: O'Flynn working as a priest in a large mission region in upstate Pennsylvania

**1830**

January-December: Working as a priest in upstate Pennsylvania

**1831**

8 February: O'Flynn dies near Danville, PA from pneumonia. Buried in Silver Lake

The main primary sources for O'Flynn are Westminster Archdiocesan Archives (in the extensive Bishop Poynter collection), Baltimore Archdiocesan Archives (for the Caribbean interludes), Holy Cross Abbey Archives, Whitland, Wales (for the Trappist monastery at Lulworth), Historical Records of Australia (for Macquarie/O'Flynn material) and the Congregation of Propaganda Fide Archives. Copies of *A Very Contrary Irishman. The Life and Journeys of Jeremiah O'Flynn* available from Paul Collins at [pco77760@bigpond.net.au](mailto:pco77760@bigpond.net.au).

## THE CARLOW CONNECTION: THE CONTRIBUTION OF IRISH SEMINARIANS IN 19TH CENTURY AUSTRALIA

Janice Garaty\*

This is a story about connections – of a network that extended from the green fields of Ireland to disparate parts of colonial Australia; to Broken Hill, Ballarat, Goulburn, the Weddin Mountains, the Darling Downs and to Sydney Town. These were connections of geography, of religion, of family, and the glue of this intricate network was a shared sense of mission. These connections between St Patrick's, a lay college and seminary in Carlow County Ireland and eastern colonial Australia were widespread, significant and to this researcher sometimes quite surprising. St Patrick's continues to be commonly known as Carlow College. It is located in Carlow the main urban centre of a prosperous agricultural region some 85 kms south of Dublin; the town in fact owes its importance to the college which opened in 1793. Carlow County lies within the Catholic diocese of Kildare and Leighlin. The 1833 Carlow Cathedral was the first Cathedral built in Ireland after the ending of the Penal Law era.

### **Ireland under the Penal Laws**

Carlow wasn't always the main town of the county. When Daniel Delany, a priest who had been educated and ordained in France stepped back onto Irish soil in about 1777, he was appointed as curate in Tullow, a major market town, where the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, Dr James Keeffe, resided. Daniel Delany was returning to a country where the Catholic Church was technically an illegal organisation, its activities and its personnel outlawed by the English Parliament in legislation known collectively as the Penal Laws. From 1698, secular priests already in Ireland could stay and say Mass and perform their other duties provided they registered with the authorities; they could not appear outside their churches in their vestments. Catholic clergymen were forbidden to enter the country. Seminaries were banned in Ireland, as were Catholic academies for young men. As intended, the Catholic religion would find it increasingly difficult to replenish its workforce.

Under the Penal Laws, education for Catholic Irish was forbidden both at home and abroad. No Catholic could teach anyone anywhere in Ireland. Any

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\* Dr Janice Garaty is an independent researcher with a keen interest in the contribution of Catholic individuals to the growth of the Australian Church, particularly in the Archdiocese of Sydney. Her latest book is *Providence Provides: Brigidine Sisters in the New South Wales Province* (UNSW Press 2013). Her co-authored article 'Seeking the Voices of Catholic Teaching Sisters: Challenges in the research process' will be published in the *History of Education Review* in early 2015.

Catholics who went abroad for an education could be treated as an outlaw with their property confiscated and even risked transportation to English colonies in the New World. Catholics were forbidden to practice law or stand for parliament. The Irish Catholic middle and professional class diminished as its most promising young men fled to the Continent for their education and their future; few returned. Laws forbidding Protestants to sell or lease land to Catholics and the mandatory distribution of an estate among all the sons of a Catholic family meant that by 1776 it is estimated only 5% of land in Ireland was owned by Catholics.<sup>1</sup> The Penal Laws had long standing economic repercussions in Ireland. Throughout much of the 19th century, the vast majority of Irish were Catholic, engaged in rural activities and poor and about 35% were illiterate.<sup>2</sup>

By Daniel Delany's lifetime these Acts were not strictly enforced and there were signs Westminster was planning to ease the restrictions. Nevertheless, Daniel could not take the risk and his return needed to be in secret and his priestly identity disguised. He was destined to be a major reforming force in the Irish Catholic Church and to found two religious institutes: the Sisters of St Brigid (Brigidine Sisters) in 1807 and the Brothers of St Patrick (Patrician Brothers) in 1808.

### **Relaxation of the Penal Laws and opening of Carlow College**

Delany became coadjutor to Bishop Keefe with whom he shared a dream to build an educational institution to prepare young men for the priesthood and the professions. Both knew educated priests and a Catholic professional and intellectual class were needed to pull Ireland out



*A picture of Carlow College: Delany Archive, Carlow College*

of the morass of the Penal era. After the 1789 Revolution in France, the Catholic colleges in France were confiscated by the government and Irish seminarians and lay men could no longer be educated there, but from 1792 Catholics in Ireland were allowed to have their own privately funded schools.

Failing to obtain a suitable site in Tullow for his institution, Keefe was given a

1 S J Connolly, *Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland 1780-1845*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1982, 25

2 Connolly,70; statistic based on the 1861 census

999 year lease on land at Carlow. He moved his residence from Tullow to Carlow in order to supervise the construction of his college and left Daniel Delany in Tullow as his coadjutor. Bishop Keefe died some five years after construction began in 1782 and Bishop Delany saw the project through to the opening of the college in 1793 with the enrolment of the first students both lay and ecclesiastical. Carlow College was the first Catholic tertiary institution opened post Reformation in Ireland, predating Maynooth College, the Irish national seminary, by two years. By 1826 there were 391 students in Maynooth and about 120 in other seminaries (including Carlow).<sup>3</sup> From 1892 Carlow was a seminary for the priesthood exclusively and from 1989 reverted to its original role as a college of the Humanities restricting intake to lay people.

Only five years after the college had opened, Carlow County was the scene of some of the bloodiest fighting in the 1798 rebellion. Some of the insurgents escaped government troops by fleeing through the college grounds. The parish priest of Tullow was tortured and murdered by government forces and some 600 of the rebels were killed in Carlow. It is estimated 30,000 people were killed in this terrible uprising in which the Irish Catholic bishops had publically forbidden their people to participate. Visitors to the college in the early 19th century commented on the nationalist sentiments of the students; these were held in check by Andrew Fitzgerald OP, Carlow College President 1814-1843, whose training in Continental seminaries had instilled in him a 'strong respect for constitutional authority'.<sup>4</sup> The great Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, James Doyle, had witnessed the carnage of the '98 rebellion and never lost his horror of revolutionary violence but he strongly supported the anti-tithe campaign in later years. In fact, Andrew Fitzgerald was imprisoned in 1832 for refusing to pay tithes to the Church of Ireland.

Peter Lalor, a leader of the Eureka Rebellion, attended Carlow College as did at least one of his 10 brothers, James Fintan, who led the 'Young Ireland' movement of 1848. In 1831, Peter's father Patrick had led the resistance of the Leix peasants against the forcible collection of tithes for the established church and in 1832-35 he represented Queen's County in the House of Commons where he was an ardent advocate for the repeal of the Act of Union. In 1853 he wrote: 'I have been for upwards of forty years struggling without ceasing in the cause of the people'. Undoubtedly Peter Lalor's early years were overshadowed by these dramatic events and by the famine but 'no evidence shows that he was actively involved'.<sup>5</sup> What

3 Connolly, 34

4 Desmond Bowen, *Paul Cardinal Cullen and the Shaping of Modern Irish Catholicism*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1983, 4

5 Ian Turner, 'Lalor, Peter (1827–1889)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lalor-peter-3980/text6289>

spirit of anti-establishment rebellion did Peter Lalor and his contemporaries imbibe at Carlow College from fellow students or perhaps faculty members? The impact of decades of upheaval remains an important question only partially answered by the public deeds of Carlow College's alumni and faculty staff.

### **The first priests in the colony**

The penal laws applied not just in Ireland but in England and English colonies. For this reason, no Catholic minister was allowed to accompany the First Fleet and the first priests arrived in NSW as convicted felons. These three, Fathers Harold, Dixon and O'Neill, all educated on the continent and accused of treasonous activities during the 1798 Rebellion, arrived in 1800 and 1801. One of these, James Dixon, was granted conditional emancipation and permission to say Mass for the Catholics of Sydney, Liverpool and Parramatta on successive Sundays, a practice that continued from 1803 until March 1804, when the Castle Hill rebellion so alarmed Governor King that he withdrew Dixon's privileges. Dixon soon after returned to Ireland, and Mass was not legally celebrated again in the colony until Reverends John Joseph Therry and Philip Conolly, chaplains appointed by the Government in London, arrived in 1820. Their arrival can be regarded as the formal establishment of the Catholic Church in Australia after the very short, unsanctioned stay in the colony of Rev Jeremiah O'Flynn from Nov 1817 to May 1818.

Pioneer priest, John Joseph Therry, is claimed by Carlow College as one of its most illustrious graduates. It is not the purpose of this article to survey Archpriest Therry's significant contribution to Australian Catholicism yet he has a rightful place in the story as he is the ultimate example of the connectivity of Carlow College and colonial Australia. Therry was a model seminarian at Carlow College which he had entered aged 17 years and where his theology professor was Dr Doyle, later to become Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, and known by all as 'JKL'. Although as a seminarian he had already indicated his desire to be of service in a foreign mission, after his ordination in 1815 he was sent to be the bishop's secretary in the city of his birth, Cork, the port where thousands of Irish convicts would leave Ireland forever. It was at Cork that he met Jeremiah O'Flynn, the adventurer expelled by Governor Macquarie, and who explained to Therry the dire need for



*Pioneer priest, John Joseph Therry: Delany Archive, Carlow College*



Catholic ministry in the British colony of New South Wales.

An account of Therry's life in a history of the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin is a significant source because it was written by one personally acquainted with Therry.<sup>6</sup> Andrew Phelan, a graduate of Carlow College, arrived in the colony of New South Wales in 1862 to act as administrator of the Maitland diocese prior to the arrival of its first bishop, Dr Murray. Phelan was enticed back to his alma mater by the offer to be its administrator. By 1880 he was the parish priest of Mountrath, a large town near Carlow. In that role he advised the Brigidine Sisters of the Mountrath convent after Bishop Murray of Maitland had appealed to their Mother Superior; there was a desperate need for teaching religious in his large diocese. Phelan could tell them much about the conditions they should expect at Coonamble, a country town some 500 kms from Sydney. The pioneer group of six Brigidines arrived there in June 1883.

In his account Phelan tells of Therry while still working for the Bishop of Cork, coming upon a wagon loaded with Irish convicts in handcuffs with a military escort on their way to board ship. He immediately went to a nearby bookshop, bought prayer books and threw them amongst the convicts. Phelan was certain this was the turning point in Therry's life. Therry 'resolved to follow [the convicts] to the other side of the earth to save their immortal souls from destruction'.<sup>7</sup> Soon after this incident Therry met O'Flynn and he saw the opportunity to be seized as he was informed how the colony's Catholics were in desperate need of ministry.

Following Rev O'Flynn's deportation from New South Wales, two strong petitions, one from the Catholic laity in general and one from the Catholic members of the military were sent to England and the matter debated in the House of Commons. Subsequently, Lord Bathurst made provision for two Catholic clergymen to be sent to NSW and an annual stipend of £100 was promised. Governor Macquarie was advised of the appointments in a letter dated 20 October 1819. Therry was eventually granted permission from his bishop to leave Cork, and along with Philip Conolly preparations were made. The *Janus* was directed to call into Cork to pick up the two missionaries on 5 December 1819. The ship was the subject of a judicial enquiry regarding prostitution on board and the two priests were called as witnesses. Therry testified that the proportion of the Catholic female convicts was about one-third and 'they did not enter into the illicit intercourse'.

The *Janus* arrived in April 1820 and Therry was given lodgings at the house of William Davis of Charlotte Square, the foundations of which can be seen metres from the present church of St Patrick's, Church Hill, (The Rocks) Sydney. Davis had

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6 M Comerford, *Collections Relating to the Dioceses of Kildare and Leighlin, Vol 1*, James Duffy and Sons, Dublin, 1883, 179-185

7 Comerford, 180

been transported because of his activities in the 1798 rebellion but had prospered and obtained a land grant in 1809. In 1840, Davis donated the land on which St Patrick's Church Hill was built.

It appears that Therry spent the greater part of his day in the saddle and some early commentators mention that a horse was always waiting ready harnessed at his front gate (that is at Davis's front gate). On returning, one tired horse was rested, the waiting horse was mounted and a second horse harnessed in readiness for an emergency. Fr Therry had an exhausting regime. Every Sunday, he had to celebrate Mass and give public instruction at either Parramatta or Liverpool once, as well as twice in Sydney. He was required to frequently visit the hospital and attend to all Catholic persons in danger of death within a circuit of about 200 miles. The government had not provided him with any horses. The road gangs and the gaols at Parramatta and Sydney also needed Therry's attention as these were the basis of his £100 salary.

Fr Phelan records the tale of one epic ride by Therry which demonstrates his determination and his stamina. He had heard that a number of Irishmen were to be executed at Maitland. He knew there was only one small government steamer which sailed once a week. Therry was refused a passage on the steamer by government authorities. In Therry's words:

*I started on horseback with a trusted Irish friend. After travelling uninterruptedly for a day and a night we reached Maitland at five o'clock on the morning fixed for the execution. I at once set about preparing the men for death. I then celebrated Mass, administered Holy Communion to them, and, in a few hours afterwards, attended at their execution.<sup>8</sup>*

This was the first Mass celebrated in the Hunter district.

Fr Therry's diary gives us an idea of what was expected of this 'one-man-band'. His biographer, Dr Eris O'Brien, called this 'a very ordinary week':

July 1st	Sunday Mass at Parramatta and Sydney
July 2nd	From Sydney to Parramatta. Attended two men in hospital
July 3rd	In Parramatta . Attended one man. Visited Factory. To Liverpool
July 4th	In Liverpool. Baptised a black child. Went to Bunbury Curran, [present day Macquarie Fields] returned to Liverpool. To Parramatta
July 5th	At Parramatta. Baptised a black child. Visited the hospital. To Sydney
July 6th	Mass at Sydney for subscribers to Church attended meeting etc
July 7th	Heard confessions at Dempsey's [in Kent Street]. <sup>9</sup>

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8 Comerford, 182

9 Eris M O'Brien, *Life and Letters of Archpriest John Joseph Therry*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1922, 38

Therry had influential supporters such as WC Wentworth, MLC, one of the leading figures of early colonial New South Wales. Prominent Protestants gave financial support to his appeal to build St Mary's Chapel on the edge of Hyde Park. In fact Governor Macquarie laid its foundation stone with a silver trowel, with which he was then presented and promptly pocketed.<sup>10</sup> Dr Eris O'Brien wrote: 'It required a very versatile man to make his influence felt among all classes in the New South Wales of that day'.

### **Fr Tim McCarthy – the Bushranger Priest**

To quote Fr Paul Stenhouse in his *Annals* of August 1985: 'Tim McCarthy began and ended his brief fifty years of life in County Cork. In the meanwhile, he was to carry out a most curious ministry as a priest-intermediary between Police and bushrangers on the other side of the world.' After he completed his schooling he went on to study law for three years but later transferred to study Theology and Philosophy at Carlow College in his preparation for the priesthood. He was ordained in 1852 and arrived in Sydney in March 1853. Carlow College proudly claims him as an outstanding pioneer on the Australian mission.



*Fr Tim McCarthy the Bushranger Priest: Catholic Schools Office, Armidale*

After an introductory spell in Sydney, in 1853 he was put in charge of a territory that had Armidale in the New England region of New South Wales as its centre and extended to the Queensland border and the east coast. He was the first resident priest there.<sup>11</sup> His parents had been tenant farmers and he was a skilled horseman. Just as well as he would be riding around his circuit for months at a time. In his travels from one outpost to another, baptising, catechising, hearing confessions, saying Mass, arranging prayer meetings, consoling the sick, and carrying out the hundred and one other responsibilities of his vocation, he would be supplied with food, drink and a change of horse at each place of call. One reference to him in the (Sydney) *Freeman's Journal* of October 1854 mentions Fr McCarthy acknowledging the receipt of almost

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10 For Therry's address to Governor Macquarie and the Governor's reply see: *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 3 Nov. 1821, 3

11 See T J Linane and F A Mecham (eds), *The Men of '38 and Other Pioneer Priests*, reprint of articles by 'John O'Brien' in the *Australasian Catholic Record*, 1943-1945 for detailed account of Fr Tim's exploits.

£160 towards the building of a Catholic Church at South Grafton. The editor took the opportunity to thank the good Father for 'his successful efforts in extensively circulating the *Freeman's Journal* throughout the New England and Northern Districts of his mission. If other clergymen used similar exertions, the *Freeman's Journal* would soon be found in every Catholic family in the Archdiocese'.

In 1863, Fr Tim was transferred to Carcoar in the diocese of Bathurst. The district was then in the throes of a gold fever and an associated crime spree. Gold was a powerful lure. Frankie Gardiner and accomplices had stolen £14,000 from the gold escort at Eugowra. In June 1863, six highway robberies were committed in one day near Lambing Flat. By 1863, Gardiner was gone from the area, but there remained behind half a dozen young men whom he had enticed to a life of easy pickings. They rallied around Ben Hall who had been driven to bushranging through injustice.

'Many of the bushrangers, many of their settler-victims and many of the police were of Irish extraction. It was but natural that an Irish priest be recruited who might conciliate the bushrangers or even bring them in. Such a recruit was Fr Tim.'<sup>12</sup> Fr Tim first came to public notice when he persuaded the bushranger Foley to disclose where he had hidden the £2,700 he had stolen from the Mudgee mail coach. Foley handed it over to Fr Tim, who duly gave it back to the Joint Stock Bank, refusing the £100 reward and earning the respect and the gratitude of many.

One of Ben Halls' gang was John Vane, only about twenty, who had been a bushranger all of three months but had a £1,000 reward on his head. Fr Tim accidentally came upon him at his hiding place while he was cooking his dinner and Vane, once he realised McCarthy wasn't a trooper, invited the priest to share his meal. A serious discussion about the certain outcome of a lawless life led to Vane promising to think about giving himself up. After the priest left the camp he came upon Vane's mother and she implored Fr Tim to return with her to her son, who was finally persuaded to listen to his mother's pleas. After obtaining a written authority from the local Honorary Magistrate, the two men rode through the night to Bathurst where Vane surrendered.<sup>13</sup>

Fr Tim refused the £1,000 reward and he became an instant celebrity. He was accused of using the confessional to withhold information from the police who had proved totally inept in tracking down the gang. In fact Vane was not Catholic and his parents were well-off and respectable farmers; he was far from the stereotypical (Irish Catholic and low-class) bushranger. In fact, Patrick O'Farrell comments that of the 100 most prominent of Australia's bushrangers up to Federation only 22 were

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<sup>12</sup> Fr Paul Stenhouse, *Annals*, August 1985

<sup>13</sup> (Sydney) *Freeman's Journal*, 25 Nov. 1863, 3; see *JACHS*, vol 34 2013, 19 for this event's connection to ACHS chaplain, Fr George Connolly

Irish born. Nearly all were Australian born. It was assumed the criminal element were all Irish and therefore also Catholic.<sup>14</sup> What is without doubt is that to the educated elite of this period, the common ordinary Irish, not the Anglo-Irish gentry, were ‘a sub-stratum of non-persons’.<sup>15</sup>

John Vane appeared before Supreme Court Judge Sir Alfred Stephan charged with two ‘shoot with intent’ and three ‘robbery under arms’ offences between August and October 1863 to which he pleaded guilty. At his trial he was represented by William Bede Dalley, well known Catholic lawyer, who at this time was the member for Carcoar in the NSW Legislative Assembly. Vane was sentenced to 15 years hard labour on the roads but only served seven. After his release he was employed on the construction of the new St Mary’s Cathedral.

In 1865, Fr Tim was called back to Sydney. As Senior Priest of St Benedict’s Church, he must have found the regularity and routine a relief after his hard living in the bush. Five years of this smooth placid life went by and then he was promoted to St Mary’s Cathedral, and was appointed the Dean of the Cathedral in 1874. By 1878, it was apparent his health was broken and he longed to return to Ireland, but he was penniless; a colony-wide appeal raised his sea fare back to Cork, the city of his birth. Two steamers of well-wishers escorted his mail boat down Sydney Harbour. He was not to return as he had wished. Sadly he died 25 August 1879 aged 50 years. His requiem was held at St Finbarr’s South Cork, the church where John Joseph Therry had been baptised 90 years before. On his headstone at Ballyheeda, are these words: ‘He returned to his native land for change of air fully determined to go back again, but Providence willed it otherwise’. Continuing public interest in the exploit of the ‘bushranger priest’ was such that in 1930 the (Sydney) *Freeman’s Journal* published a series of weekly articles featuring Fr Tim and the Weddin Mountains gang.<sup>16</sup>

### **Three Carlow connections were related by family**

Strong family connections among the Carlow College missionaries to the Australian colonies meant their individual stories are entwined. Fr Patrick Dunne was ordained 1846 and in 1850 was the first priest to go directly from Ireland to the newly formed Melbourne diocese. He was sent to Pentridge, now called Coburg, where a stockade or jail had been built in 1850; one of his duties was prison chaplain. He began to build a church there but all the builders deserted to go to the goldfields. On horseback, Fr Dunne followed them to Ballarat in October 1851 and celebrated the first Mass there in a borrowed tent. By the late 1850s he was running a school in

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14 Patrick O’Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, UNSW Press, Kensington, 1986, 141

15 O’Farrell, 93-94

16 (Sydney) *Freeman’s Journal*, 7 Aug 1930 – 2 Oct 1930, 16

Tullamore, Ireland, to provide priests for the Australian mission. In 1859 he was engaged in assisting nearly four thousand Irish emigrants to settle in Queensland, working with Bishop James Quinn of Brisbane. In the early 1860s he masterminded a migration scheme which contributed to the settling of the Darling Downs where, by the 1880s, the population was one third Catholic and many had become small farmers. Dunne made six round trips to select the emigrants and accompanied them on chartered ships to Queensland. Patrick Dunne was the first President of St Patrick's College Goulburn.<sup>17</sup>

Fr Patrick Bermingham is another interesting Carlow College connection. After graduating from Maynooth he then became a faculty member at Carlow College. A cousin of Fr Patrick Dunne, he was encouraged to join him in Melbourne in 1854. Later, he returned to Carlow College to become vice-president and professor of Theology but left again for Australia in 1871.<sup>18</sup> In 1860 Fr Bermingham took a dozen youths, called 'the twelve apostles', from the Yass district to be educated at Carlow College. Said to be a group of very promising lads and hand-picked by him, their parents had been convinced to send them back 'home' to Ireland rather than entrust them to Polding's Lyndhurst and St John's College.<sup>19</sup> 'Tradition has it that they led a wild student life at Carlow'.<sup>20</sup>



*Fr Patrick Bermingham*: Delany Archive, Carlow College

17 T J Linane, 'Dunne, Patrick (1818–1900)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dunne-patrick-3455/text5277>

18 For details of Fr Bermingham's colourful life see: O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia*, 112-115 and C. J. Duffy, 'Bermingham, Patrick (1828–1883)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bermingham-patrick-2981/text4349>

19 Patrick O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia: A History*, Nelson, Melbourne, rev.ed. 1977, 127

20 John McAvoy, 'The Carlow College Priest from Australasia to the Americas', reprint of Chapter 18 from Thomas McGrath, *Carlow: History and Society*, Geography Publications, Dublin, 2008, 517

‘John O’Brien’ remarked: ‘They, after adding many grey hairs of the heads responsible for the good conduct of Carlow College, returned to their native land with exactly the same number of sacraments as they had when they left it’.<sup>21</sup> After this scandal, no other Australian colonials were welcome in any of the Irish seminaries.<sup>22</sup>

As Vicar-General of Goulburn, Patrick Dunne persuaded Archbishop Polding to allow his nephew John Dunne, another Carlow College alumnus, to join the diocese in 1871, where he served for 16 years. He built the beautiful bluestone church at Boorowa in 1877. In 1887, John Dunne became the first Bishop of Wilcannia, a diocese of 150,000 sq miles, and served there for thirty years, dying in office. In July 1888, while on a visit home to Ireland he actively recruited new priests for his diocese.

### **Broader Carlow connections**

Cardinal Paul Cullen, Ireland’s first cardinal, was educated at Carlow and had strong familial and other ties with the Australian Church. During the ’98 rebellion, Paul Cullen’s father, Hugh, was imprisoned, his uncle shot dead, and Hugh returned home to find his 700 acre farm destroyed. The local Quakers intervened on behalf of their Catholic neighbours and because of that Paul was sent to the Quaker school for four years after which he was sent to Carlow College at the age of 13 years as a boarder, remaining there five years before he entered the College of Propaganda, Rome in 1821. Bishop James Doyle had offered Cullen the Chair of Theology at Carlow College. The college proudly claims him and his influence on the Church in Australia was immense; relatives or protégés of Cullen became bishops of Maitland, Bathurst, Hobart, Armidale, Goulburn and Brisbane. His nephew, Patrick Francis Cardinal Moran, did not attend Carlow College but certainly had an active interest in that diocese, in which he had been born, in which he had been the Bishop of Ossary and which was a rich source of missionaries for his Archdiocese of Sydney. Moran presided at the dedication of the college’s chapel in 1888,<sup>23</sup> a trip to Ireland from which he returned with the pioneer group of the Parramatta Sisters of Mercy.

Apart from Bishop Dunne of Wilcannia, three other priests from Carlow College who went to work in Australia became bishops. Patrick Phelan, seminarian from 1882-1888, was sent to Melbourne and served as the treasurer of the Australian Catholic Truth Society. He was appointed Bishop of Sale in 1912. John Carroll, (1886-1890), was named Bishop of Lismore in 1909 and consecrated by Cardinal Moran; this position he held for 40 years. Andrew Killian studied theology and was

21 Quoted in C J Duffy, ‘John O’Sullivan’, *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1969, 7

22 Duffy, 7

23 (Sydney) *Freeman’s Journal*, 10 Nov. 1888, 7

ordained priest in 1898 for the diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes. After years of pioneer missionary work in the outback country he became Bishop of Port Augusta diocese in 1924 and then appointed as coadjutor Archbishop of Adelaide. He succeeded as archbishop in 1934.

### **Conclusion**

By 1900, most of the English-speaking world relied on the supply of Irish-born priests educated at Carlow College, All Hallows and other colleges in Ireland. In total, 303 Carlow College priests went to Australia. Almost 50 Carlow priests were ordained specifically for Goulburn or Canberra-Goulburn dioceses between the years 1862 and 1964. Money came from alumni in Australia to fund future missionaries. Therry left £150 to Carlow College for that purpose. Dean Thomas Leonard, educated at Carlow College 1866-60 and serving in the Sydney Archdiocese up to his death in 1888, left money to establish three free places at the College for missions in Sydney and the new diocese of Wilcannia.

Carlow men were not always welcomed unconditionally. Bishop James Murray of Maitland had mixed feelings about the products of the Irish colleges. He held Carlow men, such as Andrew Phelan, in high regard but he believed that the students from Maynooth were not “gifted with the apostolic spirit’ or at least not to the same measure as the Irish nuns ... [and] he was not always happy with the products of All Hallows’.<sup>24</sup>

The motto of the College is *Rescissa Vegetior Assurgit* and translates into contemporary language as ‘Having been cut down it rises stronger than before’, a fitting reflection on the troubled times in which it opened its doors to the first of many generations of inspired and inspiring young men. ‘Carlow College students were imbued with a great sense of their institution’s history. Students preparing for foreign missions knew they would follow in the footsteps of pioneer missionaries. Frequent visits of bishops and priests from foreign dioceses ... gave the students a heightened sense of belonging to a global church’.<sup>25</sup> We should not underestimate their contribution to the development of the Catholic Church in Australasia. Pioneers, adventurers, men of courage, sometimes foolishly headstrong, they are certainly memorable.

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<sup>24</sup> James Murray to Tobias Kirby June 1872, quoted in Beverly Zimmerman, *The Making of a Diocese: Maitland, its Bishop, priests and people 1866-1909*, MUP, Melbourne, 2000, 71-72

<sup>25</sup> McAvoy, 503



## THE MELBOURNE PARISH OF RICHMOND: A LETTER OF 1933

Michael Moran\*



*Photograph of Richmond ca.1872. Shows Church Street Hill looking south, including St. Ignatius Catholic Church and the Methodist Church, as well as residential buildings and vacant blocks.<sup>1</sup>*

In October 1933 William Bloxom, longtime resident of Richmond, Victoria and former customs officer, fell into conversation with Fr J S Bourke SJ about the history of St Ignatius' parish.

Bloxom (1859-1936) had come to Richmond 'from Melbourne' as a boy in 1873. His conversation with Fr Bourke led to a letter of reminiscences, reproduced below. The letter can be found in a scrapbook in the papers of the late S F (Syd) Tutton<sup>2</sup> which are now in the State Library of Victoria. These papers also contain an impressive collection of Hibernian Australian Catholic Benefit Society (HACBS) records.

The letter opens a window into the life of the parish in its early years. We see the church bell hanging from a gum tree, the tenacious pursuit of careless

1 State Library of Victoria, Image H35242: <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/69501>

2 Syd Tutton (1937-2010), a native of Richmond, was National President of the St Vincent de Paul Society (2008-2010)

\* Michael Moran is the archivist of the St Vincent de Paul Society's National Office and is writing a history of the Society.

parishioners by a collector with ‘objectionable’ methods, and the celebrated Father Joseph Dalton SJ reciting Robbie Burns and practising a little job placement.

Dalton (1817-1905), the great founder – he founded the Jesuit mission in Melbourne in 1865, built the Church of St Ignatius, and established both Xavier College, Kew (1878) and St Ignatius College, Riverview (1880) – is seen here as parish priest.

We see the social life of the parish, the weekly concerts, debating, drama and song. We learn of Irish Town and sectarian conflict in The Vacluse.<sup>3</sup> We see the formation of a men’s club, later the Richmond Branch of the Catholic Young Men’s Society, and its destruction by an overbearing spiritual director.

Luminaries glimpsed include the journalist and controversialist, Benjamin Hoare (1842-1932),<sup>4</sup> the Winter brothers, Samuel (1843-1904) and Joseph (1844-1915),<sup>5</sup> and identities later prominent in local politics such as P J O’Connor (1862-1923), Mayor of Richmond (1896) and MLA for Fitzroy (1901-1902).

Many of the Jesuits encountered by Bloxom during his life in the parish are mentioned.<sup>6</sup> Biographies of most of them can be found in David Strong’s *The Australian dictionary of Jesuit biography, 1848-1998* (1999). Four - Dalton, Aloysius Kranewitter, John Ryan and William J Lockington - can also be found in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Several, such as Dalton, Ryan (1849-1922) and Lockington (1871-1948), feature prominently in Ursula Bygott’s *With pen and tongue: the Jesuits in Australia 1865-1939* (1980). Ryan, first publisher of the Messenger of the Sacred Heart in 1887 and author of ‘the little booklet’ of Richmond parish history to which Bloxom refers, was succeeded as superior of the Jesuit order in Australia by Lockington (1871-1948), orator, controversialist, and friend and ally of Mannix. Bloxom, however, remembers them all as pastors.

I am grateful to Mr Lachlan Harley of the St Vincent de Paul Society’s national office for his assistance in preparing this letter.

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3 On The Vacluse see Alfred Stirling, *Old Richmond*, Melbourne : Hawthorn Press, 1979

4 Benjamin Hoare 1842-1932: <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A090321b.htm>

5 Joseph Winter 1844-1915 and Samuel Vincent Winter 1843-1904  
<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A060542b.htm>

6 Bloxom mentions John Ryan 1849-1922, Patrick McGrath 1870-1948, John Stephen Bourke 1876-1969, Joseph Dalton 1817-1897, Joseph Mulhall 1820-1897, Aloysius Kranewitter 1817-1880, Isaac Moore 1829-1899, Joseph O’Malley 1830-1910, Michael Watson 1845-1931, Edward Murphy 1829-1886, Oliver Daly 1845-1916, James Kennedy, John McInerney 1850-1913, Augustus Fleury 1855-1931, Joseph Brennan, William J. Lockington 1871-1948, Charles Morogh, Charles Delaney 1867-1949, Charles Cuffe 1878-1935, John Martin 1876-1951 and Joseph Hearn 1854-1941

23 Elm Grove  
11/10/1933  
Richmond E.1

Dear & Revd Father,

A few weeks ago you asked me regarding some of my reminiscences of St Ignatius' Parish. I am now enclosing them herewith but I am afraid you will find it a poor effort.

I may be wrong but I am assuming that you had in mind the idea of writing an up to date history of the Parish or perhaps a continuation of the little booklet published in 1909, a copy of which I enclose.<sup>7</sup>

All the happenings after that date will be found In Father McGrath's statement in the "Advocate" which I also enclose. In that is set out the cost of building the schools, the debt &c at stated periods, the laying of the foundation stone for the spire, and the subsequent blessing of it when completed, together with the speeches on both occasions.

In any contemplated history of the Church these I hope will assist you materially, in fact perhaps most of it could be used as printed. If it is not intended to publish anything may I ask for a return of the booklet &c, at your convenience.

With great respect  
Yours Sincerely  
W Bloxom

The Revd J S Bourke SJ  
St Ignatius

P.S. Pictures & photos of Jesuit Fathers past and present would greatly add to any publication.

Enclosed: 1. Booklet. Memoirs of Richmond Mission; 2. Advocate Sheet of August 4 1929; 3. Advocate. Sheets (2) of October 11 1928

### **Some recollections of St Ignatius' Parish**

I came to Richmond with my parents, from Melbourne in 1873 and have resided in the parish from then till now. My connection with St Ignatius' Church began as a boy who was one of others deputed to ring the bell for Mass and Vespers. The bell was hung in a gum tree growing at a spot that would be about where the mens room is now situated. That same room is I believe part of the old wooden schoolroom and hall that did duty before the present brick schools were erected. The Jesuit Fathers when I came to Richmond were Father Dalton, parish priest, Father Mulhall and Father Kranewitter. Father Dalton was a frequent visitor to our house to see my

<sup>7</sup> J Ryan SJ, *Memoirs of the Richmond mission*, 1909

father and I have a vivid recollection that when letting him out from our house on one occasion he said to me that he hoped I would live to see the spire on his church.

As time went on I gradually became more closely connected with some of the activities of the parish in humble capacities. With Mr John T Duffy (R.I.P.) I assisted for some time in outdoor collecting, having a very large and scattered area to cover, the principal part of which was known as “Irish Town”, that being the name bestowed on a large section of the parish bounded by Swan Street, Punt Road, the river and Burnley. At that time there was only St Ignatius’ Church to serve the whole of Richmond.

It was in 1876 that St Ignatius’ Schools were placed in the hands of the Christian Brothers. The opening ceremony and consecration of the Convent and Schools being performed by Archbishop Goold on February 3rd. 1876.

I am not very clear about the reason the Brothers after several years relinquished charge of them.

Father Dalton was instrumental in forming a sort of men’s club which met once a week in the old Guild Hall then owned by the H.A.C.B. Society. At these gatherings, which were of a free and easy kind, we had songs, music and recitations by any one who was willing to oblige, and Father Dalton always gave us a short address and frequently a recitation, his pet selection being “A man’s a man for [all] that”. These gatherings led up to a few of us starting weekly concerts in addition to our own meetings, and Mr Duffy and myself on Saturday nights used to visit popular concerts in Melbourne to pick up suitable professional talent to [tone] up our own local volunteers. These concerts provided for several winters clean and cheap entertainment, the profits from which went to the Church Schools or deserving local charities.

At times our meetings were visited by some of the members of the Victorian Catholic Young Men’s Society which met at St Patrick’s Hall in Bourke Street Melbourne, and we in return were asked to come in to their meetings. Many of us did so frequently and the result was that we decided to give our gatherings a name somewhat similar to theirs. To our surprise we found out that we could not assume the title of a Catholic Young Men’s Society without the permission of the Archbishop. To obtain this permission a deputation comprising Messrs Joseph Winter (at that time proprietor of the “Advocate”), S.V. [Winter] (proprietor of the ‘Herald’), James Malin (a dux of St Patrick’s College), P.J. O’Connor, John T. Duffy, John Sheedy, John T. Hood & others including myself waited upon His Grace Dr. Goold and at once received his hearty approval and consent, and the club blossomed out as “The Richmond Branch of the Victorian Catholic Young Men’s Society”, being the first branch in Victoria. Very soon we had the able assistance of Mr Benjamin Hoare, who became not only a prominent and valuable member

but a guide philosopher and friend and put the Branch on the high road to success. Mr. Hoare writing to me a year or so ago about old times recalled his connection with the Branch and said “we used to do some good in those days”. We had a first class Debating Club, also a Dramatic Club and later a Minstrel Troupe and the two latter gave many performances in aid of the Schools and Convent and met with much success from 1879 to 1884. However all good things come to an end and through – well to put it mildly – some misunderstanding between the then Spiritual Director and the older members. The rules distinctly precluded the office of President being held by a clergyman but our Spiritual Director wished to become president to have complete control, and upon being elected without, for obvious reasons, any opposition, he gained his desire, but the older members left in a body.

We intended to carry on away from the schoolroom where meetings had been transferred to, and go back to the Guild Hall, but yielding to the good advice of Father Mulhall, who did not want two lots of members, we decided to disband with very great reluctance. The climax was reached very soon after when the remnants also ceased to exist.

Father Dalton had left Richmond long before these happenings but it is worthy of mention that before doing so, by his great influence he was instrumental in getting a number of his young men into permanent position in the Royal Mint, which was then starting in Victoria.

About 1878 to 1879 there was considerable unpleasantness regarding the private road known as Vaucluse. The greater number of the residents there were not Catholics and so bitter were they in their antagonism that they caused the gates at each end of the thoroughfare to be locked all day and night on Sundays, to prevent Catholics using it to go to Mass and Vespers. Gradually however the church acquired property after property until the position was reversed and an end put to all that. The same bitterness on their part resulted in stopping the ringing of the bell for early Masses and Vespers. It must however be said that the authorities at St Stephen’s had no part whatever in either of these matters.<sup>8</sup>

During the period that Father Mulhall was completing the building of the Church he organized a Grand Art Union called the “Richmond Bazaar Art Union” to obtain funds and made a profit of over 4000 (pounds) from it. This was in 1890 & 1891.

There was one great collector for the church indoor collection named Tony Carroll. He had his own ideas of methods which though objectionable were often effective. When anyone passed the plate, which he held at the door, without a donation, he would follow them up to their seat and remind them that they had forgotten to contribute. In those days there was 6s [? text unclear] expected for the

<sup>8</sup> St Stephen’s Church of England adjoined St Ignatius’

centre aisle, 3s [?] for one of the sides and the other was called the poor side. All this was however done away with, I think, when Father Hearn came.

Many of the young men of the Society before mentioned achieved civic positions in the City. P.J. O'Connor and John Sheedy were afterwards mayors of Richmond, and Councillors William J Bray, James Mulally, and others held their positions for some years.

During Father Mulhall's time he organised what was called the "Friendly Brothers". Their work was to collect once a month outdoor for the relief of cases of distress. For many years they brought in much money until ultimately the St Vincent De Paul's Society started.

It has been my great privilege up to a few years ago to know a large number of the great priests who have passed through the portals of St Ignatius. Apart from those already mentioned I knew the Reverend Fathers Isaac Moore, Joseph O'Malley, Michael Watson, John Ryan, Edward Murphy, Oliver Daly, James Kennedy, John McNerney, Augustus Fleury, Joseph Brennan, W.J. Lockington, Charles Morogh as well as Fathers Delaney, Cuffe and Martin. The outstanding work of the pioneer, Father Dalton, as a diplomat in securing the grand site for the church as well as his wonderful energy in starting the building of it - the great work of Father Mulhall in completing it, and the never to be forgotten success of Father McGrath in crowning all this with the spire, as well as providing the two beautiful marble altars, and the great bells, has brought to a grand climax something that Richmond Catholics should all be justly proud of and thankful to be in such a wonderful parish. Strange enough I was nearly missing something of the utmost importance and that is the marvellous work of Father Hearn in erecting the splendid schools. This great work was accomplished in the face of great difficulties, but nothing ever daunted him once he set out on a job, and I recall the frequent working bees he instituted to clean up the grounds, the schools &c, when the response of men was so great that it astonished everyone except Father Hearn himself. Then as if to overshadow all he had already done he volunteered for active service in the Great War where he so distinguished himself that he was awarded to Military Cross. Not being an active participant precluded him from receiving the V.C which he rightly deserved.

On his return he was accorded a great reception in St Ignatius Hall and he richly deserved it, but with all these things to his credit he could not rest and we next heard of him at Hawthorn when he built the fine Manresa Hall during his term of office as Parish Priest there.

There are many other happenings that are worthy of recording during my 60 years in the Parish that I wish I could recall but there is a mist over my memory and I have no notes so the curtain must drop.

## DISHARMONY AMONG BISHOPS: ON THE BINDING NATURE OF A PAPAL *MOTU PROPRIO* ON MUSIC

John de Luca\*

The initial research for this chapter was undertaken as part of a doctoral thesis presented to the University of New South Wales in 2001.<sup>1</sup> Significant material relevant to the chapter's theme published since then includes a major biography of the principal protagonist, Patrick Francis Cardinal Moran, commissioned by Moran's present-day successor as archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal George Pell.<sup>2</sup> A journal article on Moran's contemporary and sometime episcopal critic, the archbishop of Adelaide, John O'Reilly, has been added to the small but important body of research relating to this interesting colonial prelate.<sup>3</sup> A study of the relations between the popes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the Italian state casts light on some of the motivating forces shaping the attitudes of the leading papal musical reformer of the period, Pope Pius X,<sup>4</sup> as does the recent work of probably the leading Australian scholar researching in the field of Italian history.<sup>5</sup>

Since the publication of a *motu proprio* in 2007 by Pope Benedict XVI, partially restoring the ceremonial of the post-Tridentine period to the Roman Rite,<sup>6</sup> considerable point has been added to this chapter's consideration of conflicting episcopal attitudes to liturgical musical reform. Such reform was the aim of the celebrated *motu proprio*, issued within three months of his accession to the papacy,

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- 1 John Anthony de Luca, 'A Vision Found and Lost: The Promotion and Evolving Interpretation of the Movement for Liturgical Musical Reform within the Sydney Catholic Church during the Twentieth Century', PhD thesis, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 2001.
  - 2 Philip Ayres, *Prince of the Church: Patrick Francis Moran, 1830-1911*, Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2007.
  - 3 Robert Rice, 'Archbishop John O'Reilly: First bishop of Port Augusta and second archbishop of Adelaide – Some aspects of his theology and practice: *Australasian Catholic Record* 84, 2007, 169–84.
  - 4 David I Kertzer, *Prisoner of the Vatican: The Popes' Secret Plot to Capture Rome from the New Italian State*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.
  - 5 R J B Bosworth, *Mussolini's Italy: Life under the Dictatorship, 1915-1945*, London: Penguin, 2006.
  - 6 Benedictus PP. XVI, Apostolic Letter in the form of a *Motu Proprio*, *Summorum Pontificium*, Rome [Vatican City]: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007.

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\* Rev. Dr John De Luca, Historian, musician and Pastor Emeritus of the Parish of St Mary and St Joseph Maroubra Bay/Beach. Originally published as *Disputatur inter doctores*, in *Renewal and Resistance: Catholic Church Music from the 1850s to Vatican II*, ed. P Collins (Peter Lang, Oxford, 2010), 240-50. Reprinted with permission of Peter Lang.

by Pope Pius X in 1903.<sup>7</sup> Conventional wisdom says that, in the secular sphere, all politics is ultimately local. In all likelihood, this applies also to ecclesiastical politics, since the church, irrespective of its claims to divine origin and guidance, is composed of human beings, and therefore is not immune to the prejudices of the people who comprise it, be they prelates or parishioners. This chapter looks at divergent attitudes within the Australian Catholic church to the 1903 *motu proprio*, which sought to promote congregational sung participation in the liturgy by stressing music's structural role rather than its decorative function. Pius X wished to stress the active participation of the laity in the liturgy as an essential prerequisite for their full involvement in the life of the church. By proscribing music that he considered ornamental (be it soloistic, the mixed-voice repertoire of the Classical and Romantic periods, or purely instrumental) and replacing it with a restoration of monodic plainsong for the congregation and the male-voice polyphony of the High Renaissance as represented especially by the Roman School of Palestrina and Victoria, Pius X gave official approbation at the highest level to the aspirations of the nineteenth-century Cecilian movement.<sup>8</sup> The reality that many ordinary church members enjoyed the existing musical repertoire, approved of female choristers and soloists, and considered the reforms of Pius X as elitist, was not lost on the then archbishop of Sydney, who openly resisted the *motu proprio's* reforms. Equally, the archbishop of Adelaide, who had anticipated the reform programme of Pius X almost to the letter, sought to impose the reform agenda by decree. This chapter's story tells of the victory of populism over idealism in one remote part of the Roman Church: a determined bishop resisting a papal command.

Pope Pius X (Giuseppe Sarto) held office from 1903 to 1914. He is generally remembered as a pastoral rather than as a political or intellectual pontiff. Prior to his elevation to the papacy, he had served first as bishop of Mantua, and then as patriarch of Venice. As pope, his major musical reform is contained in the *motu proprio*, known by its Italian title, which was issued on 22 November 1903 (feast of St Cecilia, patron of music and musicians), barely three months after his accession to office. The haste with which this document was produced, confirmed by the fact that it was not until 1904 that the official Latin version appeared, may fairly be judged to indicate that liturgical musical reform was an issue close to the pope's heart.

As a young priest, Giuseppe Sarco had been an amateur choirmaster and

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7 Pius PP.X, *Tra le sollecitudini*, Rome [Vatican City]: Acta Sanctae Sedis, 36.329, 1903.

8 See Karl Gustav Fellerer, 'Cecilian movement', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 4, London: Macmillan, 1995, 47-8.



church musician.<sup>9</sup> As a diocesan bishop, he had sought to improve liturgical musical standards in the two dioceses for which he had oversight. In furtherance of this aim, Sarto commissioned the Jesuit priest Angdo de Santi to draw up a list of liturgical musical norms to be implemented in the diocese of Mantua. This document was later revised and reissued in Venice when Sarto was appointed patriarch there. The late American scholar of papal musical legislation, Robert Hayburn, has ably demonstrated the close correspondence between Sarto's two decrees promulgated in Mantua and Venice, showing how the earlier decrees were in large part identical with the *motu proprio* of 1903.<sup>10</sup> De Santi, then, maybe considered the effective author of the *motu proprio*, although the document undoubtedly reflected the deeply held convictions of Pius X himself.

Although geographically remote from the European heartland of Catholicism, and from its vibrant expression in the new world of the Americas, Australian Catholics at the beginning of the twentieth century were well acquainted with the currents of thought in those older societies. The campaign to reform liturgical musical practice in the archdiocese of Adelaide conducted by John O'Reily (archbishop of Adelaide, 1895-1915) was based on the ideals of the Cecilian movement, and in many respects anticipated the reforms of Pius X. Not content with restricting his attempt to reform contemporary liturgical musical practices to his own diocese of Adelaide, O'Reily campaigned nationally in support of the Cecilian reform agenda. In the inaugural year (1895) of the *Australasian Catholic Record*, a scholarly ecclesiastical journal, O'Reily penned a lengthy article on the state of church music in Australia in which he called for the banning of '[...] the masses of Mozart and Haydn *et hoc genus omne* [and all those of that kind].<sup>11</sup> Moreover, he suggested the drawing up of an *index expurgatorius*, or list of music considered unsuitable for use in Catholic worship. It was somewhat daring of O'Reily to choose the *Australasian Catholic Record* as the locus for his attack on current musical tastes, since this journal had been founded by Patrick Francis Cardinal Moran, archbishop of Sydney, a senior prelate who could be considered to have been O'Reily's patron. The musical practice in Moran's own cathedral church (St Mary's Cathedral Sydney) embraced many of the so-called abuses that O'Reily was seeking to correct. To attack those abuses could

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9 See Iginio Giordani (trans. Thomas J Tobin), *Pius X: A Country Priest*, Milwaukee: Bruce, 1954; also Rafael Merry del Val, *Memories of Pope Pius X*, London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1939, and A G Cicognani, A G Flunan et al., *A Symposium on the Life and Work of Pope Pius X*, Washington, DC: Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, 1946.

10 Robert Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music, 95 A.D. to 1977 A.D.*, Collegetown, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979, 120-2.

11 John O'Reily, 'Church Music in Australia', *Australasian Catholic Record*, 1895, 202.

be construed as criticism of Moran himself. O'Reily's article in the *Australasian Catholic Record* soon elicited a spirited riposte, not from Moran, but from Moran's associate, the director of cathedral music, John Albert Delaney.<sup>12</sup> Delaney's musical abilities were highly regarded in Australia, and his liturgical musical preferences suited Moran and the Sydney Catholic community. Although he was not totally opposed to some of the ideals being espoused by O'Reily (ideals which were soon to be enshrined in Pius X's reforming legislation), Delaney had many reservations about the direction that liturgical musical reform was taking.

O'Reily continued his national campaign for liturgical musical reform in a paper given at the First Australasian Catholic Congress, held in Sydney in 1900.<sup>13</sup> This paper was principally devoted to a critical study of the state of plainsong in Australian Catholic churches. In restricting himself to a consideration of plainsong, O'Reily left room for another speaker, one who shared O'Reily's Cecilian ideals, the Sydney lawyer John Donovan. Quite possibly, the division of labour between these two musical reformers at the First Australasian Catholic Congress was a diplomatic move on the part of O'Reily. The congress was being held in the diocese administered by Moran, Australia's senior ecclesiastic, a person of some standing with Vatican authorities, and one, moreover, who had been a patron of O'Reily himself. Moran had been the principal consecrator of O'Reily as a bishop, and had shown consideration for O'Reily addressing pressing financial problems in O'Reily's own diocese of Adelaide. O'Reily probably considered it prudent to leave trenchant criticism to Donovan, a wealthy Sydney lawyer, the leading practitioner in equity law at the Sydney bar, a bachelor and significant donor to the church in Sydney and beyond. John Donovan will be seen to have played a pivotal role in the matter being considered in this chapter.

At the 1900 congress, O'Reily laid the blame for the reluctance of the laity to accept the use of plainsong in worship on the poor example being given by the clergy. Though personally in favour of plainsong, O'Reily considered that 'the condition in which the art of Gregorian singing finds itself in Australia is certainly regrettable. That art is a lifeless, spiritless thing, a mere dead body, without animation or beauty.'<sup>14</sup> So, clearly, O'Reily had no illusions about how difficult was the task to attempt to change public acceptance of the Cecilian reform agenda.

John Donovan, who was considerably more outspoken than O'Reily in criticism of the prevailing liturgical musical practice at the 1900 congress, was a prominent Sydney layman, well known to Cardinal Moran. Moran had secured a papal

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12 J A Delaney, 'Church Music in Australia', *Australasian Catholic Record* 2, 1895, 465-473.

13 John O'Reily, 'Gregorian Chant', *Proceedings of the First Australasian Catholic Congress*, Sydney: St Mary's Cathedral, 1900, 810-814.

14 'Gregorian Chant', 813.

knighthood for Donovan in 1893 in recognition of his generous donations to Catholic charities and, indeed, to the fabric of Moran's cathedral church itself. Donovan had been appointed to a committee in 1878, by Moran's Benedictine episcopal predecessor, to reorganize the choir of St Mary's Cathedral along Cecilian lines, with boys' and men's voices. This attempt at reform was not continued by Moran or his director of music, John Albert Delany, quite possibly to Donovan's annoyance. In his 1900 paper 'On Church Music', Donovan condemned the contemporary musical repertoire as entirely unsuitable for worship.<sup>15</sup> He considered it to be 'self-indulgent, repetitious, and more a vehicle for the display of soloists' technique than a useful adjunct to worship.' Donovan cited, as a particularly unsuitable example of this defective repertoire, the soprano aria 'Inflamatus' from Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, about which more will be said later. In condemning the Masses of Haydn (and to a lesser extent, Mozart), Donovan used phrases that had previously been employed by O'Reily in the decrees he had issued in an attempt to reform liturgical music in his own diocese of Adelaide. This congruity suggests the possibility that O'Reily and Donovan were acting in concert, and that their target, at least in part, was the recalcitrant Moran himself.

It is a moot point as to whether Donovan could be considered O'Reily's mouthpiece at the 1900 congress. As a leading practitioner at law, Donovan was his own person and in need of no prompting to pursue causes that he considered proper. However, O'Reily was a natural ally, and as a metropolitan bishop, the senior and most articulate pro-reform ecclesiastic in Australia at the time. Each probably drew strength from the other, a joint resolve that was needed to confront the very powerfully placed and influential Cardinal Moran. The fact that Donovan used the expressions *hoc genus omne* and *index expurgatorious*, both used previously by O'Reily, could be explained by both men having had access to *Lyra Ecclesiastica*, the monthly bulletin of the Irish Society of St Cecilia, where these phrases were first used in October 1878.<sup>16</sup> But it would seem more likely that the line of influence should be traced from the Irish-educated O'Reily to the native Australian Donovan.

The issuing of the 1903 *motu proprio* by Pope Pius X received wide publicity within Catholic circles in Australia. The two weekly Catholic newspapers in Sydney, the *Catholic Press* and the *Freeman's Journal*, featured both the text of the *motu proprio* itself, and detailed commentary on it. Advocates of liturgical musical reform, such as O'Reily and Donovan, felt vindicated by the papal decree. The fact that five papers on the topic of liturgical music were presented at the first significant

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15 John Donovan, 'On Church Music', *Proceedings of the First Australasian Catholic Congress* (as n.13), 815-25.

16 See Kieran Anthony Daly, *Catholic Church Music in Ireland, 1878-1903*, Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995, 38-9.

national Catholic gathering following the publication of the *motu proprio* (the Second Australasian Catholic Congress, held in Melbourne in 1904), is a clear indication of the higher profile being given to liturgical music within the Australian church as a direct result of the papal intervention. The five papers included a commentary on the *motu proprio* by a Vatican official, Monsignor Antonio Rella, who was subsequently to become director of the Sistine Chapel Choir.<sup>17</sup> John O'Reily again spoke, this time with a more triumphalist tone. His paper was entitled 'The Pope on Church Music'.<sup>18</sup> O'Reily obviously felt vindicated by the papal endorsement of the reform agenda that he (O'Reily) had been fostering, not without opposition, for some time. The flavour of O'Reily's sense of vindication may be gauged from the following quotation: 'The Supreme Pontiff has spoken. The High Priest has said his word. His it is to rule the sanctuary, his to shape and fashion the public homage offered to God.'<sup>19</sup> Because of his superior ecclesiastical status, the last word at the 1904 congress was given to Cardinal Moran. Moran, predictably, did not pass up the opportunity to put on record his personal opinion that the *motu proprio* was not of binding nature so far as the Australian church was concerned. Moran contended that the pope's legislation was intended for the older, established churches, and not intended for the church in younger, missionary countries such as Australia. Moran praised the pope's 'perfect musicianship' and agreed that people 'ought to endeavour, as far as possible, to carry out his wishes.' But he also stated firmly that 'the Holy Father was addressing the home, and not missionary countries.'<sup>20</sup> In no uncertain terms, Moran indicated his opinion that the 1903 *motu proprio* should not be considered as binding legislation so far as the Australian church was concerned. So there the matter rested: *Disputatur inter doctores*.

Moran's 1904 argument on the non-binding nature of the *motu proprio* for missionary churches was immediately taken up by his cathedral director of music, John Albert Delany. Writing that same year in the *Australasian Catholic Record*, Delany asked: '[...] can, then, the Catholic Church in Australia be considered as any other than a Missionary Church? [...] the writer ventures to think not.'<sup>21</sup> To the legal mind of John Donovan, the Moran-Delany argument was specious, and he eventually determined to test the argument in the highest court of appeal for any Catholic, the Vatican Curia itself. But before making an appeal to Rome, there

17 Antonio Rella, 'A Brief Commentary on the Motu Proprio of Pius X', *Proceedings of the Second Australasian Catholic Congress*, Melbourne: Advocate Press, 1905, 478-83.

18 John O'Reily, 'The Pope on Church Music', *Proceedings of the Second Australasian Catholic Congress* (as n.17), 471-7.

19 *Proceedings of the Second Australasian Catholic Congress*, (as n.17), 471.

20 *Proceedings of the Second Australasian Catholic Congress*, (as n.17), 477.

21 J A Delany, 'Pius X and Sacred Music', *Australasian Catholic Record*, 1904, 376.

was an opportunity to test Moran's opinion at the Third Plenary Council of the Australian Catholic Church, scheduled to be held in 1905. Unlike the congresses of 1900 and 1903, which were just 'talk-fests' plenary councils were legislative bodies, proposing binding legislation for the local church, legislation which would be ratified by the Vatican. To have the missionary church argument debated by the Australian bishops in council, John Donovan's brother, Thomas, also a barrister but more well known as a successful businessman, wrote to O'Reily soliciting his support for music reform at the 1905 plenary council.<sup>22</sup> At this time, there was no official papal representative (apostolic delegate or papal nuncio) in Australia. Such formal representation did not commence until 1914. It was Moran himself who was commissioned by the Vatican to preside at the 1905 plenary council as the pope's cardinal delegate, a presidency that he had also exercised at the two previous plenary councils in 1885 and 1895. With Moran in the chair, it was highly unlikely that any attempt to use the plenary council as a vehicle for dissent was likely to succeed. And this proved to be the case. The one concrete proposal concerning church music reform agreed to by the bishops at the 1905 plenary council was a call for the drawing-up of a list of music suitable for use in worship.<sup>23</sup> This proposal reversed both O'Reily's and John Donovan's previous calls for a list of proscribed music. But even this watered-down proposal was not implemented in the Sydney church during Moran's time as archbishop. The failure of the bishops at the 1905 plenary council to embrace any meaningful liturgical musical reform was probably the catalyst for John Donovan's next move: to appeal directly to the Cardinal Secretary of State in the Vatican.

Pope Pius X's Secretary of State was Rafael Cardinal Merry del Val, of mainly Spanish ancestry, but, significantly in the Australian context, English educated and English speaking. Possibly because of this English connection, Merry del Val's name was probably more well-known to informed lay Australian Catholics than the names of other members of the Roman Curia. For whatever reason, it was to Cardinal Merry del Val that John Donovan wrote, on Sydney's Australian Club letterhead, on 1 June 1909, seeking official clarification of whether Moran was correct in invoking exemption from the 1903 *motu proprio's* reforms on the grounds that Australia was a missionary country. Donovan asked:

Is the instruction of the Holy Father, commonly called the '*Motu Proprio*' on Church Music [...] intended to apply to all the Catholic World? Or, on

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22 See T Donovan/J O'Reily, O'Reily Papers, Box 6 (Church Music 1895-1909), Archdiocese of Adelaide Archives; also Helen Harrison, *Laudate Dominum: Music at Adelaide's Catholic Cathedral, 1845-1995*, Adelaide: Powerhouse Press, 1997, 32.

23 *Acta et Decreta Concilii Plenarii Australiensis III, habiti apud Sydney, A.D. 1905, a Sancta Sede Recognita*, Sydney: William Brooks Printer, 1905, n. 193.

the other hand, are 'Missionary Countries' (such as Australia is said to be exempted from its operation, and if so, in what respect? [...] Cardinal Moran contends, or at any rate suggests, that this being a 'Missionary Country' the '*Motu Proprio*' is not intended to apply here [...] but I am unaware that the Cardinal has ever submitted this question to Rome.<sup>24</sup>

Donovan asked for a speedy reply to his inquiry, since he wished to prepare a paper correcting Moran's rejection of the binding nature of the 1903 *motu proprio*, and intended to present this paper at the forthcoming Third Australasian Catholic Congress, which was scheduled to be held in Sydney in September 1909. As will be seen below, Moran gave Donovan no opportunity to present his paper at the 1909 congress, effectively forestalling any possible criticism from Donovan.

The present writer, unaware at the time (1994) of the existence of John Donovan's letter to Cardinal Merry del Val, but interested in ascertaining whether Moran's argument concerning the non-binding nature of 1903 *motu proprio* had ever been ventilated with the Roman authorities, conducted archival research on the matter in three Roman archives in May 1994. The first archive consulted was that of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the Catholic Church's principal missionary office, formerly known as Propaganda Fide. The aim of the search was to ascertain whether Cardinal Moran had formally raised the question of the application of the 1903 *motu proprio* within the Australian context in any communication with the missionary dicastery. The search was assisted by the publication of an inventory of the archive's holdings prepared by a former prefect of the archive, Fr Josef Metzler, OMI.<sup>25</sup> As expected, the search proved negative. There was no record of any communication from Moran on this topic in the records of the dicastery of first instance to which Moran was answerable.

The second search was conducted in the archives of the former Sacred Congregation of Rites, now known as the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. Because of a division in the functions of this office that took place during the papacy of Pope John Paul II, this archive is now found in the building presently housing the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. This search unearthed for the first time the previously-mentioned letter of John Donovan to the Cardinal Secretary of State, dated 1 June 1909. There was, furthermore, considerable documentation relating to the stir within the Vatican dicasteries

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<sup>24</sup> J Donovan/R Merry del Val, *Segreteria di Stato di Sua Santita*, Vatican, 1909, n.38504.

<sup>25</sup> Josef Metzler OMI, *Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide Memoria Rerum: 350 Years in the Service of the Missions*, Rome, Freiburg and Vienna; Herder, 1976.

following receipt of Donovan's letter.<sup>26</sup> No evidence, however, came to light on any communication from Moran. The discovery of Donovan's letter will be discussed in more detail below.

The final search was conducted in the Vatican Secret Archives, to which the present writer was given access by the then prefect, the same Fr Josef Metzler who had previously been responsible for the Propaganda Fide archives. The records consulted were those of the Secretariat of State during the time of Moran's incumbency in Sydney. Once again, there was no sign of any communication from Moran to Rome on the issue of the 1903 *motu proprio*. This was a predictable result, considering Moran's sense both of his personal status and of his seniority to most curial functionaries.

With regard to the Vatican reaction to John Donovan's letter of 1 June 1909, the first thing to be noted is the promptness with which action was taken. On 12 July 1909, the Secretariat of State sent Donovan's letter to the Congregation for Divine Worship, directing that dicastery to attend to the matter. This typically bureaucratic response (that of shifting responsibility to another department) could validly be construed as recognition of Moran's status, and of an unwillingness to offend him. The Congregation for Divine Worship, however, researched the question of the application of general church directives, such as those contained in the 1903 *motu proprio*, to local churches in missionary countries that were under the jurisdiction of Propaganda Fide. The particular official charged with drawing up a response to Donovan's letter cited three precedents which indicated that Moran was in error. Despite this judgment, the advice given to the cardinal prefect as to how he might respond to a petitioner who had caused a high-ranking ecclesiastic to have been shown to be in error was simply to ignore both the question and the questioner. The cardinal prefect was advised that since the question had been asked by a layperson (*'postulante e un semplice laico'*) and not by a bishop who had a right to a response, the cardinal prefect was under no obligation to respond. So there the matter rested. No reply was sent to John Donovan. Moran was wrong, but Donovan was not to be told this. This deprived John Donovan of the official judgment he had sought to use at the Third Australasian Catholic Congress, held in Sydney in September 1909.

As it happened, Donovan was not invited to speak at the Third Australasian Catholic Congress. Cardinal Moran controlled the agenda, and he clearly had no intention of providing a platform for his critics. In contrast to the 1904 congress held in Melbourne, where five papers on the topic of musical reform were delivered,

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<sup>26</sup> See inter-offic memorandum from Secretariat of State to the prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites (12 July 1909); also position papers prepared for the prefect for a reply to John Donovan (17 July 1909), SCR correspondence folders (1909), nos 196, 635.

some of which were, at least indirectly, critical of Moran's stance on this issue, the topic of liturgical musical reform was altogether avoided at the 1909 congress. To circumvent controversy, Moran invited only a trusted medical practitioner, Charles W MacCarthy, to speak on a musical topic in 1909. MacCarthy had called for the composition of an Australian national song at the 1900 congress, a topic agreeable to the nationalist sentiments of Moran. Presumably MacCarthy could be relied on not to offend Moran. In his reply to Moran's invitation to speak, MacCarthy makes no mention of anything controversial.<sup>27</sup> In the end, MacCarthy delivered a paper on the uncontroversial topic of Irish Music.<sup>28</sup> Since there was no separate section for liturgical music at the 1909 Sydney congress, MacCarthy's paper was included in the section for literature, science and art.

An even more cogent indication of Moran's control of the situation may be seen in the music chosen for the solemn High Mass celebrated in St Mary's Cathedral as the high point of the Third Australasian Catholic Congress. If anything, the repertoire for this very public occasion was counter-Cecilian. A mixed choir of some 270 voices, with orchestral accompaniment, performed the Australian premiere of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford's *Mass in G*. An instrumental interlude replaced the proper plainsong Gradual (the item was the Norwegian violinist Ole Bull's air 'Solitude'). Most pointedly, in view of John Donovan having cited, at the 1900 congress, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* (and particularly the soprano aria 'Inflammatu') as a prime example of the sort of music that had no place in Catholic worship, it was precisely this aria that was 'glowingly sung by Miss Amy Castles' at the 1909 congress High Mass.<sup>29</sup> A determined and recalcitrant Cardinal Moran was indeed rubbing salt into the wounds of the would-be but vanquished liturgical musical reformers, and in so doing, confirmed an anti-reform pattern that was to continue in Sydney's Catholic churches for many decades to come.

The present writer's doctoral thesis examined the reluctant history of liturgical musical reform within the Sydney Catholic church during the twentieth century, a story that quite clearly reflected Cardinal Moran's recognition of the power of popular musical taste at the beginning of the century. An interesting study could be made of the similarities between the reform agendas for liturgical music of both Pope Pius X and his present day successor, Pope Benedict XVI. An even more interesting study could be made of episcopal resistance to liturgical musical reform, one example of which this chapter has sought to illustrate.

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27 See C W MacCarthy/P F Moran, 7 July 1909, Sydney Archdiocesan Archives, U2314/5.94.

28 C W MacCarthy, 'Irish Music', *Proceedings of the Third Australasian Catholic Congress*, Sydney: St Mary's Cathedral, 1909, 601-2.5.

29 Errol Lea-Scarlett, 'Music, Choir and Organ', in Patrick O'Farrell (ed.), *St Mary's Cathedral Sydney, 1821-1971*, Surry Hills: Devonshire Press, 1971, 157-81 (at p.179). 37



**MONSIGNOR PETER BYRNE**  
**AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF CATHOLICISM IN STRATHFIELD**

**Damian John Gleeson\***

**Introduction**



*Monsignor Peter Byrne, Catholic Press*

NSW Premier Jim McGirr. In earlier times though, construction of the first church (1905) and creation of St Martha's Parish (1916) occurred against concerns that an official Catholic presence would harm residential property values! A tenacious and tireless Fr (later Monsignor) Peter Byrne, from the 'north of Ireland', mobilised a small but influential Catholic community. Mons Byrne was also a senior and trusted archdiocesan member. This paper focuses on the life of Mons Byrne and his partnership with laity to develop St Martha's parish. With few exceptions, Mons Byrne has not received coverage in Irish or Australian Catholic historiography.<sup>1</sup> This paper posits Mons Byrne within his northern Irish culture.

Contemporaneously, Strathfield is synonymous with the Catholic Institute of Sydney, several religious orders and private schools, a campus of Australian Catholic University, and the vibrant local parish of St Martha's. Although a parishioner of St Martha's for the first half of my life, it was not until the current Parish Priest, Fr Christopher Slattery invited me to write the parish's history that I began to appreciate Strathfield's rather unique past. Strathfield has a distinctive culture and history that set its Catholic foundations apart from most other Sydney parishes. Notably, it is the only Australian parish named after St Martha and its socio-economic composition in the early decades of the 20th century did not reflect an Irish-Australian working class parish. Untypically, also, St Martha's parishioners included both Prime Minister Francis Forde and

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1 For example, W J Delaney, *They Passed this Way: a coverage of the history of the first 100 years of progress in the parish of St. Mary's, Concord, N.S.W. 1870-1970* (Concord, 1970).

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### **Irish heritage**

Peter Byrne was born into a strong nationalist family just a few years after the ravaging effects of the late 1840s Great Irish Famine. His official record in the Sydney Archdiocesan Archives (SAA) says he was born in Co Louth, Ireland on 23 March 1856.<sup>2</sup> The year may be incorrect as another record held by the SAA says 1854, which is more in keeping with him being 68 years when he died,<sup>3</sup> and



*Historic Killanny Cemetery, Co Louth: Generations of Byrnes are buried in this graveyard. Author's photo, July 2014.*

aged 32 when he migrated to the colony of New South Wales in 1895.<sup>4</sup> Fr Byrne came from the Clogher Diocese, which covered several counties, including a few northern parishes of Co Louth.

Byrne, a high frequency surname, proved a challenge in identifying Fr Peter's forebears. Although Byrnes resided in Co Louth for several centuries it is not a name indigenous to that locality. In the 17th century several Byrnes from Wicklow migrated north and settled in the parish of Killanny, near Carrickmacross. The *Freeman's Journal* noted that Fr Byrne's '... family is connected by ties of blood, with those whole-souled patriots, the O'Byrnes, rebel chieftains of Wicklow.'<sup>5</sup>

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2 Personal Details, Monsignor Peter Byrne File, Sydney Archdiocesan Archives (SAA).

3 Obituary, *Sydney Morning Herald* (hereafter *SMH*), 20 March 1922.

4 Victorian Shipping Records.

5 *Freeman's Journal* (hereafter *FJ*), 22 October 1904, 10.

Peter's parents were Peter Byrne, a farmer, and Margaret Roddy.<sup>6</sup> These families were neighbours and the Roddys operated a local Mill.<sup>7</sup> Advice from the Heritage Room, Carrickmacross Workhouse confirms that young Peter was born in the townland of Lannat, Killanny and his siblings were Loughlin (1854-1916) and Anne (m. Peter Kelly of Essexford).<sup>8</sup> Many descendants continue to live in the district.

In 1872 Peter Byrne began studying to be a priest. Unlike many Clogher diocese seminarians who came from the major towns in Co Monaghan, Peter came from a village in the diocese's most south-eastern parish in Co Louth. As one local historian observed:

Generally students [to St Macartan's College] would come from relatively comfortable backgrounds. Parents would be teachers or in business or their fathers may have been in the police force or in a trade, but in the main, the student body would be from an industrious, medium-sized farming community.<sup>9</sup>

Peter moved to St Patrick's College, Maynooth and on 23 September 1875 matriculated with a Second in Philosophy.<sup>10</sup> He continued studying at the Diocesan College of St Macartan's and was ordained at Monaghan Cathedral on 28 October 1879.

### **'Ardent Patriot'**

Fr Byrne's first appointment, says the *Irish Catholic Directory*, was to Pettigo, the most northern parish in the Diocese of Clogher. Pronounced in Gaelic, *Paitihegoba*, *Pettigo* means 'the place of the smith's house'.<sup>11</sup> They were challenging times with Orangeism rife and significant sectarianism against Catholics.<sup>12</sup> A land reform movement, led by Protestant politician, Charles Stewart Parnell, which sought equality for the largely dispossessed Catholic community, attracted Fr Byrne's support, who the *Catholic Press* later described as an 'ardent patriot' fighting

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6 Byrne, Peter, NSW Death Certificate, 1922.

7 Letter from Mrs Patsy Markey, Carrickmacross, to the writer, 6 October 2014.

8 M F Kirley and colleagues from the Heritage Room, Carrickmacross Workhouse kindly provided this information, July 2014.

9 J Murnane, *St Macartan's College, 1840-1990: A history, ca 1990*, 41.

10 P.J. Hamell, *Maynooth Students' and Ordinations' Index, 1795-1895* (Birr, Co Offaly, June 1982), 37.

11 P W Joyce, *The origin and history of Irish names of places*, Vol. 111, published 1913 reprint 1976, by E P Publishing, 529.

12 *Belfast News*, 8 July 1881; 6 November; 16 November & 27 December 1883.

‘against landlordism and the Protestant ascendancy’.<sup>13</sup>

Landlord-tenant tensions brought Catholic religious activities under undue suspicion.<sup>14</sup> Indicative of society’s deep fault lines, ‘... local magistrates and other dissident persons, who dislike everything in the least degree savouring Catholicity’ secured a large police presence at the ordination of priests and the unveiling of a votive statue of our Blessed Lady at Pettigo in 1882.<sup>15</sup> A correspondent to the Irish *Freeman’s Journal* commented that sectarianism has ‘given rise to a great amount of indignant feeling and most justifiable resentment’.<sup>16</sup>

After Pettigo, Fr Byrne ministered at two Co Monaghan parishes: Curran, and Clontibret. At Clontibret, when instructed to collect dues from parishioners, he refused, citing the people’s poverty.<sup>17</sup>

### **Migration**

Migration may be considered in terms of push-pull factors. In the turbulent north of Ireland in the 1880s Fr Byrne had demonstrated political will to support dispossessed Catholics. Whether his actions attracted support or ire from his local bishop is unclear as Clogher Diocese has no extant records.<sup>18</sup> A possible influence may have been that there was an older – possibly a cousin – Fr Peter Byrne also from Killanny parish, who had visited Australia to fundraise for Clogher.<sup>19</sup> On the ‘pull’ side, Fr Byrne’s migration has been attributed to the ‘magnetism’ of Cardinal Moran, who visited Ireland in mid-1885, on return from Rome where he had been elevated to a ‘Prince of the Church’.<sup>20</sup>

The Irish *Freeman’s Journal* reported that Cardinal Moran would return to Sydney with several priests and members of religious orders.<sup>21</sup> Fr Byrne was among 10 priests who migrated to Australia on the *Liguria*, along with foundation members of the Little Company of Mary, who would establish Lewisham Hospital.

After arriving in Sydney, Fr Byrne briefly ministered at St Mary’s Cathedral, before being appointed to the Kogarah district as first resident priest at the (then) Hurstville-based parish. Fr Byrne oversaw construction of St Patrick’s Church Kogarah, which Cardinal Moran opened on 19 February 1888. St Patrick’s Kogarah

13 *Catholic Press* (hereafter *CP*), 27 October 1904, 3.

14 *The Nation*, 13 November 1880.

15 [Irish] *Freeman’s Journal*, 10 July 1882, 6.

16 [Irish] *FJ*, 6.

17 Letter from Mrs Patsy Markey, Carrickmacross, to the writer, 18 August 2014, 2-3.

18 Clogher Catholic Diocesan Archives are based at Monaghan town.

19 ‘Death of the Rev Fr Peter Byrne PP, Kilmore’, *Dundalk Democrat*, 13 October 1883, 4.

20 *CP*, 22 October 1904, 3; 23 February 1922, 21.

21 [Irish] *Freeman’s Journal*, 11 August 1885, 5.

bell tower, opened on St Patrick's Day in 1936, includes this recognition transcribed from Latin:

John Joseph O'Driscoll, the successor of Peter Byrne, first pastor of this parish, gave me in pious memory of him so that I might call the faithful to St Patrick's Church to give praise to God.<sup>22</sup>

Fr Byrne returned to Cathedral parish, where he was given special responsibility for St Canice's Darlinghurst (now Potts Point). In early 1894, Fr Byrne received a fond farewell from the Mayor of Sydney, Sir William Manning, as he embarked on appointment to Cooma.<sup>23</sup> The extensive Cooma mission included Adaminaby, Buckley's Crossing/Moonbar, Umeralla and numerous stations.<sup>24</sup> Before leaving Cooma in 1898 the Mayor and community people gave him a large send-off.<sup>25</sup>

### **Burwood**

On 28 April 1898 Fr Byrne was appointed Parish Priest of Concord, referred to as the Burwood parochial district as it encompassed Concord, Mortlake, Enfield West, Burwood Heights, Strathfield, Homebush, and Flemington. Fr Byrne's 'dedicated work' was aided by a parishioner giving him a motor vehicle, reputed to be one of the first in the area. Fr Byrne worked conscientiously across the large Burwood parish to spread the faith and to reduce Concord's debt, a task admirably aided by families, such as the Dalys of *Warwillah*, Parramatta Road.<sup>26</sup>

Fr William Delaney, a more recent parish priest of Concord, says that Fr Byrne clashed over the Christian Brothers' secondary school at Burwood. Although Fr Byrne 'introduced the Christian Brothers into the parish, he was not in favour of them coming to Burwood and it was only in deference to Cardinal Moran's wishes that he took the step of building the first two roomed school for them'.<sup>27</sup> Fr Delaney continued that Fr Byrne did not believe the Christian Brothers' school would be a successful venture and '... would never reach 100 boys in his lifetime'.<sup>28</sup> The school, though, opened with 100 students. While critical of Fr Byrne on this issue, Fr Delaney adds that it was a '...clash of opinion between good men who make up

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22 St Patrick's Catholic Parish, Kogarah: <http://www.stpatrickskogarah.org/mod/entity-information/> (Accessed 20 May 2014).

23 *FJ*, 10 February 1894, 14.

24 *Australasian Catholic Directory, 1895-1898*.

25 *CP*, 7 May 1898, 19.

26 *CP*, 27 August 1903, 26.

27 Delaney, *They Passed this Way*, 93.

28 Delaney, 93.

some of the more colourful history of the Church'.<sup>29</sup> Fr Byrne did not have an issue with the Christian Brothers per se; rather, his motivation was to secure the parish primary school. Fr Delaney also provides a fairly positive assessment of Fr Byrne's ministry:

[At Cooma]... he was popular with and respected by people of all faiths and every social standing. In this was a feature of his long ministry in Australia. He also held the deep affection and administration of Catholics in all the parishes in whichever he worked.<sup>30</sup>

### **Strathfield**

From the early 1880s *Redmyre*<sup>31</sup> attracted predominantly business people, including a small number of Catholics. In the *Centennial History of New South Wales*, W F Morrison remarked:

Strathfield is purely residential. The location is beautiful. The houses are of the better class of merchants and for retired people. It is worthy of note, and one its citizens desire to have mentioned, is that there are no public houses in the borough, although there is already within the municipality 1,129 electors...<sup>32</sup>

The reference to no pub reflected the Protestant dominance of late 19th century Strathfield. Dissenting Protestants, including Methodists and Congregationalists, represented a disproportionate number of Strathfield's citizens compared with state averages. By 1891 Catholics were poorly represented; just 14 per cent of Strathfield's population.

It is ironic that one of Strathfield's wealthiest citizens at that time was Catholic: James Toohey, the brewery baron. Historian, Michael Jones says that Toohey was 'not universally popular in the area because his wealth came from the brewing of beer in a strongly anti-alcohol area'.<sup>33</sup> Jones's claim that Toohey's 1895 premature death 'removed a potential friend of the Catholic population' and slowed the development of Catholicism in Strathfield overlooks the influence – and generosity – of other Catholics. Toohey's relict, Catherine, Muriel Daly, and successful businessmen, John Casey and Thomas Holley, and Walter Edmunds, lawyer, provided strong financial support for the establishment of a church in Strathfield. An equally talented group of women raised sufficient funds to lay the foundations

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29 Delaney, 93.

30 Delaney, 94

31 Original spelling for *Redmyre*; suburb officially renamed 'Strathfield' in 1886.

32 W F Morrison, *Centennial History of New South Wales*, Sydney, 1888.

33 M Jones, *Oasis in the West: Strathfield's First Hundred Years*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1985, 124, 126.

for the first St Martha's Church at the corner of The Avenue (now Churchill Avenue) and Homebush Road.

### **Dominicans**

Catholicism in Strathfield was strengthened by the Dominican Sisters taking up residence. In 1892 the Dominicans, who had been based in the Diocese of Maitland since 1867, and also at Moss Vale, successfully applied to Cardinal Moran to establish a Sydney base.<sup>34</sup> They selected six acres on the Boulevard, Strathfield. In January 1894, eight nuns from West Maitland, accompanied by Bishop Murray, moved to Strathfield to staff Santa Sabina College.<sup>35</sup>

The first Mass in Strathfield was held at the Dominican Sisters' chapel in the late 1890s.<sup>36</sup> Overcrowding, however, led the sisters to withdraw the privilege. For the next few years the Catholic community rented Strathfield's Town Hall for the Sunday Eucharist. While size was a factor, there was some discomfort with the hall being used by Catholics.

Fr Byrne prioritised a church in Strathfield. *The Catholic Press* explained:

The need of a new church at Strathfield was felt by the people of that portion of Burwood parish for some time. The distance to St Mary's [Concord] was rather long and great inconvenience was experienced.<sup>37</sup>

In 1904 Fr Byrne sought to purchase land at Strathfield. His experiences dealing with bigotry in Ireland provided the skills to meet challenges in his adopted land. Whilst the degree of sectarianism was perhaps less overt than Ireland, its presence in the establishment of Catholicism in Strathfield should not be understated. Strathfield's Protestant elite was concerned a Catholic Church would adversely impact the local community. Fr Byrne commented on this misperception:

The difficulty of procuring a site has been very great. It was feared by the vendors that the building of a Catholic Church in this neighbourhood would depreciate the value of the land and the houses built around it.<sup>38</sup>

The biggest anomaly in Strathfield was the absence of a Catholic Church. In a spirited response to critics, Fr Byrne said:

Such a preposterous idea he had never conceived of, because they were not going to build any kind of a shanty [emphasis added]... the present church, when completed, would bear favourable comparison with any building,

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<sup>34</sup> *FJ*, 22 July 1893, 15.

<sup>35</sup> *Maitland Daily Mercury*, 12 January 1894, 3.

<sup>36</sup> *SMH*, 25 March 1893, 5; *FJ*, 1 April 1893, 15.

<sup>37</sup> *CP*, 17 November 1904, 22.

<sup>38</sup> *CP*, 17 November 1904, 22.

church, school, hall or private residence in this beautiful district... in this extraordinary district there was not a single public hall, no bank, even that object that used to be matter of importance in the old land – the village smithy – was excluded.<sup>39</sup>

Looking back on the period, Justice Edmunds, a long time parishioner noted that:

Boldly Fr Byrne attacked the Bank of New South Wales, and, going in without an inch of land or a penny of money, he came out with power to buy the property, and with £3000 to build that church.<sup>40</sup>

Reflecting an Irish sense of humour, Fr Byrne noted the proposed site was part of the King Estate.

Why it was called the King Estate he did not know, as there was no crown or eminence about it.<sup>41</sup>

Indeed, the estate was named after the vendors: Robert Joshua King and Mary Anne Balmain. St Martha's parish stands on land that was originally a Crown Grant to English settler, Thomas Rose, on 28 May 1793.<sup>42</sup>

### **Supporters**

Despite Fr Byrne's motivation, it is unlikely Catholicism would have gained momentum in Strathfield in the early 20th century without moral and generous financial support.

*John Vincent Casey and Mary Whipple* John, born in Chicago to Co Limerick parents, held a senior management role in Dalton Brothers in Pitt Street, Sydney. He and his American-born wife, Mary Whipple and their children lived at *Combiers*, Woodward Avenue. John was one of two lay trustees involved in the purchase of St Martha's land. After John's untimely death in September 1905, Fr Byrne described him as my 'right hand man in regard to all matters concerning charity or religion in the [Strathfield] district'.<sup>43</sup> Mary Casey continued to provide large financial support to Fr Byrne and his successor, Fr Patrick Kerwick.

*Muriel Daly* daughter of Limerick native Terence Daly, devoted her life to an extensive array of Catholic organisations including reducing Concord's parish debt,<sup>44</sup> and development of St Martha's Church and Parish. She died in 1923.

<sup>39</sup> *CP*, 22.

<sup>40</sup> *CP*, 13 December 1923, 25.

<sup>41</sup> *FJ*, 26 November 1904, 26.

<sup>42</sup> Land Titles' Office, NSW, Volume 1668, Folio 198.

<sup>43</sup> *CP*, 7 September 1905, 47; *FJ*, 9 September 1905, 24.

<sup>44</sup> *FJ*, 8 March 1902, 23; *SMH*, 11 December 1923, 6.



*Walter Edmunds*, barrister, one-time MP, and, later a prominent judge and Royal Commissioner, was a stalwart parishioner for many decades.<sup>45</sup> Born at Maitland in 1856, Mr Edmunds worked as a teacher before gaining a law degree in 1881.<sup>46</sup> He became a barrister in 1882 and a district judge in 1911. Among his noteworthy judgements was achieving settlement between workers and management in the 1916 coal miners' strike. In 1920 he was appointed a judge of the Industrial Court of Arbitration and President of the Board of Trade. Justice Edmunds spoke at many parish events and gave generously. Upon his death in 1932 a colleague described him as 'skilled in the law, patient in argument, genial in temperament and shrewd in judgement'.<sup>47</sup> A headline in *The Freeman's Journal* read 'Fine Type of Catholic Passes Away'.<sup>48</sup>

*William Joseph Hogan and Wilhelmina Stewart Mackay* The Hogan family lived at *Elwood House* a famous Strathfield landmark demolished in the 1930s to pave the way for Strathfield Girls High School. William Hogan, born in Orange made his mark as a solicitor and civil leader in Cobar. In 1894 he married Wilhelmina Stewart McKay, whose mother, Mary Hurley, was a niece of Edmund Ryan of Galong. Mary ran a successful business in Boorowa for 30 years. Wilhelmina's father was probably a Protestant. William and Wilhelmina Hogan had a family of six sons and three daughters. William died at Elwood on 31 December 1911. Wilhelmina donated £100 towards the St Martha's Presbytery in 1917, a sum eclipsed only by Fr Byrne.<sup>49</sup> She died on 23 October 1925, and bequeathed funds for the St Martha's bell.

*Thomas Holley* of Ballina, 36 Redmyre Road, so-named after his property at Ballina in rural NSW. In 1881 Mr Holley settled at *Redmire* and was Strathfield's oldest resident when he died in 1939. When the Bank of NSW gave Fr Byrne difficulties securing a bank loan, Mr Holley intervened and secured a 'concession' to purchase land for £900.<sup>50</sup> Mr Holley and Mr Casey were lay Trustees of the original St Martha's.

*Catherine Toohey* relict of James gave frequently to Catholic organisations, including her home parish. Born in 1850, Catherine was a daughter of James and Jane Ferris of Parramatta. In 1873 she married James Matthew Toohey, who became

45 E J Minchin, 'Edmunds, Walter (1856–1932)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/edmunds-walter-6091/text10435>, published first in hardcopy 1981, accessed online 8 October 2014.

46 *SMH*, 17 August 1932, 15.

47 Judge Sheridan cited in *The Northern Star*, 20 August 1932, 13.

48 *FJ*, 18 August 1932, 15.

49 *FJ*, 29 March 1917, 23.

50 Obituary, *CP*, 3 August 1939, 17. *Funeral Notice*, Thomas Holley, 29 July 1939, 9.

a member of the NSW Legislative Assembly and principal of the family brewery.<sup>51</sup> Catherine (listed as Mrs James Toohey in contemporary publications), played a major role in supporting the Dominican Sisters' establishment at Strathfield and gave £100 at the 1904 foundation stone laying for St Martha's Church.<sup>52</sup> Her death in 1913 attracted a *Sydney Morning Herald* headline: 'The Late Mrs J M Toohey: A Charitable Citizen'.<sup>53</sup> Another described her as 'a woman with a big, generous heart and a purse large and wide enough to permit her to follow her inclinations'.<sup>54</sup>

### **St Martha's**

St Martha's is the only church/parish with this name in Australia. According to Justice Edmunds, Fr Byrne's intention for the original St Martha's church was to build a 'chapel of ease' for the workers, who would otherwise have a long walk to Concord.<sup>55</sup> In an article to commemorate the parish's 75th anniversary, Br J A McGlade *cfc* noted that:

Tradition has it that because there were a number of Irish girls in service in the grand houses of the district, it was given the name of St Martha who served the Lord when he came to visit.<sup>56</sup>

This theme – echoed in later print and electronic publications<sup>57</sup> – does not fully explain the choice of the parish's name. Some Irish servants worked in Strathfield at the turn of the 20th century, but the district could not be considered a Catholic stronghold. Many other Sydney suburbs such as Irishtown (now Bankstown), Darlinghurst, Waterloo, Balmain, Waverley, had much higher proportions of Irish-born women in domestic service.

The church's name may have influenced by the work of St Martha's Industrial Home at Leichhardt. Established in 1889, through the fundraising efforts of the Ladies Association of Charity, patrons of St Martha's Industrial Home included

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51 G P Walsh, 'Toohey, James Matthew, 1850-1895', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 6, 1976: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/toohey-james-matthew-4943> (Accessed 27 October 2014).

52 *SMH*, 21 November 1904, 10.

53 *SMH*, 21 January 1913, 8.

54 *Wagga Wagga Express*, 1 February 1913, 2.

55 Cited in *CP*, 13 December 1923, 25.

56 J A McGlade, 'The Parish of St Martha's Strathfield: Its Story', in *St Martha's Strathfield, 1916-1991*, Strathfield, 1991, 8-11.

57 G Vella, *St Martha's Church, Strathfield: a hundred years of hospitality (1904-2004)*, Strathfield, 2004, 8; The History of St Martha's Parish, Parish website: <http://www.stmarthas.org.au/index.php?page=st-martha-s-history> (Accessed 31 July 2014)

Catherine Toohey and Fr Byrne.<sup>58</sup> The home's patrons were anxious to dispel misconceptions that the home was a reformatory. Rather, it provided training for 'good and respectable girls over the age of 14'.<sup>59</sup> In this regard it is quite probable that Catherine Toohey and other Strathfield women employed St Martha's girls in their 'grand Strathfield houses'; this may have been added impetus for naming Strathfield parish after St Martha's?

Moreover, the service nature of St Martha fitted the archdiocese's perception that a Strathfield Catholic community could be of service to less fortunate community members. A speech by Archbishop Kelly in 1905 adds some weight to this interpretation:

He confessed that his sympathy was not so much with the elite of Strathfield and Burwood, as with the poor and he trusted that the people of these districts would continue to assist their less fortunate friends by helping to build churches and schools for them.<sup>60</sup>

#### *Fundraising and the Altar Society*

On 20 November 1904 Cardinal Moran laid the foundation stone for St Martha's Church.<sup>61</sup> Apart from the individuals mentioned above, principal subscribers included Frank Gaxieu £110 and Dr Odhillo Maher £50.<sup>62</sup> When St Martha's Church was opened on 9 April 1905 at a cost of £2252, more than one-third of the debt had been retired.<sup>63</sup> Women had played a core role in reducing the debt. An Altar Society was established in 1905 with Mary Casey as president, Mrs Foley, secretary, and Miss Walsh, treasurer. A successful bazaar at the Burwood School of Arts in September 1905, organised by ladies from Burwood, Concord and Strathfield, resulted in a further £500 being raised to offset St Martha's Church debt.<sup>64</sup>

#### **America/Ireland**

In 1908 Fr Byrne took a long holiday, probably his first. He travelled to Ireland and visited his sister and brothers and their families. He travelled via America, arriving on the *Lusitania*.<sup>65</sup> On his return to Sydney, he was appointed a Diocesan Consultor and afforded the title, Very Reverend. He became a Fellow of St John's College,

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58 *SMH*, 9 August 1899, 4.

59 *Evening News*, 29 July 1898, 7.

60 *SMH*, 5 October 1905, 3.

61 *SMH*, 21 November 1904, 10.

62 *CP*, 24 November 1904, 22.

63 *SMH*, 10 April 1905, 5.

64 *SMH*, 25 September 1905, 25; 28 October 1905, 25.

65 Heritage Centre, Carrickmacross Workhouse, 2014.

Sydney University.

By 1916 the Burwood parish had become too extensive to be managed centrally from St Mary's Concord. Fr Byrne sought permission to be the foundation parish priest at Strathfield. On 27 April 1916, the *Catholic Press* announced that Fr Byrne had been appointed 'irremovable rector' of St Martha's. The Apostolic Delegate laid a foundation stone for a presbytery in November 1916, and opened the building a few months later.<sup>66</sup>

Also in 1916, a new parish at Burwood Heights (now Enfield) was created, with Fr Considine appointed foundation PP. Tensions emerged over parish boundaries. Fr Considine, believed St Anne's Church, Enfield West should fall within Burwood Heights.<sup>67</sup> Fr Byrne felt Druitt Town and the Barks Huts, which incorporated St Anne's, would be better aligned with Strathfield. Archbishop Kelly supported Fr Considine on this dispute, though he agreed with Fr Byrne that Strathfield's eastern boundary be modified to include the Dominican Sisters at Santa Sabina.

In April 1917 Fr Byrne received leave to travel to America and Europe.<sup>68</sup> Prompting the trip was the need to transfer deeds on an inherited property to his nephew, Edward Kelly. Fr Byrne travelled via America and landed in Liverpool (UK). Mr Kelly was travelling to Australia to meet Fr Byrne about the same matter and they met on the same day in Liverpool.<sup>69</sup> During his year-long break, Fr (later Monsignor) Richard Lonergan was appointed Administrator of St Martha's.

In 1919 Fr Byrne was appointed a Domestic Prelate, i.e. a Monsignor. He worked enthusiastically for the archdiocese as well as St Martha's and developed a viable parish and close community spirit.

In early 1922 Fr Byrne took ill and for many weeks was cared for at Lewisham Hospital. There was a large outpouring of sadness amongst Strathfield parishioners when Fr Byrne died in hospital on 18 March 1922. One secular newspaper referred to Fr Byrne as '...one of the most distinguished prelates of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Australia...'<sup>70</sup> The *Catholic Press* expressed:

It is no exaggeration to say that the late Monsignor Byrne was the most popular priest in the Archdiocese of Sydney. He was the friend and confidant of every priest.

He was a man remarkable for his culture, good taste, and simplicity. In his

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<sup>66</sup> *SMH*, 13 November 1916, 8.

<sup>67</sup> See discussion in D.J. Gleeson, 'The origins and development of St Anne's Catholic Church, Enfield West', *Australasian Catholic Record*, Vol. 68, No 2, 1991, 221-236.

<sup>68</sup> *CP*, 19 April 1917, 4.

<sup>69</sup> This account provided by Edward Kelly's grand-daughter, Mrs Markey.

<sup>70</sup> *Sunday Times*, 19 March 1922, 2.

passing, there goes one of the links that take us back to early days.

Sydney will be all the poorer without him.<sup>71</sup>

Justice Edmunds reflecting on Monsignor Byrne's death said:

I saw him after his death. He was clad in his priestly vestments, but he was a changed Father Byrne. He was not the man I had known. The marks of suffering, sorrow and care had all been effaced, and I was astonished to find that he looked the Father Byrne, the intrepid Irishman and good priest he was when he first came to Australia.

Indicative of the respect in which he was held, and notable given the considerable sectarianism across NSW, Strathfield's Anglican minister attended Monsignor's Byrne's funeral at St Martha's Church.<sup>72</sup> His lifetime friend, Monsignor O'Haran, was principal celebrant at the funeral and also presided at the burial at Rookwood cemetery.<sup>73</sup>

### **Conclusion**

A reading of archival and secondary materials endorses Fr Byrne as a hard-working and very well liked priest. His nationalist heritage did not deter ecumenical relations. This pastorally centred and highly respected confidant to clergy had achieved beyond expectations in both Ireland and Australia. He served the Strathfield district with distinction for a quarter of a century; first, as parish priest of Burwood parish, 1898-1916, and then from 1916 as St Martha's first parish priest. Although modest, Mons Byrne enjoyed the label, 'The Man from Snowy River', in recognition of his work at Cooma. As a tribute to their late esteemed pastor in 1924 St Martha's parishioners erected a new church in his memory: The *Monsignor Peter Byrne Memorial Church*, which is the current St Martha's parish church.

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71 *CP*, 23 February 1922, 21.

72 *CP*, 23 February 1922, 21.

73 *SMH*, 21 March 1922, 7.

## ARCHBISHOP MANNIX: HOME LIFE AT RAHEEN

James Franklin, Gerald O Nolan and Michael Gilchrist\*



*Raheen from the air, taken c1930, photographer, Charles Daniel Pratt, Airspy collection of aerial photographs.*<sup>1</sup>

*The real Mannix* . . . there is no “real” Mannix left to see – no private diaries, no intimate letters, no memoirs by confidants. Instead there is rumour, anecdote, theatre.

Archbishop Carr had lived in a few simple rooms in the presbytery beside the Cathedral. When Mannix succeeded Carr, the Catholic Trusts Corporation at once bought for him the magnificent mansion *Raheen* in what was then semi-rural Studley Park. Mannix moved into *Raheen* in 1918 and died there in 1963.

The two storeyed loggia house was built on approximately 15,000 square metres of land with the four storeyed tower in one corner, in an Italianate style,

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1 Link to photograph at the State Library of Victoria: <http://handle.slv.vic.gov.au/10381/177668>

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This article is reprinted from the authors’ book *The Real Archbishop Mannix: From the sources* (Connor Court Publishing, 2015).

dominating the view from the street.<sup>2</sup> The aim of this extravagant purchase was not to live magnificently. On the contrary, Mannix's tastes and way of life were ascetic: he only used a telephone twice in his life, never flew in an aeroplane, never owned a car.<sup>3</sup> He had little interest in food and slept on an iron bed in a plain bedroom. The only major alteration made to Raheen was the conversion of the existing ballroom to a library.

The purpose of *Raheen* was instead to exhibit the apex of the Melbourne Catholic community as on a par with the finest the Establishment could offer. It was a theatrical prop, a stage for the Mannix act as tribal leader.

In speaking of the "real" Mannix, one must remember that the real Mannix was an expert showman. Patrick O'Farrell writes of Mannix as actor – an actor with a purpose:<sup>4</sup>

The extent to which Mannix was theatre is a perception lost in the overlay of serious religious issues . . .

Daniel Mannix had all the marks of a consummate actor. He carried onto the stage, wherever it was, the commanding presence of an aristocratic self-image which he projected with all the aid of his poised physical bearing, superbly crafted lines deliberately underplayed, and a range of props: top-hat, biretta, even a cape in the Victorian thespian tradition... His enormous audience relished his performance, enjoying it because of its studied excellence as a role, and because it was constructed from, and deeply relevant to, real Catholic life. Here was leadership, not merely as directional encouragement, but in projecting effortless superiority. The money given away in the legendary private walks was aristocratic largesse, distributed in royal progress. The polite and polished insults to the secular authorities came from a source patently above them with no care for their regard.

### **A Maynooth student's view**

When Mannix was first named as coadjutor Archbishop, Catholics in Melbourne wondered what manner of man they might expect. A former student of his at Maynooth who had come to Victoria was persuaded to set down his impressions. He paints a memorable portrait:<sup>5</sup>

2 City of Kew Urban Conservation Study: Volume 2, 85; James Griffin, *Daniel Mannix: Beyond the Myths*, Garratt Publishing, Mulgrave, Vic., 2012, 220-2.

3 Griffin, *Daniel Mannix*, 348.

4 Patrick O'Farrell, *Vanished Kingdoms: The Irish in Australia and New Zealand: A Personal Excursion*. Kensington, NAW: UNSW Press, 1990, 246.

5 "G. Brendáin", *Memories of Monsignor Mannix*, *Austral Light* 13 (1912), 707-19

Thanks to Patrick Morgan for supplying this article.

My first impressions of the Bishop-elect were gained at a temperance lecture . . . He entered the pulpit, and for about three-quarters of an hour held our attention uninterruptedly from beginning to end . . . Mgr. Mannix uses no flamboyant rhetoric or histrionic gesticulations, nor does he aim at picturesque language. His style is vigorous, incisive, sometimes electric, and always dignified. His words are well-chosen, chiselled off by a distinct articulation, and one feels that there is behind them a master-mind, with a thorough grip on his subject, one who certainly impresses his auditors with a feeling of great reserve power, of intense conviction, and immense earnestness . . .

Mgr. Mannix is a singularly undemonstrative man. As Cardinal Logue remarked, "he is as silent as a ghost" on occasions where others might indulge in flattery. Once, however, it was not hard to detect a note of elation in his voice as he told of the congratulations he received for the unique record attained by one class when, out of seventy-three candidates for the B.A. degree, there was not a single failure.

Mgr. Mannix was certainly a strict disciplinarian. He seemed to look upon Maynooth as the West Point of Ireland, the military academy in which were trained the officers for the army of Christ, and to consider that one who proved unable or unwilling to submit to its regulations could not be safely permitted to bind himself irrevocably to the life-long discipline of obedience and self-denial of the priesthood . . . I have heard him, as President, refer very slightly to [popularity]. As a past pupil of his tells me, "cheap popularity he heartily despised."

It could scarcely be said of him that he is gifted with the art of diplomacy, except his reticence and power of inspiring confidence be accounted such. He is too straightforward to hide his views if there be a call to express them; too much an enemy of subterfuge to employ the language that conceals thought . . .

He was not prompt to rebuke in person, but when he did it was short, sharp, and effective, clothed sometimes in a dry humour, or tinged with a quiet sarcasm that was still more successful. In one of such a reserved temperament, the more kindly side of his nature could not often be in evidence . . . Those who have had occasion to approach him know they may always count on a courteous reception, and a request would be sure of a fair hearing, and, if it did not always prove acceptable or practicable, his refusal would at least leave no sting. A suggestion would be considered on its merits, and he was not beyond adopting it if it recommended itself to his judgment. He was one of the last men it would occur to you to bluff or



wheelde into a proposal. Diplomacy was useless in presence of those eyes, that seemed to read one through . . .

Among his intimate friends and acquaintances he is said to unbend somewhat and give play to a quiet humour and gentle raillery, but as students we seldom saw other than the sterner side of his character. A restrained laugh would occasionally appear, but oftener a smile would hover about the compressed lips. Once, though, we witnessed him in uncontrollable laughter, as from the stage of the Aula Maxima, a venerable Irish scholar and raconteur held an audience convulsed with merriment for nearly two hours at a wholly delightful mixture of sparkling wit and the sublimest egotism . . .

Of his inner life and spiritual characteristics I cannot speak. Outwardly, he was an example of regularity, said his daily Mass devoutly, and with such a grace and attention to rubrical accuracy that a student who paid particular attention to these matters used to refer to him and another as models in this respect. He always emphasised the religious note when addressing us on temperance during his professorial days, and on discipline when he became President. One saw too that he felt every word when he spoke of the example of the Christ who, as a youth, surrendered His will to his earthly guardians, and “went down to Nazareth and was subject to them.”

### **Dinner at Raheen**

*Raheen* served official purposes. Mannix rarely went out except to church events – no cinema, no sporting events, very rarely home visitations except a few of condolence in early years. When the Anglican archbishop wished to see him, he simply replied, “I never pay social visits or return them.”<sup>6</sup> One came to him. From the early 1920s onwards there were many important ecclesiastical meetings and other formal gatherings held at Raheen, as well as the frequent informal meetings that Mannix held in his library or study, and around his dining table. Though he was personally abstemious, he was a generous host, as one cleric has recalled:<sup>7</sup>

[Dr Mannix] gave many a pleasant clerical dinner party at Raheen to mark the visit of some distinguished cleric, and used to invite a wide circle of his senior priests to his table. Almost to the end of his days he entertained the Cathedral staff at Christmas dinner at Raheen. On great occasions, among

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6 Mannix to Archbishop Head, 30/12/1929, in D. Schütz, “May I write to you . . .?”: The correspondence between Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne Daniel Mannix (1864-1963) and Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne F W (Frederick Waldegrave) Head (1974-1941) concerning the Eucharistic Procession Controversy, Part 1: Letters 1-11, 1929-1933), *Footprints* 28 (2) (2013), 8-48.

7 Bev Roberts, *Raheen*, Pola Nominees, Melbourne, 2007, 4.

them the consecration of any of the priests of his diocese to the episcopate . . . he was always happy to play host to a dinner for more than two hundred of the clergy both local and visiting.<sup>8</sup>

One of Mannix's successors as Archbishop, Frank Little, recalled the dinners at a later period:<sup>9</sup>

The meals were good, thanks to the Virgona sisters. Always a three-course dinner starting with a grapefruit cocktail, so good that Little was sure it was laced with alcohol, so he went into the kitchen and checked, and of course it was. 'And there was Dan with his Pioneer Total Abstinence badge like a beacon.'

The sumptuous dinners were always accompanied by a variety of wines and selected liqueurs which were always on the table. Dr Mannix never drank, so often his guests wouldn't drink either. Some of the clergy who would drink as private guests would not touch the wine and liqueurs at banquets if no-one else started. Eventually Jean went around the table and poured the liqueurs into their glasses or coffee to save any embarrassment

One of the Bishops who had taken the pledge not to drink, once noticed that Jean had put a little more wine in the soup and made the remark that he didn't think Dr Mannix would take spirits, to which Mannix retorted: '*I never question what the cook puts into the meal.*'

A niece of the Virgona sisters describes the menu:

The special dinners were major productions involving all the family. There were six or seven courses: antipasto, entre, soup, a fish course, a meat course, a sweet followed by petits fours, coffee and liqueur. Our parents and sometimes the cousins lent a hand. Preparations would begin well in advance and Jean wrote out a plan coordinating each stage of the operation. I remember peering into the dining room when the table was set. There was a whole regiment of cutlery lined up at each setting, a pair of carved crystal wine glasses and a flower floating in each individual finger bowl. Dr Mannix sat at the head of the table. Protocol required that he begin eating first. On one occasion he never started and the whole course had to be returned to the kitchen.<sup>10</sup>

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8 Rev. Bernard O'Connell, memoir, 1965, in *Raheen*, 86, n. 20.

9 Brenda Niall, *The Riddle of Father Hackett*, 262.

10 Crina Virgona, Jean and Lena Virgona, housekeepers to Dr Mannix 1944-1963: a memoir, *Footprints* 28 (1) (2013), 4-10.

**Rumours of firearms stored at *Raheen***

*Raheen*, like Mannix himself, attracted rumours and anecdotes, which were part of the projected image. The first *Raheen* rumour was that its purchase had been funded by John Wren. (There is no evidence that it was.)

In 1918 a new rumour hit the street: that someone had seen firearms stored in a tunnel linking *Raheen* with John Wren's house across the road. The intelligence

RE RUMOUR OF ARMS STORED AT "RAHEEN"

On 9.5.18 I visited Mrs Davies, 19 Yarra Street, South Yarra, who informed me that she had got the information from a Mrs Cashmore of 13 Yarra Street, South Yarra. I then paid Mrs Cashmore a visit and she stated that she had heard the rumour from her daughter, who then appeared.

Miss Cashmore stated she had heard it from a girl, a small child at school, who in turn had got the information from her sister who works at a Factory, the sister having got it from another factory girl who had got the information from her father, who had got it from a carpenter who had worked at *Raheen* when the alterations and improvements were being made before Christmas.

From Miss Cashmore's demeanour and evident desire that I should not proceed further with the enquiry, I came to the conclusion that this rumour was nothing more than idle gossip which had gathered importance in its travels.

*J. Harvey*  
10/5/18

services were quickly on the case and tracked down the truth. The results of their investigations can be seen in the letter reproduced on the previous page.<sup>11</sup>

### **The daily walks; Maureen**

Then, adverting to his famous walks, the Archbishop confessed:<sup>12</sup>

I still did not expect to live to a great age in those days. And as I did not play tennis or cricket or football I decided that I would walk every day until I was 90, if I lived to be 90. And so I walked every day from Raheen to St Patrick's, the better part of four miles in and four miles out. It did me good.

All sorts of people might be met on the walks. Mr Menzies, for example, as we saw. Or the Eyres, who established a greengrocery business in Victoria Parade on the route of the walks; he frequently called at their shop. The Eyres' only child, Maureen, recalls the Archbishop:<sup>13</sup>

My first impression was standing outside St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne, and looking up at him and 'thinking'. (He always treated me as his equal and never spoke down to me.) Anyway, he said:

Maureen, what are you thinking?

I answered: 'I was wondering if you put up your hand, could you touch the sky?' He said he did not know, but he tried and then smiled and said no, he could not.

Maureen enrolled at Catholic Ladies College in 1938 and soon excelled at the piano. Later that year, she wrote proudly of her work to Dr Mannix – she was now seven – and received a friendly handwritten reply:<sup>14</sup>

You are just wonderful! How did you get 91 marks out of 100 at your music examination?

I am sure that I never got as good marks at any examination that I sat for. And at the piano I should not get any marks at all. I am glad to know that you are to make your first Holy Communion soon and I shall gladly remember you often in my prayers in the meantime. Kindly give my best wishes to father and mother; and keep a big share for yourself.

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11 NAA, A8911, 240: Reverend Dr D Mannix (Anti-Conscription and Anti-British Utterances: Sinn Feiner), 66-72.

12 Michael Gilchrist, *Daniel Mannix: Wit and Wisdom*, 253, n. 65, quoted from R. Hastings, 'And I Never Owned a Motor Car', *Bulletin*, 16 November 1963.

13 Gilchrist, *Daniel Mannix*, 143, n. 30, quoted from an interview with Maureen Landy, Red Hill, ACT, June 1981..

14 Gilchrist, *Daniel Mannix*, 162-3, n. 99, quoted from a letter from Mannix to Maureen Eyre, 21 September 1938: copy in M Gilchrist's possession.

By the age of 25, Maureen was a concert pianist with the Australian Broadcasting Commission. She brought her fiancée several times to see Dr Mannix. On the day of the wedding, 9 June 1956, a special picture was taken of the couple with the Archbishop at *Raheen*. Dr Mannix asked that the picture be taken so that a portrait of his mother on the wall appeared in the photo and as the picture was about to be taken, remarked:<sup>15</sup>

I'm still very handsome. They'll have trouble telling who's the bridegroom!

That brought smiles for the camera. The Archbishop then presented the couple with a large Bible containing a message on the inside cover:

*To John and Maureen with every blessing for their wedding day and for the years to come.*

A few months later, when Maureen learned she was expecting a child, she informed Dr Mannix personally of the news. He asked when the baby was due and Maureen gave the date as 4 March, Daniel Mannix's own birthday. This was a white lie, as she did not know the precise date, and it was given only to please him.

But 4 March it was.

In later years, Maureen sometimes looked after Raheen during the day to give the Virgona sisters a break. On these occasions, her children had the run of the place, bringing delight to the old Archbishop.

### **Banter with Fr Hackett, "Court Jester"**

Some brief glimpses of Mannix en famille (to the extent that that phrase makes sense) can be gleaned from the papers of Father Hackett, perhaps the closest Mannix had to a personal friend – although it is believed not on first name terms.<sup>16</sup>

In 1922, at the height of Ireland's tragic civil war, William Philip Hackett (1878-1954), Irish Jesuit, teacher and propagandist, was transferred to Australia by his order. That was possibly because of his over-close involvement in the Civil War. He knew well both de Valera and Michael Collins and had tried to arrange a meeting of the two, by then enemies, immediately before Collins' assassination by the Republicans. Collins' note to Hackett is believed to be the last letter he wrote.<sup>17, 18</sup>

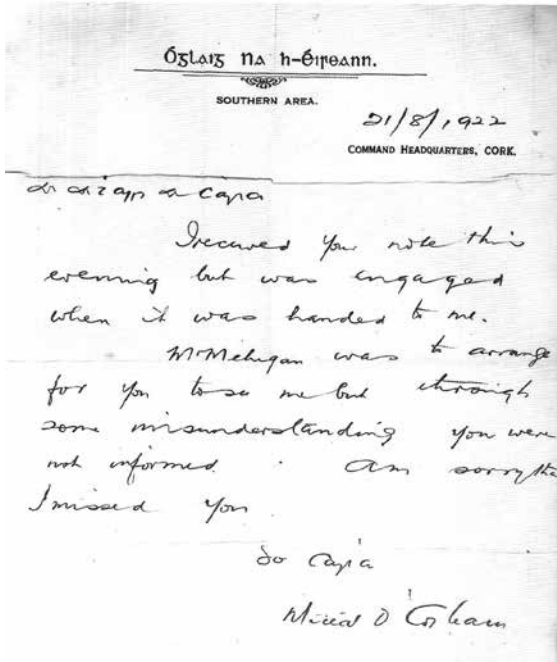
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15 Gilchrist, *Daniel Mannix*, 237, n. 23, interview with Maureen Landy, Red Hill, ACT, June 1981.

16 Griffin, *Daniel Mannix*, 348.

17 Brenda Niall, *The Riddle of Father Hackett: A life in Ireland and Australia*, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2009: 97-105; James Griffin, 'Hackett, William Philip' (1878-1954), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 9, 1983.

18 Image and caption reproduced from *The Riddle of Father Hackett*: page before 97: from Michael Collins to William Hackett, 21 August 1922, Hackett Papers, Archives of the Society of Jesus, Australia (ASJASL).



In Australia Fr Hackett was Rector of Xavier College and founded the Catholic Central Library, a major effort to provide intellectual stimulation for the laity. He entertained Mannix on Monday evenings and accompanied him on his annual vacations at Portsea. The two certainly got on well, but Hackett's letters show from time to time a dislike of being "a quasi-episcopal hanger-on". A man of "gasps, grunts and angular gestures", he was the object of Mannix's friendly if sharp jibes.<sup>19</sup> The role could be trying:<sup>20</sup>

In a discussion of counties of origin, after a pointed tilt of disparagement at Cork, Fr. Hackett – butt of much byplay like the old time court jester, a role he loved – in self-defence replied,

*The last known letter of Michael Collins, written to Fr William Hackett, 21 August 1922, the night before his assassination. Hackett visited Collins' headquarters hoping to arrange a meeting between leaders, Collins and de Valera, in the civil war.*

"I was born in Cork, but crossed to Kilkenny to be civilised".

"And failed", said D M.

At the dinner table one time an interstate guest provoked a laugh by pointing out that some of the cutlery was labelled, Made in Sheffield. When the merriment had subsided, Dr. Mannix observed,

"That is not the only thing English here".

"What else, your Grace?"

<sup>19</sup> Griffin, 'Hackett'.

<sup>20</sup> Walter A. Ebsworth, *Archbishop Mannix*, H. H. Stephenson, Armadale, 1977, 431; recollections of Hackett's successor as Portsea holiday companion in Leo Clarke, Archbishop Mannix: what was he like? *Footprints* 20 (1) (2003), 28-48.

“Father Hackett’s Oxford accent”.<sup>21</sup>

Following Mannix around to functions was not always enjoyable.<sup>22</sup>

Easter Sunday dinner for 18 members of the Cathedral staff (‘I loathe long meals’) and two open air functions 20 miles apart, on Easter Monday, provoke Hackett to angry self-reflection: ‘The poodle goes with him’.

### ***Raheen under the Virgona sisters***

For 20 years from 1944 – the year Mannix turned 80 – apart from two devoted sisters, Misses Jean and Angelina Virgona, who acted as his housekeepers, Mannix was the solitary resident of the large house, much of which was unused.

The sisters, then in their thirties, were introduced to the Archbishop by the chaplain to the Italian community, Fr Modotti SJ. Jean recalled:<sup>23</sup>

The first and only time I had seen Dr Mannix was in 1927 for an interview; 17 years later I found myself, with my sister, at Raheen, to fill a vacancy, supposedly for a few weeks. When His Grace died, 20 years later, we felt the bottom had fallen from our world, just as we had felt when our father and when our mother died.

Why so, seeing that we made repeated attempts to retire from the work? There was something about Dr Mannix that inspired more than loyalty to duty from those around him; or it could have been that we happened to fill a void, for he had once said to Fr Modotti shortly after we arrived at Raheen: ‘I was a hermit until Jean and Lena came.’ It seemed natural to hear our relatives speak of Dr Mannix, affectionately, as ‘il nonno’ [grandfather].

He was our life during those years . . .

They did not wish to be paid, and when money was pressed on them they donated it to the education of priests. As there was no refrigerator, they brought one.<sup>24</sup> The normal household was only the Archbishop and the two sisters (not counting “Old Pat”, the Irishman who looked after the cows and vegetable garden out the back). The Archbishop had no secretary, chaplain, or personal assistant. The sisters kept his clothes clean, but every aspect of his domestic life was completely private. He even cut his own hair. Not very well many would say; nor often.<sup>25</sup>

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21 Ebsworth, *Archbishop Mannix*, 431.

22 The *Riddle of Father Hackett*: 249, n. 7: WPH to Florence Hackett. 19 April 1954. Hackett Papers, ASJASL.

23 Gilchrist, *Mannix: Wit and Wisdom*, 236, n. 21, recalled by Jean Virgona in letter to M Gilchrist, 15 February 1982.

24 Jean and Lena Virgona.

25 Niall Brennan, *Dr Mannix*, Rigby Limited, Adelaide, 1964, 308.

A long interview with another of Jean Virgona's nieces contains detailed information about life at *Raheen* from the inside:<sup>26</sup>

For the Virgonas "Raheen" came first. They rarely had any time off. The job was full time, three hundred and sixty-five days. The only chance of some leisure or rest was in the summer when His Grace would go to Portsea for a month. They would go to their own home in East Malvern but not for long, having to return to give "Raheen" a spring clean, especially the huge library. This was a nightmare. Apart from the time it took to dust each book, people often borrowed books and didn't return them or there would be books returned and left on top of each other gathering dust. Summer was the only time they could cope with it because there were no visitors to interrupt the exercise. So much for their summer holiday!

However one day in the middle of this operation the door bell rang. They hesitated. Would they answer it or not? Their conscience won and they opened the door. Just as well, because it was a special relation, a very strict and distinguished gentleman Salvatore Favalaro and family down from Bendigo.

They were caught there and then up ladders, dressed in their old work clothes, certainly not exactly dressed for such visitors. He said: "Jean, you're doing this work! You can tell me it isn't my business but for the respect I had for your parents this isn't the sort of work you've got to do". Jean replied that it had to be done sometime. It was just as well that Uncle Salv didn't know what the daily routine amounted to.

It was amazing what the two girls fitted in each day. Jean was a natural gourmet cook so she did most of the cooking in between making appointments for Dr Mannix and taking messages and Lena looked after the housework in between answering the door bell. They would keep as much as possible to a daily routine. This meant that they would have to



*Jean Virgona at the door of Raheen.*  
Courtesy of Crina Virgona

<sup>26</sup> Maria Santospirito Triaea, Jean Virgona: Archbishop Mannix's Italian housekeeper, *Australia Early Years, IHS Journal0017*, 17: downloaded from: <http://ebookbrowse.net/gdoc.php?id=311576464&url=685e7d73627612bb83b93be0558c78de>



be up by 6.00am at least in order to be ready to answer Dr Mannix's Mass at 7.00am and to have prepared the breakfast ready by 8 o'clock and to have as much as possible of the essential daily routine cleaning done before Mass. This meant cleaning carpets, washing and polishing basins before the appointments began or any number of unexpected visitors . . .

. . . A lot of Jean's time was taken up making appointments for visitors to see Dr Mannix at "Raheen". There were the frequent ones that I knew of such as Father Ugo Modotti, Chaplain for the Italian Community; Bob Santamaria and Mr and Mrs Arthur Calwell. I have to include my mother Mrs Santospirito who was given the title of 'La Mamma degli Italiani' by a visiting journalist from America for the work she did for the Italians during the war.<sup>27</sup> She could not have done it without the help of Dr Mannix and Arthur Calwell, both dear friends. Through them the Italians were permitted to gather at the St George's Hall in Carlton and it was possible for her to place the children of internees into boarding schools. Moreover, His Grace was always sympathetic in the fifties when there was an influx of Italian immigrants needing jobs.

Jean Virgona saw Mannix's daily routine close up:<sup>28</sup>

The Archbishop offered his Mass each morning at 7.30. That occupied about three-quarters of an hour, and was marked by an extraordinary appreciation of the Divine Presence in its reverent attention to the rubrical actions. Then followed two hours of thanksgiving, for he never appeared for his meagre breakfast before 10.15.

His supper was taken at 10.30, a glass of hot milk and a biscuit, and often she would see the light on in his chapel well after midnight.

She remembered,

... the surprise expressed by strangers wandering around his enormous library to find a shelf of P. G. Wodehouse, whose perennial sense of humour was so akin to his own.

Handling unexpected visitors was part of the job:<sup>29</sup>

The local police were constantly complaining of "undesirables" haunting

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27 Lena Santospirito, leader of work for Italians in Melbourne in World War II and after, as member of the Archbishop's committee for Italian relief; see Cate Elkner and James Gobbo, 'Santospirito, Louisa Angelina (Lena) (1895–1983),' *Australian Dictionary of Biography* vol. 18 (2012).

28 Ebsworth, *Archbishop Mannix*, 432.

29 Ebsworth, *Archbishop Mannix*, 431.

his residence for the inevitable hand-out, insisted on by him, even in his absence.

Early one morning Jean Virgona was carrying breakfast to the Archbishop's study. She heard the front door-bell ring.<sup>30</sup> Although it was a long walk to the front door, Jean put down the tray and walked to the door. But when she opened it, there was no-one to be seen. So back she went to get the tray when the door-bell rang again; the same thing happened, but this time Jean walked down the drive-way to investigate. There, she found a small boy aged about six.

'What do you want?' she asked.

'I want to see the Archbishop; I want to make my First Communion.' was the reply.

Jean then went to the Archbishop and told him of the visitor.

'Well, bring him in,' he said.

So he was brought in, introduced, and remained with Dr Mannix while he had breakfast. About 20 minutes later, he brought the boy to the door to say good-bye and when he had departed, Jean asked:

'Did you give him what he wanted?'

'What did he want?' inquired Dr Mannix.

The boy had not raised the matter which was troubling him, so Jean was sent to fetch him back. When he had been recalled, the Archbishop asked what it was he desired of him.

'The priest said I was too young for receiving Communion and had to get the Archbishop's permission,' came the answer. So Dr Mannix asked him: "Whom do you receive in Communion?" "God," came the prompt response. "You know as much as I do," declared the Archbishop, who subsequently contacted the boy's parish priest and arranged for his First Holy Communion.

### **What AFL team did Mannix support?**

On the subject of television, Dr Mannix admitted that he watched very little apart from the news; but Bob Santamaria, a one-eyed Carlton supporter, reminded him that he watched the football replays.<sup>31</sup>

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30 Gilchrist, *Daniel Mannix*, 236-7, n. 22, recalled by Jean Virgona in letter to M Gilchrist, 15 February 1982.

31 Gilchrist, *Daniel Mannix*, 253, n. 65, quoted from R Hastings, 'And I Never Owned a Motor Car', *Bulletin*, 16 November 1963.

Ah, yes, the football. But I find it hard to distinguish which side is which. You know, I'm supposed to be a barracker for Collingwood. I suppose because Collingwood is in the vicinity. But the truth of it is that I have never seen a football match in my life.

**TV comes to *Raheen***



*Mannix interviewed by Gerald Lyons for ABC TV, 1962.*

Extracts from the interview have been printed in other chapters of the book. They show excellent memory and clarity of mind. Curator's notes: <http://aso.gov.au/titles/tv/interview-archbishop-mannix/notes/>

When Mannix was 97, in late 1961, the bulky television cameras of the day moved into *Raheen* for Gerald Lyons' TV interview.

With all the technicians and Mr Santamaria, who insisted on being present, the numbers there were around sixteen. Expected to last less than an hour, it began in mid-morning and finished well into the afternoon. [Jean Virgona] was constantly dashing in with tea and coffee and iced drinks and sandwiches, and all the Archbishop had was a cup of water, his endurance and patience an unforgettable wonder. Indeed, for the food he took each day one could put it all on a dinner plate.

## A FUNNY WAY TO GO TO ROME

**Richard Connolly\***

On the 25th July, 1946, at about 11 o'clock on an overcast morning, I was at Walsh Bay in Sydney Harbour, waving to my family from the deck of the *SS Moreton Bay*, an ocean going liner of some 14,000 tons. I was in the company of 17 other seminarians from Australia and New Zealand. We were excited: we were bound for Rome. Our destination there was Propaganda Fide College.

Overseas travel in the 1930s and '40s was much less common than it is today, even allowing for the wartime restrictions that had almost stopped it altogether, except for the military. Cheap airfares would not come on the scene until the early 1970s, and travel abroad was normally by sea. In fact, at this early postwar stage, it was necessarily on a troopship. The ship that we boarded in July 1946, the *SS Moreton Bay*, had carried troops through most of the war. This particular voyage was to London via Fremantle, Aden, Port Said, and Naples. Its purpose was to take 300 Royal Air Force men home to London, calling at Naples to disembark 500 Italian prisoners of war, many of whom had done useful work on farms in Australia, while Australian young men were away at the war. The 500 Italian POW's were accommodated below deck in the bow of the ship; the RAF personnel spent the voyage astern, but, unlike the prisoners, they also had some access to the main deck. Amidships were about a hundred civilian passengers, including us 18 seminarians and our two 'chaperones', Fr Len Henry, on his way to the Pontifical Music Institute in Rome, and Fr Clem Tierney, on his way to the Collegio San Pietro to complete a doctorate in theology.

Our quarters were a single large cabin filled with double bunks, troopship style. The cabin accommodated all twenty of us.

After a rough crossing of the Bight, we reached fine weather on the west coast, and after leaving Fremantle our crossing of the Indian Ocean became a pleasant succession of days which, after morning Mass, were spent reading in the sun and in enforced idleness that made a change from the regulated daily life of the seminary. We made friends with some of the RAF personnel, but saw nothing of the Italian prisoners of war, or at least of the majority of them - the lower ranks in their maroon-dyed military uniforms. But we were quick to notice that their officers - perhaps twenty or more, clad in a distinctive grey, enjoyed access to a roped-off portion of the starboard deck, where they took the air from time to time. Several of us who had learnt some elementary Italian were eager to practise it, and so we approached the officers and, across the dividing rope, struck up a friendly

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\* Richard Connolly composed some of Australia's best-loved hymns with James McAuley and was Head of ABC Radio Drama and Features.

acquaintance with a number of them. A couple of mornings later, we were surprised to read a statement on the ship's notice board, pointing out that civilian passengers had been observed conversing with the Italian prisoners of war, and instructing that such communication must cease forthwith. It was signed by a certain Colonel Fox-Hulme, and it was our first intimation that although the ship had a Captain, who ran things as far as sailing was concerned, she was also a British troopship and as such subject to military discipline under the command of a British officer.

We did not take kindly to Colonel Fox-Hulme's edict, nor did our friends among the Italian officers, and our pleasant association continued surreptitiously. One of our friends, Marcello Moretti, a keen Catholic and zealous papalist, at times when it was unwise to talk, used to attract our attention by making a sign in the air with his hands outlining a papal tiara and then crossing his arms to signify the crossed keys beneath it. Another of the officers, Lieutenant Sergio Brugnoli, was less demonstrative but just as keen to maintain contact. Towards the end of the voyage he invited me, quite illegally, to a below-deck concert put on by the POW's which I greatly enjoyed though I didn't understand much of the songs or the humour. A few weeks later, in Rome, I would call at Marcello Moretti's clothes shop on the Via Nazionale and visit him with his family at their home in Via dell'Archetto. Likewise with Brugnoli, whose family apartment was on the Viale Mazzini, where some thirty years later, in the RAI (Italian National Radio) Studios, I would occasionally record programs for the ABC.

Our first port of call was Aden, where we took on what should have been fresh water but was found too late to be seawater. So we had salt water baths all the way up the Red Sea and the Suez Canal to Port Said. Soon we were in the Mediterranean, passing Stromboli, an impressive sight, and on 28th August we berthed at Mussolini's handsome Stazione Marittima (maritime station) on the Bay of Naples. Here the disembarking Italian prisoners were welcomed by a smart military band which played, among other things, Funiculi Funicula.

We, who had not set foot on land since leaving Fremantle a month earlier, watched these proceedings ruefully, reflecting that it seemed a pity to have to continue to London and then turn back all the way to Rome, when at that very moment Rome was only 120 miles away.

Then came the surprising news that, after successful representations from our two priests, the Italian authorities were allowing us to disembark there and then, with a temporary residence permit of ten days – ample time for us to reach Propaganda Fide College (Vatican territory) and regularize our position. Suddenly it was all haste, and in no time we had disembarked and booked in for the night at a smart hotel where the management were only too pleased to change our sterling travellers' cheques at the official rate (950 lire to the pound – three or four hundred

lire below the going rate on the open market, as we would soon find out). After an early dinner, our two priest-minders rang the College villa at Castel Gandolfo, where students and superiors were spending the summer vacation. Arrangements were made for us to be met and brought to the villa next day. In the mean time some of us – the Manly group, as I recall – had taken up the hotel’s offer of a taxi excursion to see the beautiful surroundings of the city. Despite the appalling effects of years of bombing, Naples was still a gloriously beautiful place, and the heights above it were like hanging gardens - now long since buried under what Neapolitans call the ‘cementification’, the building frenzy of the 1960s.

Our evening tour ended in an unexpected way that our superiors would neither have foreseen nor approved – at an open air night club with a spectacular view of the city. In our dark suits and open necked shirts we sat down at a longish table at the edge of the dance floor. Business seemed fairly quiet; the patrons were mainly American soldiers, and I clearly remember one of them, who was directly in my line of vision on the opposite side of the dance floor. He was quite unconscious, having, it seemed, passed out with his head in the lap of a young woman who was stroking it and looking very bored. At the table next to ours were half a dozen or so attractive young women, who began to make it clear that they thought it an anomaly that a group of young men should be occupying one table while the next one was occupied exclusively by females. After some friendly repartee, John Dougherty explained to them that we were not sailors from a merchant ship, but seminarians on our way to Rome to study for the priesthood. They burst into laughter – mocking, but not unfriendly laughter – and began to shake their décolletages at us in a very revealing way while murmuring ‘Dominus vobiscum’ with a come-hither intonation we had never heard before.

Somehow we made our escape back to the hotel, where I was sharing a room with John Dougherty. We awoke next morning to the sound of tinkling bells. Looking down from our window, we were charmed to see in the street below that the little bells were on the harness of a donkey pulling a small cart full of vegetables, driven by an old man. A few hours later, at the local seminary (closed because of summer holidays) we met two of the Australians who had spent the whole of the war as students in Rome at Propaganda Fide College; they were the recently ordained Fathers Con Keogh and Grove Johnson. They had come down in a truck driven by the college driver, Ferruccio. We assumed that we’d be leaving for the college next morning, but Con and Grove thought otherwise. They pointed out that we would be seeing plenty of Rome and the college over the next few years; for the moment there were interesting things to see in and around Naples. There followed six wonderful days that left a permanent mark on us, I think. We ever after referred to them as ‘the week in Naples.’

Grove Johnson and Con Keogh had connections, and they knew how to use them. Before long they had arranged for us to be put up by a British army chaplain, Father Basil, in the requisitioned apartment he occupied at the upper end of the Via Toledo, the principal shopping street of Naples. Twenty camp stretchers were borrowed and squeezed into a large spare bedroom. We had lodgings and a delightful host. We were signed in at the NAAFI British military services club, situated at the other end of Via Toledo, in the former Royal Palace on the Bay. Every evening, we walked about 1200 metres along that crowded street, from Fr Basil's flat to our dinner at the services club, and every evening, with each ten or fifteen metres that we traversed, we would be accosted by a man or youth, each one describing, in very basic English, the physical charms of a lady he could take us to. On at least one occasion it was a mere boy with a graphic physical description of his sister. This was not the Naples I know and love today; it was a bombed and conquered and occupied city with many of its people reduced to the most primitive poverty and degradation. We had a lot to learn, but were learning fast about the aftermath of war and occupation by foreign troops.

It was not all like that. The real Naples was not dead, but alive in its glory as it had been through 26 centuries, founded by Greeks and dominated successively by Romans, Visigoths, Longobards, Byzantines, Normans, Germans, Aragonese, Spaniards and more. Those six days, to us young men from an Australia that was overwhelmingly Anglo-Irish, opened our eyes to all sorts of different and delightful ways of being and doing that were simply everyday life to the people around us. I remember, during that week, standing before a mediaeval castle on the seafront with three round towers. I didn't know that it was what the Neapolitans call the Castel Nuovo – the New Castle – even though it had been built by the Angevin French King of Naples in the 13th Century. I simply gazed and gazed at the storybook magic of it.

Two things during that week are especially memorable. One was our visit to Pompeii. I have been there since and seen it all with more understanding and expert information, but the effect of that first visit is unforgettable. A hot, dusty weekday afternoon with absolutely no one else in those vast ruins except ourselves, young men from a young country and an old guide from a very ancient part of an old land.

Afterwards, in the new (XIX Cent.) town of Pompei, we sat under the umbrellas at an open-air cafe and were surprised and delighted when a violinist and a guitarist appeared, walking among the tables and playing to the customers - all locals, no occupying soldiers here. In the train back to Naples we sat in an old carriage on hard wooden seats with people who wanted to know all about us. With their few words of English and our baby Italian plus a lot of goodwill and good spirits, we managed to fill them in, and we all got along just fine. The whole carriage, for much

of the journey, was entertained by two hunters returning from a successful outing with shotguns held between their knees and a full game bag. They celebrated their successful day by singing happily and lustily, to much enthusiastic applause.

Another memory of that ‘week in Naples’ is of the sunny day on which we took the ferry to Capri. It was a weekday, and in any case at that time there was no tourism and no tourists, unless you counted the few American soldiers wandering here and there, and a couple of British NCO’s later on in the otherwise empty restaurant where we had lunch up at Anacapri. We were driven around the island by young men in two – or maybe three - quite large and very ancient touring cars, and apart from those few soldiers we seemed to have the whole island to ourselves. In the afternoon, at the Marina Grande, we hired a big open boat to take us round to the famous Blue Grotto on the other side of the island. The entrance to this enormous and magical sea cave is so small that to enter it you have to transfer to one of the special boats, very low in the water, standing by near the cave entrance, and to duck your head and bend low as your boat goes in. Alas, the Blue Grotto boatmen were on strike that day, and there was no way our much bigger boat could enter. It didn’t take long for us to work out what to do. It was pretty obvious. There was no one there except our boatman, so we stripped off and went over the side, and soon the huge sea-cavern was filled with the boisterous shouts and splashings of eighteen seminarians and four young priests swimming around happily, their white bodies glimmering with a strange blue, and trailing iridescent blue magic behind them. These days, I don’t think there are many people who can say they have swum naked in the Blue Grotto.

It was time to head for Rome, or rather for Castel Gandolfo, in the Alban Hills about 25 km south-east of the city, where the students and superiors were in residence during the long summer holiday. We boarded the truck and settled ourselves on improvised board seats in the back, which was covered. We arrived at the villa towards the end of the morning of 3rd September, and after a welcome from the Rector, Monsignor Cavallera, we were ushered into the refectory for lunch, which provided yet another pleasant surprise. We sat at long tables, about 24 to a table, with the prefect at one end and the vice prefect at the other, each of them serving us, from a large tureen, a first-rate minestrone – something we had never seen before, much less tasted. I was seated near the vice prefect, Danny Vongsbanij, a young priest from Thailand, who surprised me by asking if I would like a second helping. I answered yes, as did some of my Australian companions. We were a little embarrassed later on to find that there were two more courses to come. Fortunately there was plenty of water, and for each of us a small carafe which held two tumblers of wine. In my next letter home I expatiated with enthusiasm on the quality of the food, and pronounced it far superior to what we had been used to at Springwood and



Manly, where it had been a standard joke that our evening meal consisted of three courses: bread, butter and jam (washed down with tea.)

The student body when we arrived at the College was both depleted and top-heavy. There were 24 ordained priests and a mere 9 other students all in senior classes. This was well below the normal complement of around 200. We were the first large national group to arrive after the war, and we rather changed the character of the place. Only a couple of months before our arrival the college had been full to overflowing with priests who had finished their studies but could not get back to their homelands because travel was impossible during and just after the war. Their number had included at least 17 Australians, all of whom had now left for home, except for Con and Grove, and also Fr James Knox, (later Cardinal Knox) who had been appointed assistente (sub vice rector) of the College. The 9 students who were not yet ordained when we arrived were mainly from Yugoslavia – Slovenians and Croatians who had crossed the border during the war. One of them, Segula, later told me that when he was making his unauthorized border-crossing, deep in a forest in northern Italy, he was nabbed by a German guard, who proceeded to search him. When the guard saw the Mary Immaculate medal round Segula's neck he stopped searching, gave him a kick in the pants and told him to be on his way.

The villa where we would spend the next month was new and well appointed – for a tragic reason. It had been bombed by the Americans in 1944 and more than 800 refugees sheltering in it had been killed. When the allies in January 1944 had established a beachhead at Anzio, on the coast near Rome, it was from these hills that the Marshal Kesselring's army had blasted away at them and in turn been blasted by allied planes.

There was still a whole month of summer holiday to be spent at the villa before lectures would begin in Rome. A pleasant feature of our daily life under the summer sun was swimming in the brand new pool – a gift from Cardinal Gilroy to his alma mater. The excavation for it had already been made a year or two earlier– by an American. bomb.

We also went on walks to explore the surrounding countryside and the little hill towns – the Castelli Romani, which still supply Rome's trattorias with their standard white wine. A few of us walked through the bush one morning to the nearby town of Marino for the annual Festa del Vino, the celebration of the vintage, when for a couple of hours the town fountain flowed not with water but with the excellent local white wine, and all you needed was a receptacle of some kind for a good time to be had by all.

About two weeks after our arrival, it was arranged that our Australian group should go to an audience with Pope Pius XII in the papal palace, a short walk from our villa through the then quiet little town of Castel Gandolfo. Together with a few

lay people, including a couple of American military officers, we were gathered in a large circle in the audience room. The Pope entered and went round the circle, offering his hand to each of us so that we could kiss his ring, and occasionally pausing and asking a question. It was obvious that he had by this time met lots of American servicemen, as whatever his polite question might be, or whatever the answer to it, his reaction was always 'Fine, fine.' When Pope Pius came to Tom Sweeney, fresh from a Queensland farm via Banyo seminary, he decided to pause and chat. 'How did you come to Rome?' the Pope asked Tom, and Tom replied with a beaming smile, 'On the Moreton Bay, Your Holiness'. I never knew if the Pope looked puzzled at this, because he had his back to me; but I'm pretty sure his reaction was 'Fine, fine,' before he passed on to the next student. We were innocent; we had so much to learn – some more than others, and that 'some' included me. In an early letter to my family which I recently looked at for the first time since I wrote it, I was humbled to read, and I quote: 'We are fast becoming good wine drinkers and we can tell Marsala and Vermouth and all the more popular types of wine now.' I then go on to observe, with my newfound expertise, that although my preference is for Marsala, 'it would be too expensive to have it with our meals in the college'. A revolting idea in itself, although it should be noted that in the Australia we had left, if anything was drunk with a meal, it was tea, or water, or beer. Table wine as a normal thing was 20-odd years away in the future.

Towards the end of September, it was the custom for the whole student body to spend a week on the annual retreat. This took place at the Villa at Castel Gandolfo, and it did not involve us newcomers. So Fr James Knox, the sub-vice rector, had the happy idea of spiriting us away to Rome for a week, where we would be based in the empty college. We boarded the truck once again, and after about an hour's drive through what was then beautiful country and is now largely built up, we were crossing the Tiber, climbing the hill called the Gianicolo, and passing through the imposing entrance gates into the extraterritorial Vatican enclave which housed not only the College and its extensive gardens and football field, but also the Pontifical Urban University, where we, together with students from other seminaries and religious houses, would soon be attending lectures and classes. From the front garden of the college you looked down across the river with the whole city laid out before you, the domes of many of the city's 500 churches rising above the other buildings.

We were allotted our rooms for this week in Rome, and mine was at the back of the college, with a splendid view – not the one I have just described, but straight across the Piazza of St Peter's to the great Basilica itself, and adjacent to it the Vatican Palace. I wrote to my family that it was, as the crow flies, only about two or three hundred yards from my window sill to the entrance to St Peter's. It was, in

fact, quite a bit further than that. I was deceived by the splendid visual harmony of it all. Needless to say, it was during that week in Rome that we paid our first visits to the four Major Basilicas of St Peter, St John Lateran, St Mary Major and St Paul's outside the Walls.

Another visit, of a different kind, was to the Ardeatine Caves, on the southern outskirts of Rome near the Catacombs of St Callistus. Eighteen months earlier, during the cruel nine-month German occupation of Rome, partisans had exploded a bomb in Via Rasella, near the Piazza di Spagna, killing 33 German police as they marched along the street. The German Commandant of Rome, with the explicit approval of Hitler, decided that 10 Italians should die for each German killed. So 335 Italian men, some from the prisons, some Jews and many just picked up at random, were taken to the caves and shot systematically in batches of five. The Ardeatine Caves are now a national memorial, indeed they were then, but in a very primitive way. The bodies lay in cheap timber coffins, without much in the way of adornment, and the place, though tidy, was probably not very different in appearance from when they had been taken there and shot. I have forgotten some of the detail, but not the terrible impression all this made on me, and I praise the wisdom of James Knox in making sure we saw it.

Mention of Rome under the German occupation reminds me that Grove and Con told us a lot about how the college had fared under that harsh regime, of the food shortage and severe rationing, of how, through the resulting malnutrition eight students had died of tuberculosis. They told us of the close involvement of two senior New Zealand students, Flanagan and Sneddon, in a clandestine escape line for Allied prisoners of war. This was famously organized by an Irishman working in the Vatican, Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty, who was later awarded a CBE. They told us of how Australian students had saved bread from their daily ration and how it was passed on to feed escaped prisoners of war. But this is another subject, which I postpone hopefully for another paper or article.

We had reached our destination, and by Christmas 1946, with the arrival of Indians, Africans, Americans, Lebanese, Iraklis, Greeks and others, the student numbers rose to 84. The following year would see the arrival of twenty Chinese, seven Australians and a New Zealander, plus numerous others. By 1950, the total stood at 184, including 28 Australians and 3 New Zealanders.

But that was in the future. For the moment, in September, 1946, sixteen Australians and two New Zealanders were looking forward to their studies and, whether they knew it or not at that stage, to a life whose graces are beyond the telling. I would leave after four years, immensely enriched by the friendships I had made and the life I had lived with young men from 26 different countries. In July 1950 it was with deep sadness that I said goodbye to Bob Dosseh from

Togo, Thomas Tam from Vietnam, Anton Taxt from Norway, Jimmy Kou, from China, Manik Muttukumar from Ceylon, Adrian Ddungu from Uganda and other friends whom I was unlikely to see again. Among those I would see again was my classmate John Molony, later Professor of History at the ANU and a friend for the past 67 years. A book John gave me a few years ago bears the inscription: "To Dick, in memory of the great days." That says it all.

## **AFTERWORD**

I should like to acknowledge the valuable help I received from Father Grove Johnson, now living in retirement in his diocesan home town of Rockhampton. In numerous telephone conversations, and in a recorded interview I made with him in 1989, he has very helpfully prompted my memory and contributed extensively from his own.

The people who made this trip to Rome in 1946 were as follows. Without disrespect, I trust, I use first names as we used them at the time:

*From St Patrick's College, Manly, NSW*

**John Dougherty**, who later worked as a priest in the Lismore Diocese.

**Eugene Kenly**, who would work as a priest in the Port Augusta (Port Pirie) Diocese.

**Ian Burns**, later secretary to Cardinal Gilroy, and Parish Priest of Avalon, NSW.

**Geoff Lloyd**, priest of the Canberra-Goulburn Archdiocese, who ended as Parish Priest of Bega, NSW.

**Noel Tobin**, priest of the Geraldton Diocese, WA.

**Frank Bell**, from Wagga Diocese, who became Parish Priest of Narrandera, and before that did priestly work in Peru for 13 years.

**Reg Crowley**, who left the college in 1948, became chief proofreader and film critic, *Catholic Weekly* (Sydney) and member of Enmore St Vincent de Paul Society.

**Dick Connolly**, later a soundtrack and liturgical composer and department head, ABC.

*From Corpus Christi College, Werribee (Vic)*

**Len Faulkner**, who became Archbishop of Adelaide.

**Gerry Moylan**, whose priestly work was in Sandhurst diocese; he became Parish Priest of Numurkah (Vic).

**Des O'Hagan**, after priestly work in Ballarat Diocese became Lecturer in History of Science at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

*From Banyo Seminary, Brisbane (Q)*

**John Gerry**, after parish work became Auxiliary Bishop, Brisbane.

**John Mullins**, became Vicar General of Cairns Diocese.

**Tom Sweeney**, parish work in Toowoomba Diocese; Parish Priest of Quilpie (Q)

**Tom Lambert**, who after priestly work in Rockhampton Diocese became head of a college in northern NSW.

**Frank Conaty**, who, to our great sadness, contracted cancer during his second year at the College, and returned home, where he died shortly afterwards

*From Holy Cross College, Mosgiel (NZ)*

**Brian Ashby**, became Bishop of Christchurch, NZ

**John Cavanagh**, who left the college to work in the Vatican as lay secretary to Archbishop (later Cardinal) Pignedoli, planning the Holy Year of 1950; he later joined NZ Dept of Immigration

## RECOLLECTIONS OF A PERTH MOVEMENT CHAPLAIN, 1952-1958

John Challis\*

*Perhaps a better title would be: Vignettes of parish life in the 1950's, with many of them relating to the Movement.*

Let me begin by saying that this is a piece of oral history with all the limitations that that implies; in particular, I don't have any documentary support for most of the events I'm about to relate. I've checked, but none of the other priests who were present at the meetings I describe are still alive.

On Christmas Eve of 1951, aged 23, and newly ordained from Manly, I arrived in the working class parish of Victoria Park. The elderly parish priest, Fr Humphrey Kieran, who had a reputation for being strict and irascible, went to bed and left me to finish hearing confessions and say the Midnight Mass for the crowded church. It was widely known amongst the parishioners that Fr Kieran and Archbishop Prendiville, weren't on speaking terms. So I introduced myself to the congregation and said that I was the Archbishop's Christmas present to Fr Kieran.

### **The "Ne Temere" decree**

One of the first tasks Fr Kieran gave me was to go and visit the "Ne Tem cases", as they were called in clerical parlance – people who were married outside the church and therefore "living in sin".

I said to Fr Kieran: 'What should I say to them?' and he said: 'Tell them they have to live as brother and sister'.

"Ne Tem" was short for the "Ne Temere" decree of Pope Pius X in 1907, which changed church law and made it a condition of validity that Catholics be married in the presence of a priest. Prior to that the marriage of a Catholic in a Protestant church or in a registry office, was a serious sin of disobedience, but the Church recognized it as a valid marriage.

The new decree became part of the new Canon Law in 1918.

As Ed Campion points out in his very perceptive monograph "The Santamaria Movement: A Question of Loyalties", this had an indirect, but very important effect on the outcome of the Movement crisis in 1955; so it's worth a minor detour.

In the 1920 NSW elections the Catholic Federation, which was a lay organization, sponsored a confessional party called the Democratic Party. It was completely

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unsuccessful and took votes away from Labor, but it triggered a backlash from the powerful Protestant Federation. The Federation dominated the new conservative, Fuller Government, which then went on to win the 1922 election with a promise to make it a criminal offence to promulgate the “Ne Temere” decree. Protestants saw it as an attack on NSW sovereignty for the Pope to declare as invalid marriages recognized as valid by the State. Archbishop Kelly said that if the law was passed he and his priests would go to jail if necessary. The legislation passed the Lower House and was defeated by only one vote in the Upper House. It was resubmitted and again narrowly defeated. Finally, Labor was re-elected in the 1925 election and the issue died. But, As Ed Campion says: it was a “a near run thing”.

Fast forward to 1955 and the Labor Party split in Victoria, leading to what was seen as a Catholic-inspired, and Movement-dominated, Anti-Communist Labor Party, openly supported by Archbishop Mannix and the Victorian Catholic bishops – in other words, a “confessional party”. Cardinal Gilroy, and especially his auxiliary, Bishop Carroll, made sure that the split didn’t spread to NSW and, through their influence, Movement members stayed in the Labor Party and the NSW Labor Government stayed in power.

I think Ed Campion is correct in saying that one strand of motivation for this action by Sydney bishops was “sore memories” of the dark years of the 1922 sectarian backlash against a confessional party.

The “Ne Temere” decree is still in effect. It has always seemed to me to be a violation of the separation of church and state to have canon law overriding state law. Isn’t this the problem with the child abuse scandal – the canon law has been overriding civil law? Is it any different Muslims claiming that Sharia law should override civil law? Perhaps the “Ne Temere” decree will be on the agenda for Pope Francis’s Family Synod.

### **Victoria Park parish**

Back to Victoria Park parish in 1952 and the “Ne Tem” list.

When I looked at the list the first name was a Mrs Molly Paltridge. Shortly after Christmas Fr Kieran had been angry when he heard that the proprietor of the local “Broken Hill” Hotel, Shane Paltridge (soon to be Senator Shane Paltridge) had married a woman from a leading Perth Catholic family, the McEncros, in the registry office, because Shane had been divorced. Mrs Paltridge was now living at the hotel. Like Ben Chifley, Molly Paltridge came to Mass every Sunday and sat at the back of the church. Fr Kieran refused to acknowledge her and wouldn’t accept any contributions from the “Broken Hill” Hotel to the building fund.

The situation was aggravated by the fact that we soon lost our housekeeper and had our meals at the “Broken Hill,” so we often walked past the Paltridge’s table when they were present, with Fr Kieran staring straight ahead and the hapless

curate following up the rear smiling and trying to be friendly.

I called on her and we had a cup of tea and a pleasant chat, but I didn't get around to the brother and sister bit!

In due course they had a daughter Mary, who was baptized at the Cathedral Parish and grew up to marry Kim Beazley – a mixed marriage if ever there was one.<sup>1</sup>

### **Fr Lalor's 1952 visit**

After about three months I'd settled into the parish routine and we were summoned to a meeting of priests in the Archbishop's Palace – yes it was indeed a palace, built by the Benedictine monks from New Norcia, and always referred to as "The Palace" – to hear an address by a wise man from the East, Fr Harold Lalor, SJ.

Now Fr. Lalor was already known to most of us. I remembered hearing him on radio 6PR as "Uncle Peter" in a children's programme called "Peter and Pongo". The entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Jesuit Biography* describes him as follows: "He was a handsome fellow who used to dress well. He was thought of as a social figure and was in demand in amateur dramatic circles." In 1933, he gave up radio announcing and went to Rome to study for the priesthood. He was ordained in March 1939, and got back to Australia just before war broke out. In Italy he observed the growth of Catholic Action and probably had contact with the political wing of Italian Catholic Action.

Back in Perth, he was soon on the air again on Station 6PR, with a Sunday night programme called "The Catholic Answer", similar to Dr Rumble's Sydney programme.

I can still hear his deep resonating voice introducing the programme each week: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. I give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven... and the gates of hell shall not prevail..." as the exultant music of Handel's Royal Fireworks Music swelled underneath. Catholic triumphalism at its best.

He was also a dramatic preacher. His Jesuit biographer describes him as follows: "Lalor was a fiery, even sensational speaker, and he soon had people jubilantly for or hotly against him. He saw the whole world polarized on Moscow and Rome and was full of apocalyptic visions of the coming struggle." Then there is this strange statement: "In his early days as a priest he had a melodramatic appetite for martyrdom."!!

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1 Following Shane's election to the Senate, the Paltridges moved to the neighbouring, more desirable, suburb of South Perth, where they were befriended by the urbane, socializing, parish priest Monsignor J T McMahon, who received Sir Shane into the Church when he was dying of cancer. In his *The Chance of Politics*, Sir Paul Hasluck profiles Shane Paltridge, but confuses his years in South Perth parish with the earlier years in Victoria Park. (page 99).



In 1946, much to everyone's surprise - and perhaps to the relief of the Archbishop - Fr.Lalor went off to Melbourne to join the Jesuits, and, as his biographer says: "after a brief refresher course in theology, he was once more back again in circulation crusading against Communism."

So what did Fr.Lalor have to tell us at that 1952 meeting? He told us all about a secret organization lead by an outstanding layman called Bob Santamaria, whom I vaguely knew was the head of the Catholic Action secretariat in Melbourne. This organization had been set up in 1945 with a mandate from the bishops of Australia to fight communism in the trade unions. He outlined for us the grave situation that had existed with the communists almost taking over the trade unions, and being ready to link up with the communist forces spreading from China down into south east Asia and onto Australia. Fortunately, Santamaria's organization - it didn't have a name; it was referred to as "the Show" or "The Movement" - had turned the tide and won back the major trade unions, but the fight had to go on.

And then he explained that another aspect of "The Show" was to influence the policies of the Labor Party, to make sure it had the right foreign policy, family policies, to get the socialist objective modified; generally to counter any left wing influences in the party - what he referred to as "the apostolate of institutions." I asked him why were they concentrating on the Labor Party and Lalor said that there was no Communist influence in the Liberal Party, and, anyway, Catholics weren't numerous or welcome in the Liberal Party; but more importantly, Santamaria's assessment was that Labor would be the predominant force in Australian politics for the next ten years.

And then came the punch line: the Archbishop had agreed to Movement groups being established in Perth; many of us would be asked to be chaplains to parish groups; we'd be asked to sell the Movement paper *News Weekly* outside churches, and that he would be holding meetings with leading laymen to raise funds for the Movement's work.

Bruce Duncan, in his book *Crusade or Conspiracy*, which is the best account of the Movement from a religious perspective, gives this picture of Fr Lalor's operating methods: 'Lalor was one of Santamaria's most trusted associates and the leading priestly promoter of the Movement, and soon became one of the best known priests in Australia. A dynamic and emotive speaker, with a splendid voice, he became known as "the five-minutes-to midnight priest" because of his apocalyptic portrayal of the menace of Communism.

Within two years he had raised 60,000 pounds from meetings in Sydney, Maitland, Armidale and Wollongong. Parish priests would invite wealthy parishioners to a closed meeting, even in the church after the Blessed Sacrament had been removed.

And here is an eye-witness account from a Movement member, John Cotter, of Fr Lalor conducting a training course for new members: ‘The rookies course, with Lalor at the helm, was a kind of lay novitiate, a tense religious mission – the great sin was apathy; this is a decision between you and God! I remember clearly a big meeting with Movement members, immediately after the Rookies course: Fr Lalor was in his Jesuit robe. He created a night of breathless intensity. Martyrdom was in the air. People leaned further and further forward in their seats. Absolute silence during his pauses. Suddenly he finished with: “God love you”. Ear shattering applause. The Jesuit stood there like marble. Even when the audience broke up, Fr Lalor stood there as if hypnotized by his own oratory.’

Like Fr Lalor, Santamaria was a brilliant, mesmerizing orator. Cardinal Pell had this recollection of him: ‘As a teenager, probably in 1955, I first heard him talk to a packed Cathedral Hall in Ballarat on the menace of Communism. He set out to identify the mighty forces under the swirl of events... he often appealed to history. We felt we too belonged to the forces of good fighting the new forces of evil, as saints and heroes had done for a thousand years.’( *The Prince*, by David Marr)

As national chaplain to the Movement executive in Melbourne, and editor of *Social Survey* ( the Movement’s research magazine) Fr Lalor became a close friend and confidant of Santamaria, and it’s easy to see that they would have reinforced each other’s views and interpretations of national and world events.

### **My reaction**

Well what was my reaction to this wise man from the East?

I was completely convinced by what Fr Lalor said. Remember it was 1952 – the Korean War was just over; there was the Cold War in Europe; persecution of the Church in Eastern Europe. At Manly College on cold winter nights we’d had to study by candlelight because of the Communist-lead strikes in the coal fields. It sounded exciting, much more interesting than visiting the “Ne Tems”; it had been successful in the Eastern States; the Archbishop wanted it done; who was I to query my superiors.

Back in the parish, Fr Kieran wasn’t interested this “new stuff”. I was already chaplain to the Young Christian Workers group and the National Catholic Girls Movement. The Movement was added to my list of duties.

### **Parish organisation**

I wonder can you remember what parish life was like more than 60 years ago .

The main objective of priests like Fr Kieran, and he was a zealous, hard working, devout priest, was to get people into the sodalities – the Children of Mary for girls, with their blue cloaks and white veils, which they wore over their wedding dresses, and the Sacred Heart Sodality for married women. Both sodalities went to Mass and

holy communion – of course preceded by confession – on the first Sunday of the month. On the second Sunday it was the men's turn in the Holy Name Society, all sitting together behind their banners, wearing their distinctive badges. At its height the Holy Name Society had over 100,000 members. As John Cornwall notes in *The Dark Box* – his history of the confessional – the sodalities with their emphasis on regular confession, were an effective mechanism for policing morals, especially sexual morality and birth control.

My father hated regimentation and he refused to join the Holy Name Society. He refused, until after Vatican II, to use a missal. He had a prayer book called "The Garden of the Soul" given to him by his mother and I saw him kneel by his bed morning and evening and read from his prayer book, and he made his Easter Duty - confession and communion once a year. Of course growing up as a rather priggish seminarian, I was scandalized by this laxity.

### **The 'Knights'**

Not long after the Lalor meeting one of the senior Holy Name men, came to me and said: 'I hear you are going to take on the Communists, Father. I'll be in that Father, you know, I'm in the Knights.'<sup>2</sup> I said, 'Where did you hear that?' and he said, 'The Knights are in on this Father.' I'd never heard of the Knights, so I kept him chatting and asked him who else in the Knights would be interested and he gave me some names, and I said, 'In case there's a clash, what night do you have your meetings?' and he said, 'We meet on Monday night in at Pier Street.' At lunch time, I asked Fr Kieran about the Knights, and he said, 'keep clear of them; the Archbishop uses them to spy on priests.'

Then I remembered that my father used to go out every Monday night on his own. My Mother said he was going to his debating society, but I was always puzzled by this as I'd never heard him give a speech. Later I realized that he was in the Knights, but I found out that he fell out with them because he wouldn't give preference to Catholics applying for jobs during the Depression. He was the manager of a superphosphate factory which made fertilizer from the fossilized bird droppings on Nauru and Christmas Island. Whenever, I read about the harsh landscape of Nauru and Christmas Islands which asylum seekers have to endure, I remember my father's connection with these places.

### **Fred Steele**

I instinctively felt that for the Movement we needed a different style of laity, who were capable of acting independently of the clergy. Soon after Fr Lalor's visit, the Catholic Action office contacted me and suggested a young man named Fred Steele as a possible leader. Fred was a public servant in his mid 30s. I talked it over

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<sup>2</sup> The Knights of the Southern Cross.

with him and he said he'd be interested. He had two sons Peter and Paul who were altar boys. Instead of sending them to the local Christian Brothers, he sent them at considerable expense across the city to the Jesuit School St. Louis in Claremont. The elder boy Peter, eventually became Peter Steele SJ, a distinguished poet and Professor of English at Melbourne University. He died in 2012. I never met him again, but I often wondered where he stood in relation to the Movement, which the Jesuit Order supported so strongly, but which some individual Jesuits, particularly in the universities, had misgivings about.

So Fred went of to a training course for a few weeks, and we gradually got the group underway.

I can recall two particular meetings. One was a meeting at which a young worker named Bill O'Neill was very concerned because he had been taken to a meeting of a union of which he wasn't a member, using someone else's membership card – or possibly it was a fake card – and he was very worried that he would be challenged, and if he was, what would he say? How was it justified to tell a lie?

I tried to explain the idea of equivocation, of saying half-truths, of letting the listener mislead himself – all the tricks of casuistry I could think of – but even I wasn't convinced, and we agreed that members wouldn't be asked to take such risks if they didn't want to.

At another meeting Fred had a huge sheet of butchers' paper spread out on the blackboard and he drew a chart of the structure of the WA branch of the ALP, showing how the various unions and branches fed delegates into the State Conference, and how the State Executive and positions of State President and State Secretary were filled. The goal was to get the right people onto the State Executive and eventually even replace the State Secretary, Joe Chamberlain, who was a powerful left wing figure. He was later Federal President of the ALP and a key figure in the 1955 split.

I later found out that my colleague Fr Jim O'Brien, who was chaplain of the Leederville Group, had become quite friendly with Joe Chamberlain, because his wife was a Catholic on the "Ne Tem" list, and Fr O'Brien felt he was making good progress in getting her back to the Church.

### **Lalor's visit to Perth June/July 1954**

Around the middle of 1954 Fr Lalor visited Perth again and addressed a meeting of priests on the progress of the fight against communism. On the international front it was still "five minutes to midnight", possibly closer – remember the defeat of the French at Dien Bien Phu took place in May 1954. However, on the domestic front, Fr Lalor was surprisingly optimistic, the clock had gone back to around a quarter to twelve! This was because the communists had been defeated in the ACTU, in the Trades and Labor Councils, and in all the key industry unions, but work was still needed in the waterfront and seamen's unions. Then he told us about the Movement's

success in the political arena. I can't recall whether he gave us any figures, but a letter from Santamaria to Bishop Carroll in August 1954 gives an indication of the political strength of the Movement at this time: Santamaria claimed that five federal MP's were Movement members, three from Victoria; 13 members of the Victorian ALP State Executive were Movement members and the Movement claimed the allegiance of 130 out of 380 delegates at the State conference. (Bruce Duncan, 218). What I do remember, quite distinctly, was Fr Lalor then saying, 'We now have the numbers to replace Dr Evatt, Stan Keon will be the new leader and the next Prime Minister of Australia.'

I don't think anyone present was surprised to hear that there were moves in the Labor Party to replace Dr Evatt, who'd become obsessed by the Petrov affair and performed poorly in the May election, which Labor narrowly lost. However, we were surprised that Fr Lalor was talking so openly and confidently about the outcome of any challenge. Fr Jim O'Brien and I both asked wasn't the Church getting too closely involved in party politics, but Fr Lalor dismissed our objections, and simply said that it had nothing to do with the Church; this was the direction in which things were moving.

There is evidence now that changing the whole leadership ethos of the ALP was part of Santamaria's overall plan.

In 2007 Santamaria's book *Collected Letters* was published and the full text of a remarkable letter, which he wrote to Archbishop Mannix in December 1952, became available and was published in full in *The Australian*. Henderson and Duncan had both given brief quotes from the letter but the whole letter is much more revealing of Santamaria's long term thinking.

It's a long letter, and he concludes the first part by saying, 'The result of seven years activity in the unions is roughly that the Communist Party cannot hope to seize control of Australia by revolutionary means.' Then he says now that the work the bishops asked the Movement to do is done, perhaps we should hand in our mandate. But he says there are other possibilities, 'Because leading figures in each trade union become delegates to the Labor Party conferences, rising to executive and parliamentary positions, it was inevitable that as our people obtained prominence in the unions, they would rise also in the political field.' It's almost as if this political influence has fallen in the Movement's lap by accident.

Then he lists what he says this new political arm of the Movement can reasonably be expected to do 'for the public welfare':

'The Social Studies Movement should within a period of five or six years be able to completely transform the leadership of the Labor movement and to introduce into the federal and state spheres large numbers of members who possess a clear realization of what Australia demands of them and the will to carry it out. Without

going into details, they should be able to implement a Christian social program in both the state and federal spheres. This is the first time that such a work has become possible in Australia, and as far as I can see, in the Anglo-Saxon world since the advent of Protestantism.’

He then talks about getting state aid for Catholic schools, plans for migration (from Catholic countries of course) and large scale plans for land settlement. Then he says, ‘It is of course for the bishops to decide whether they wish this work to be done.’

There is no evidence that Archbishop Mannix sent this letter on to the other bishops in 1952 or later; or that the bishops discussed this plan and gave the Movement this extended new mandate to actively influence the political sphere. It seems that it just gradually expanded into this new field, and so here we have Fr Lalor two years later touting for Stan Keon as future leader and possibly Prime Minister. When I first mentioned Fr Lalor’s prediction to Ed Campion, I remember Ed saying, ‘He would have been the first gay prime minister.’

I looked up Standish Michael Keon in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, and here’s a brief portrait of him, ‘He was born in 1913 to working class parents in Carlton – his registered names were Horace Stanley – (I wonder where the ‘Standish’ came from). He won a scholarship to Xavier College, but was unable to take it up. Reduced family circumstances compelled him to start work at the age of 12.

‘Sponsored by Calwell in 1927 he joined the ALP and became a committed member of the Catholic Young Men’s Society, which provided a form of higher education and a social network that he would later draw on in his political career. As editor of *The Catholic Young Man* he promoted Catholic Action which, in the wake of the Depression was understood by many socially aware Catholics to mean militant opposition to both capitalism and communism.

‘From 1939 to 1949 he was secretary of the Public Service Association and through a brilliantly organized campaign, mobilizing his connections in the public service and the Catholic Young Mens Society, he won pre-selection for the blue-ribbon Labor seat of Richmond in the Victorian Parliament, and in 1949 he comfortably won the Federal seat of Yarra.’

The biographer continues, ‘His public life was marked by fierce anti-communism. In his maiden speech in the House of Representatives he considered ways of dealing with the internal and external threat of communism – he attacked journalists and academics, describing them a “parlour pinks” and “pink professors”. In 1952 he claimed that the Commonwealth Literary Fund was being used to support Communist sympathizers.’ You can see why he would have appealed to Santamaria and Lalor.

‘At the time Keon was a dark-haired, trim, sharp-nosed figure. Intense,

ambitious, pugnacious, widely read, formidably intelligent and articulate, he left a strong impression. (He sounds like prime ministerial material.) His voice was described as having an electric character. Frank Hardy in *Power without Glory* (1950) caricatured the unmarried Keon in his malign portrait of the devious, sexually repressed Michael Kiely. Writing in 2004, Philip Jones, who knew Keon, characterized him as a “very closeted gay”. After the split he became deputy leader of the Anti-Communist Labor Party (later the DLP) and in the following election he lost his seat to Jim Cairns after a vicious campaign by both sides.

‘After politics he became a successful wine merchant and built up a successful collection of Australian Art. He died in 1987. He was often described as a potential prime minister, but despite his great talents, it was never likely that he would attain that position. Throughout his political career he remained an irascible, volatile, individualist.’

As you all know, three months later, on 4 October 1954, Dr Evatt issued a sensational statement blaming the election defeat on disloyal Victorian party members who had undermined his campaign, and he added, ‘It seems clear that the activities of this small group are largely directed from outside the Labor Movement. The Melbourne *News Weekly* appears to act as their organ.’

And then the whole story about Catholic Action and the secret organization based in Melbourne called ‘The Movement’, led by an Italo-Australian named Santamaria, came out, with an editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, written by John Pringle, warning Catholics ‘that if they cannot persuade the majority to adopt their ideas in the normal course of debate, then it is dangerous to try to impose them by any form of semi-secret organization.’ Anglican Bishop Burgman warned, ‘That Christians should take no part in any underhand political activity of a conspiratorial nature.’

Catholic spokesmen tried to deflect the attack by accusing Evatt of deliberately stirring up sectarianism to distract attention from his own failings.

As I mentioned earlier, when talking about the “Ne Temere” Decree, in Victoria the Labor Party eventually split with Movement MPs and members forming the Anti Communist Labor Party, supported by Archbishop Mannix and the Victorian bishop, whereas in Sydney Cardinal Gilroy and Bishop Carroll, fearful of a sectarian backlash, ensured that Movement members stayed in the ALP.

Over in far distant Perth, the sympathies of the Movement members were certainly with their Victorian colleagues and with the Anti Communist Labor Party, but no split took place. The Director of Catholic Action in Perth, Fr Joe Depiazzi, who was a former student of Werribee Seminary, and an admirer of Santamaria, whom he’d heard as a student speaking at the college, kept assuring us that the Movement still had the full backing of the bishops, including our own Archbishop.

Fr O'Brien and I were not so sure, but we really didn't know. We had very poor sources of information about what was happening in the Eastern States – remember it was the days before cheap telephone calls.

We kept hearing rumours that the bishops were splitting into two camps, one aligned with the Melbourne position, the other with the Sydney position. The dispute went on through 1956 and eventually Cardinal Gilroy led a delegation to Rome to get a ruling. As chaplains we were told nothing about this. We didn't even know which side Archbishop Prendiville was on. We later found out that he had changed sides and joined the Sydney camp.

Finally the decision came back from Rome that the Movement controlled by the bishops was to confine itself to educating the laity about their civic duties, but any action in the industrial or political spheres was to be organized and carried out by the laity independently of the Church. One was called "Catholic Action"; the other was called "Action of Catholics".

However, this clear cut decision was put into effect in quite different ways by the Sydney and Melbourne camps. Following Melbourne's lead, the Perth Movement officers, with the agreement of Fr Depiazzi, all resigned; the organization's name was changed from Catholic Social Movement to National Civic Council, and business went on as usual!

Fr O'Brien and I thought it was just window dressing. I was pleased to find in Bruce Duncan's book an angry letter from Archbishop Prendiville to Frank Malone, the Movement organizer, saying, 'This is not readjustment, but the continuation in exactly the same way of what was happening before, with the legal fiction of disassociation with the past by a change of name.'

My final incursion into Movement matters was in June 1957 when I was invited to address a Newman Society Conference on Catholic Action. I took the opportunity, not only to spell out the theory of Catholic Action, but to explain the newly revised status of the Movement. I was very careful to praise the spirituality and loyalty of Movement members and the achievements of the Movement in the trade unions, which I had supported and generally admired.

And then I said that the Movement had really been too successful and that 'it need not scandalize us that an organization living so dangerously would cause concern about the Church becoming directly involved in political and industrial matters.' These problems had been addressed, relations with the bishops had been reviewed and the Movement had been placed on a new basis which frees the Church from any responsibility for activity in the civic or industrial sphere, which is initiated and directed by lay people. And finally, 'While all Catholics must oppose Communism, there is no suggestion that the method adopted by the Catholic Social Movement is the only effective way of fighting Communism. Many bishops (by implication not



all) believe that it is the most effective way in the present circumstances.’

My talk was printed in the Catholic newspaper *The Record*, and was probably the first time that there had been any mention of the Movement in the Catholic press in WA. Fr Depiazzi wasn’t pleased, and neither would Bob Santamaria have been.

I went off to the peace of the Dominican novitiate.

## **CONCLUSION**

Even allowing for my residual Dominican prejudices, I completely agree with Bruce Duncan’s assessment of Fr. Lalor, ‘Lalor died in 1969. He was a faithful lieutenant to Santamaria, but he was a man of extremes, “the five-minutes-to-midnight priest”, lacking in judgement, common sense, whipping up hysteria about communism in his fund-raising campaign and propaganda for the Movement. Mannix and Lalor’s Jesuit superiors were greatly remiss in not curbing Lalor’s frightful enthusiasm and irresponsible hyperbole.’ (Duncan, 347)

And also with Bruce Duncan’s final assessment of Bob Santamaria, ‘At the core of the Movement dispute was the way Santamaria juggled its ambivalent aims. By emphasizing the religious sanction of the Movement as an official Church organization, he could boost recruitment, bolster his own authority, enforce discipline and give members a sense of being engaged in the sacred task of saving the nation.

‘When the control of the bishops became disfunctional to his plans, especially because of the opposition of the Sydney bishops, he emphasized lay independence in politics, whilst trying to preserve as much of the religious sanction as possible. It is a tribute to his powers of persuasion that he was able to perform the juggling act for so long.’ (Duncan, 404).

The irony of the Santamaria adventure is that we now have a Prime Minister who is a great admirer, even a disciple of Santamaria, and many senior members of his cabinet were educated by the Jesuits, and yet, there is little sign of the Christian principles of justice, fairness and compassion in their policies.

## **CODA**

I may have had a further encounter with the Movement in 1978. At the ABC I was widely considered to be the most likely person to succeed Allan Ashbolt as director of the Radio Special Projects department, which was, and still is, a very influential part of Radio National. Much to my disappointment, I was not appointed. I was told by ABC management that I couldn’t be appointed because of the opposition of the ABC Commissioner from Victoria, Sir Bernard Callinan, due to ‘a church matter’ involving me. Sir Bernard was a close associate of Santamaria. Was it the ‘apostolate of institutions’ making sure that an unsound person wasn’t appointed to an influential media position?

# THE ROAD TO SCHISM: YVES DUPONT AND THE LATIN MASS SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA 1966-1977

Bernard Doherty\*

*The world has never been without people who thought the clock of time could be put back, who saw in the rejected past the true goal of mankind and, in the words of one of the most distinguished of that school in the nineteenth century, thought that change could never be for the better.*<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction: The reactionary horizon

When soon after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) the French former missionary Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre (1901-1991)<sup>2</sup> began fulminating that the Council had enshrined the spirit of the French Revolution in the very heart of the Roman Catholic Church and suggesting that this was the result of a Judeo-Masonic conspiracy,<sup>3</sup> he was not voicing an opinion which had not been percolating in some right-wing Catholic circles since the opening of the Council, nor was he voicing ideas which did not have a long pedigree in certain reactionary sectors of the Roman Catholic Church going back almost two hundred years.

Indeed, what is perhaps most surprising about Lefebvre's views is how long he managed to keep silent in the face of the far more effective lobbying power displayed by the Council majority beginning with the opening sessions in 1962, in spite of the spirited interventions of Lefebvre and his fellow members of the conservative

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- 1 R H Soltau, *French Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, Russell & Russell, New York, 1931, 5.
  - 2 On Lefebvre see the hagiographical but well-documented biography of B Tissier de Mallerais, *Marcel Lefebvre: The Biography*, Kansas City: The Angelus Press: 2002; also useful, though equally hagiographical, is David Allen White, *The Horn of the Unicorn*, Kansas City: The Angelus Press: 2006. On the importance of his missionary work to his later views see J Rich, 'Marcel Lefebvre in Gabon: Revival, Missionaries, and the Colonial Roots of Catholic Traditionalism', in S A Curtis and K J Callahan, *Views from the margins creating identities in modern France*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press: 2008, 53-83.
  - 3 M Lefebvre, *They Have Uncrowned Him: From Liberalism to Apostasy The Conciliar Tragedy*, Dickinson, The Angelus Press, 1988, 67.

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*Yves Dupont and Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre Tullamarine Airport, Melbourne, February 17, 1973. World Trends, no. 33, April, 1973, 5.*

*Coetus Internationalis Patrum.*<sup>4</sup>

The topic of opposition to the Council, whether amongst progressives who felt the Council did not go far enough in terms of its reforming agenda, or amongst various kinds of conservatives who felt the Council was in part or in whole a betrayal of Catholic tradition, has received far less attention from historians than it warrants.<sup>5</sup> While a great deal has been written about the reception of the Council,<sup>6</sup> very little has been written about the rejection of the Council or the emergence of a small, but not insignificant, minority for whom “the post-Vatican II period [was] disintegrating and disorienting,” and for whom the “destruction of old habits, assumptions and certainties entailed... a painful and confusing search

for some new identity and security within the church.”<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, even less has been written about the constituency who, to once again quote their most well known exemplar Archbishop Lefebvre, arrived at the stark conclusion that Vatican II “derives from heresy and ends in heresy, even if all its acts are not formally heretical.”<sup>8</sup>

As what little historical work on this topic demonstrates, across this reactionary horizon a wide range of opinions continue to exist ranging from those who attend

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4 Cf. Giuseppe Alberigo, *A Brief History of Vatican II*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2006; Roberto de Mattei, *The Second Vatican Council (an unwritten story)*, Fitzwilliam: Loreto Publications: 2010; Ralph M Wiltgren, *The Rhine Flows into the Tiber: A History of Vatican II*, Rockford: TAN Books: 1985.

5 The one major scholarly historical study is D Menozzi, ‘Opposition to the Council (1966-1984)’, in G Alberigo, Jean-Pierre Jossua and J A Komochak (eds), *The Reception of Vatican II*, Tunbridge Wells: Burns & Oates, 1987, 325-348.

6 For example, N Ormerod et al. *Vatican II: Reception and Implementation in the Australian Church*, Mulgrave: Garratt Publishing, 2012.

7 P O’Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community: An Australian History*, Kensington: New South Wales University Press, 1992, 425.

8 M Lefebvre, *A Bishop Speaks: Writings and Addresses 1963-1975*, Edinburgh: Scottish Una Voce, 1979, 190.

canonically approved Latin Mass parishes or chapels,<sup>9</sup> through those who attend chapels of the canonically suppressed Society of St. Pius X (henceforth SSPX), to sedevacantists,<sup>10</sup> conclavists, and those who follow a series of self-proclaimed papal claimants.<sup>11</sup> While most in-depth study of this oppositional subculture has focused on North America and Europe, the situation of theological diversity across this reactionary horizon has been equally apparent in Australia since the first stirrings of conservative dissent in the 1960s associated with the emergence of the Latin Mass Society of Australia.

However, like elsewhere, this topic has received little attention among Australian historians or those interested in contemporary Roman Catholicism,<sup>12</sup> despite an abundance of illuminating source material and the high public profile achieved by some of its more controversial offspring (e.g. Hutton Gibson and his son Mel Gibson).<sup>13</sup> Instead, the tendency appears to have been to follow the response of Patrick O'Farrell, who largely dismissed these groups as "sheer reaction [and] a refusal to budge from the positions and practices of the past," noting that while a movement rejecting the Council existed it was "small in size," and, by implication, unworthy of further study.<sup>14</sup>

There are good reasons why historians have shied away from this topic, some of which will become apparent from certain unsavory aspects examined below, but the story of opposition to Vatican II, however distasteful or extreme some of its content, is a part of the history of the Church in the last fifty years and warrants further historical scrutiny. For many Vatican II was a revolution, and as the French

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9 M Daniel, 'Growth of Latin Mass parishes and chaplaincies in Australia', *AD2000*, Vol. 27, No. 6, July, 2014, 10-11.

10 Sedevacantism (from the Latin *sede vacante* "the seat being empty") is a minority theological opinion amongst traditionalist Catholics which holds that by virtue of their heretical opinions none of the popes reigning since the death of Pope Pius XII in 1958 have been legitimate and thus there is currently no pope.

11 M Introvigne and P Zoccatelli, 'Sedevacantism and Antipopes', in J G Melton and M Bauman (eds), *Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices*, Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2010, 2562-66.

12 The two exceptions here are D Hilliard, 'Defending Orthodoxy: Some Conservative and Traditionalist Movements in Australian Christianity', G R Treloar and R D Linder (eds), *Making History for God: Essays in Evangelicalism, Revival and Mission in Honour of Stuart Piggin*, Sydney: Robert Menzies College, 2000, 273-92 and H O'Leary, 'The Lefebvre Movement: A Catholic Manifestation of Fundamentalism', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol. 67, no. 4, 1990, 401-12.

13 S Masson, 'The Eyes of the Icon', *Quadrant*, vol. 47, no. 10, October, 2003, 58-62. W D Dinges, 'Gibson and Traditionalist Catholicism', *Religion in the News*, vol. 5, no. 3: <http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/csrpl/rinvol6no3/gibson%20and%20traditionalist%20catholicism.htm>

14 O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community*, 426.

intellectual George Steiner observed: “no revolution is unanimous. The very concept of revolution entails that of opposition or counter-revolution.”<sup>15</sup> This article seeks to make a preliminary voyage into this historical *terra incognita* by examining the life and thought of one of the more extreme early advocates of this opposition in Australia, the French émigré Yves Dupont (1922-1976).

### **Yves Dupont: a biographical sketch**

Yves Louis Charles Dupont was born October 17, 1922 in Paris and educated near Bordeaux. While Dupont was not raised in a conventionally religious household he became interested in the topic of prophecy in his youth, and while hitherto considering himself an agnostic, he became a practicing Catholic in 1941 while serving in the French Colonial Army in North Africa during the Second World War. Dupont fought with the Free French in a number of different locations throughout the war, winning the *Croix de Guerre* in 1944 for his service in Alsace, and by his own admission fighting alongside communists in occupied regions, an experience he later claimed gave him keen insight into communism and what he saw to be its pernicious nature.<sup>16</sup>

Dupont immigrated to Australia in 1948 under the ex-serviceman’s assisted passage scheme, arriving aboard the *Ville L’Amiens* at Sydney on April 30. In surviving records little can be found about Dupont’s life as a migrant, other than that for a time in the late 1950s he worked for the newly established Australian Broadcasting Commission before striking out on his own by founding the periodical *World Trends* in 1962. In January 1966, together with Catherine Mackerras, Dr David Pitt MD, and John Keirnan, Dupont became a founding member of the Latin Mass Society of Australia, which in its initial stages sought the preservation of the Mass of St. Pius V (the ‘Tridentine Mass’) in the form of the 1962 Latin Missal alongside the English mass, which had become increasingly more prevalent around Australia since 1964.<sup>17</sup> The history of the Latin Mass Society of Australia is a fascinating story in itself; however, this article will only refer to this in passing for the light it sheds on Dupont.

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15 G Steiner, ‘Aspects of Counter-revolution’, in G Best (ed.), *The Permanent Revolution: The French Revolution and its Legacy 1789-1989*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988, 129.

16 Biographical details of Dupont have been assembled from several sources: R Cusworth, *History 1966-1984 and Domus Dei*, Sydney, The Latin Mass Society of Australia, 1984; an obituary in *The Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society of Australia*, March, 1977, 7-8; and Y Dupont, *Catholic Prophecy: The Coming Chastisement*, Rockford: TAN Books, 1970, 7-8.

17 C V Johnson, ‘A Deep and Vast Renewal of the Church’s Inmost Life’, in Ormerod et al (eds.) *Vatican II*, 20-46.

Dupont remained passionately committed to the Society for the remaining years of his life, though owing to his concentration on *World Trends* he never assumed any executive role within the Society. Similarly, while Dupont frequently insisted that *World Trends* was not an official organ of the Society, it was noted by Roma Cusworth in her official 1984 history that *World Trends* “expressed exactly how the quietness and holiness of the Old Latin Mass had affected us.”<sup>18</sup> While not the sole deciding factor, Dupont’s French connections clearly played an important role in the Society’s decision to officially align with SSPX in 1973. Perhaps surprisingly, however, he appears to have sided with the more moderate party when the Society split over the question of sedevacantism and Hutton Gibson’s hardening views on the Pope, with Gibson and a small minority resigning following the Annual General Meeting in October 1976.<sup>19</sup> While owing to illness, Dupont was not present, it was noted by other members on his behalf (with some surprise), that it would be a “good policy to lay off the pope; even Dupont says this.”<sup>20</sup> While it is not possible to elaborate here, Gibson later formed an organization calling itself the Alliance for Catholic Truth,<sup>21</sup> though it is uncertain whether it ever had any organized function other than providing a mailing list for the musings of the irascible and cantankerous Gibson.<sup>22</sup>

On December 6, 1976 Dupont passed away, following a long and painful battle with cancer. He was interred at Spring Vale lawn cemetery on December 9, with the Vincentian priest and Latin Mass stalwart, the much-admired Fr Patrick Fox, a long-time supporter of the Society, saying a Solemn Requiem Mass. Dupont was survived by a wife and three children. Despite his death during the period when opposition to the Council was reaching fever pitch, *World Trends* and his publishing house Tenet Books, had played a pioneering role in the dissemination of radical opposition to Vatican II, as well as contributing to the organization of a network of Australian traditionalists.

However, it is also important to note that Dupont’s writings had also sown the seeds for fragmentation within the nascent traditionalist movement. Dupont and his publishing house Tenet Books had begun the distribution of many of the more extreme writings to emerge during the Council and its aftermath, some of which were to become major works in the emerging sedevacantist subculture including Patrick Omlor’s *Questioning the Validity of the Masses using the New*,

<sup>18</sup> Cusworth, *History 1966-1984 and Domus Dei*, 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society of Australia*, November, 1976, 3.

<sup>20</sup> *Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society of Australia*, June, 1976, 1.

<sup>21</sup> A Gill, ‘The Pope a heretic? The conservative revolt’, *Sydney Morning Herald* 9/5/1975.

<sup>22</sup> A Gill, ‘After 10 years the Latin Mass remains an issue’, *Sydney Morning Herald* 23/8/79.

*All English Canon* (1967) and Maurice Pinay's *The Plot Against the Church* (1962). Works like these, helped influence some more radical members of the Society in their adoption of a sedevacantist position and it is an interesting question whether had Dupont lived he may have eventually taken a similar path. Having given this introduction to Dupont's life it is now important to look at his periodical *World Trends*.

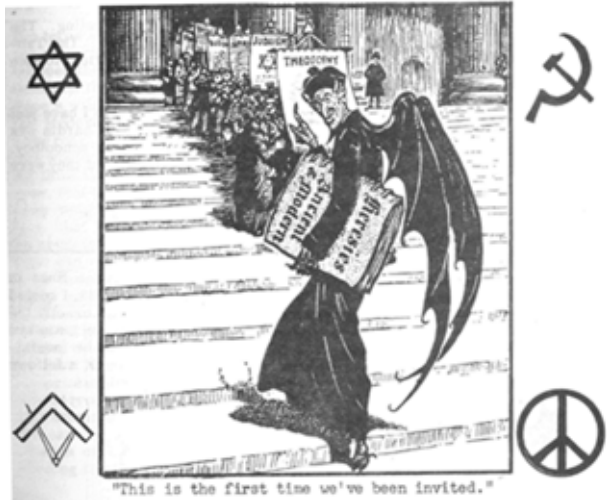


Illustration of *World Trends* issue entitled 'Vatican II: The Canonization of Heresy', *World Trends*, July, 1965, 1.

### Rejecting the Council: *World Trends* Magazine

In Australia the first signs of unrest regarding Vatican II were already manifesting during the opening sessions, with the appearance in 1962 of a new periodical calling itself *World Trends*, issued from Hawthorn in Melbourne under the auspices of Tenet Books and (initially) bearing the imprimatur of Archbishop Daniel Mannix.<sup>23</sup> This small periodical was written completely under the editorship of Dupont, and he soon became well known across the traditionalist subculture. *World Trends* was the first English language traditionalist publication and from its first issue attracted a wide readership, not only in Australia, but also in North America and further afield.

From the opening pages *World Trends* introduced Australian readers to a hitherto largely unfamiliar strand of European Catholic thought which combined a seething critique of contemporary theology with intricate conspiracy theories and an apocalyptic worldview that perceived in current world events the portents of the end-times. With articles on topics ranging from "The Antichrist"<sup>24</sup> to "The

<sup>23</sup> Somehow, despite its often highly critical content, *World Trends* managed to continue receiving an Imprimatur until September 1970 when for undisclosed reasons this was refused. From December 1970 the official position of the Diocese of Melbourne became that *World Trends* did not fall into a category of works which required the Imprimatur.

<sup>24</sup> 'The Antichrist', *World Trends*, no. 45, September 1975, 1-29.

Jewish Question,”<sup>25</sup> and from “Freemasonry and Vatican II”<sup>26</sup> to the discussion of whether or not the English Mass was valid,<sup>27</sup> *World Trends* alerted Australian Catholics to a paranoid conspiracy laden worldview which saw behind each of the successive developments arising from the Council the sinister machinations of Freemasons and other groups viewed as traditional enemies of the Church (e.g. the Jews, communists).

While marginal today, such radical views had become common across the emerging traditionalist subculture in Europe and North America during the period from the late 1960s through to the mid-1970s.<sup>28</sup> This popularity coincided with the *de facto* replacement of the Tridentine Mass – which had been in use with minimal changes since its promulgation by Pope Pius V in his papal bull *Quo Primum* (1570) – with the *Novus Ordo Missae* promulgated by Pope Paul VI on April 3, 1969. The “New Mass,” as it was referred to by traditionalists, was rolled out between 1969 and November 28, 1971, a date described by one Australian traditionalist as “the date set for its [the Tridentine Mass] extinction”.<sup>29</sup> As this date approached it became clearer that devotees of the Tridentine Mass were becoming increasingly nervous, as one member of the Latin Mass Society later noted: “the movement for the preservation, and indeed, for the restoration of the Roman Mass has gone into high gear.”<sup>30</sup>

This might appear strange in hindsight, but in general opposition to the liturgical reforms in Australia was a relatively small affair. Despite this, however, very soon members of the Australian hierarchy like Archbishop Rush in Brisbane, Archbishop Knox in Melbourne, and Cardinal Freeman in Sydney, showed their lack of sympathy with the Society and its appeals,<sup>31</sup> largely in response to the

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25 ‘The Jewish Question’, *World Trends*, no. 15, December 1969), 6f.

26 ‘Freemasonry and Vatican II’, *World Trends*, no. 37, January 1974.

27 ‘Liceity and Validity of the New Mass In English’, *World Trends*, no. 16, March 1970, 15f.

28 On the early years of Traditionalism in Europe see Mennozi, ‘Opposition to the Council (1966-1984)’, 330-332. On the situation in North America see W D Dinges, ‘In Defense of Truth and Tradition: Catholic Traditionalism in America 1964-1974’, *The Working Paper Series Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism* 17, no. 2, 1986.

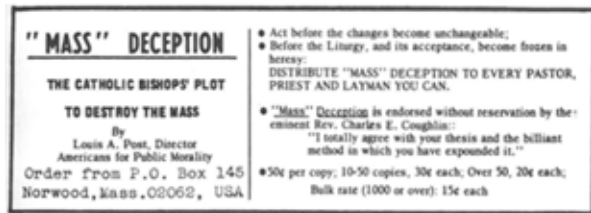
29 *Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society of Australia*, January, 1971, 2.

30 *Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society of Australia*, June, 1972, 3.

31 A Gill ‘Latin Mass rebels in Aust criticised’, *Sydney Morning Herald* 2/7/1976.



immoderate language used by figures like Gibson and Dupont in their writings.<sup>32</sup> For example, Archbishop Rush in reply to a letter from one Society member regarding the Australian Hierarchy's decision not to apply for the Indult noted: "No doubt the reason why



Advertisement for sedevacantist literature in *World Trends*, no. 22, June, 1971, 19.

most Bishops would hesitate to do so would be because of some of the attitudes your Society adopts to the *Novus Ordo Missae* of Pope Paul VI," going on to cite Gibson's "Position Paper" which he had presented to the annual Bishops' meeting in January 1974 in which Gibson claimed that the New Mass was "heretical."<sup>33</sup> The member's reply, however, confirmed Rush's suspicions and included quotations from the recently excommunicated Mexican sedevacantist Fr Joaquín Sáenz y Arriaga, the soon-to-be-excommunicated Abbé Georges de Nantes (who had openly accused Pope Paul VI of heresy in his infamous *Libellum Accusationis*), and another early sedevacantist booklet by Louis Post entitled *Mass Deception: The Catholic Bishops' Plot to Destroy the Mass* (1969), the last of which had been endorsed by the notorious American Catholic radio priest and anti-Semite Fr. Charles Coughlin. All works, it is worth pointing out, distributed by Tenet Books.

Under these strained conditions *World Trends*, along with a series of other magazines in the U.S. like *The Voice*, became a major Anglophone source for the collection and dissemination of the ideas within this emerging radical subculture, especially through advertisements for other traditionalist magazines, books, and booklets, penned by those opposed to the post-conciliar reforms. *World Trends'* role in this regard was also clearly aided by a policy adopted by *The Catholic Weekly* sometime between 1972 and 1973, of refusing letters and advertisements from members of the Society (a practice soon followed by other diocesan newspapers), again probably in response to Gibson's habit of writing aggressive and immoderate missives to or about those he disagreed with (including well-known historian

32 Gibson had written to Freeman in June 1973 that: "All this hatred of our immemorial and unquestioned rite smacks of Satanism. I can see no honest excuse for it. Nor can we expect honesty or rationale from Mass-haters" *Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society of Australia*, August, 1973, n.p.

33 *Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society of Australia*, March, 1974, n.p.

Fr Edmund Campion).<sup>34</sup> This policy of censorship, however, only served to strengthen the self-image of members of the Society that they were a “church of the catacombs” persecuted by an unsympathetic hierarchy that had betrayed tradition.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to offering a rallying point for the advertisement of Latin Mass chapels and the promotion of anti-conciliar literature, *World Trends* also had a political aspect and featured articles on a range of topics from the threat of communism to the Church,<sup>36</sup> to U.S. foreign policy and the assassination of Kennedy,<sup>37</sup> and from the Vietnam War to the prophecies of Nostradamus.<sup>38</sup> This range of topics, however, was almost always interpreted through the lens of a complex apocalyptic scenario that Dupont outlined in some detail in a popular book *Catholic Prophecy: The Coming Chastisement*, published by the conservative American publishing house Thomas A Nelson (TAN) Books in 1970.

According to the scenario laid-out in his commentary on a series of prophetic writers, ranging in date from the sixth century AD to the Second World War, Dupont outlined a complex and fantastic scenario of global political turmoil, war, and natural disaster, in which the armies of communism and Islam would be triumphant over a divided Europe and a Catholic Church ruled by an anti-pope. These events were to be followed by the rise of a Christian prince of royal blood (usually French) who would defeat the marauding armies of unbelievers. After these events Russia and China would be converted to Catholicism and a holy pope would be elected who “restores all the former disciplines of the Church.”<sup>39</sup> This would be followed by a period of great peace and prosperity preceding the rise of Antichrist who, in alliance with his Jewish followers, would usher in the last days.

*Catholic Prophecy* was a précis of thirty-years of collecting and studying these texts, which Dupont had begun before leaving France,<sup>40</sup> and while the average reader

34 Alan Gill, ‘Pope Paul suspends arch-traditionalist’, *Sydney Morning Herald* 6/8/1976, 9. For Gibson’s response to a letter written by Campion to the *Sydney Morning Herald* 4/2/1975 see *Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society of Australia*, April, 1975.

35 A Gill, ‘The Catholic backlash’, *Sydney Morning Herald* 20/9/1973; ‘Back to the catacombs’, *Sydney Morning Herald* 21/9/1973.

36 ‘The Anti-Priests (Communism in the Church)’, *World Trends*, No. 31, December, 1972, 1-20.

37 ‘Foreign Affairs, II’, *World Trends*, No. 4, May, 1964, Supplement No. 5, 1-4.

38 ‘Foreign Affairs, I’, *World Trends*, No. 4, May, 1964, Supplement No. 4, 1-4; and ‘Prophecies for Today’, *World Trends*, No. 4, May, 1964, Supplement No. 1, 3-10.

39 Y Dupont, *Catholic Prophecy: The Coming Chastisement*, Rockford, TAN Books, 1970, Preface.

40 Dupont’s first book *Les Derniers Jours des Derniers Temps* was published in Paris in 1959 with a preface from the Nostradamus expert Max Pigéard de Gurbert.

today might balk at its content, it is important to acknowledge that Dupont did draw on a long tradition of texts dating back to Late Antiquity, most written by reputable Catholic religious personages!<sup>41</sup> *Catholic Prophecy* was to become a bestseller in the traditionalist subculture, so much so that Bernard McGinn, the world's foremost scholar of Roman Catholic apocalyptic, included it in his large survey of two-thousand years of Christian thought about Antichrist as a representative example of what he characterized as: "a right-wing Catholic apocalypticism that sees in Vatican II and the subsequent liturgical changes introduced into the Mass a sign of the imminence of the end."<sup>42</sup>

As noted above, prophecies and their accompanying supernatural manifestations had been a lifelong obsession for Dupont, and stories about the latest apparitions at Garabandal in Spain,<sup>43</sup> a weeping statue of the Madonna in New Orleans,<sup>44</sup> or the divine portents which the comet Kohoutek held, were all regular features in *World Trends* alongside articles pertaining to the problems surrounding the New Mass and criticisms of the theology of figures like the *bête noire* of traditionalists Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, Dupont even became an early promoter of the extremely controversial Bayside Apparition in Flushing Meadows, Queens, publishing some of its so-called 'miraculous photography'<sup>46</sup> as early as 1973.

As the post-conciliar reforms reached their apogee over the course of the 1970s, with the Vatican finally taking a series of disciplinary actions against Archbishop Lefebvre beginning in 1976, various positions across the reactionary horizon became more crystallized.<sup>47</sup> Dupont and *World Trends* in tandem with the Latin Mass Society of Australia, became more closely aligned with Lefebvre and SSPX, with Dupont acting as a translator, promoter, and donation collection point for Lefebvre's early international appeals on behalf of his embattled group and what the French Bishops had called its "wildcat seminary" at Ecône in Switzerland.<sup>48</sup>

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41 For an overview of these ideas and their variations see B McGinn, 'Forms of Catholic Millenarianism: A Brief Overview', in K A Kottman (ed.), *Millenarianism and Messianism in Early Modern European Culture*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2001, 1-13.

42 B McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994, 252.

43 'Garabandal', *World Trends*, no. 32, February, 1973, 10f.

44 'The Weeping Madonna', *World Trends*, no. 32, February, 1973, 3f.

45 'A Sign in the Sky?' *World Trends*, no. 36, October-November, 1973.

46 *World Trends*, no. 36, 4-5.

47 On this period see Menozzi, 'Opposition to Vatican II', 336-347.

48 Michael Davies, *Apologia Pro Marcel Lefebvre Part One*, Kansas City: The Angelus Press, 1979, 36.

Beginning in August 1971 *World Trends* frequently ran stories on the seminary, appealing for donations and encouraging potential Australian seminarians,<sup>49</sup> with a typical appeal from Dupont reading:

This is a most worthy cause. Archbishop Lefebvre is, to our knowledge, the only bishop in the world to have embarked upon a bold and positive course of action to counter the modernistic climate and teaching in today's Seminaries. The Archbishop is committed to giving his priests a truly traditional formation. In our opinion, these priests may form the nucleus of the reborn Church of the future, without whom no rebirth may be possible... The Seminary fund is now open, and *World Trends* has made the first payment.<sup>50</sup>

Similarly, Dupont, together with colleagues from the Latin Mass Society of Australia, played a key role in bringing Archbishop Lefebvre to Australia to attend the International Eucharistic Congress in Melbourne in February 1973, where Lefebvre met with a few of the more conservative members of the Australian hierarchy including Bishops Bernard Stewart of Sandhurst, William Brennan of Toowoomba and F.X. Thomas of Geraldton.<sup>51</sup>

The more apocalyptic aspects of *World Trends* were certainly treated with suspicion by some in the Latin Mass Society, Hutton Gibson, for example, was uncharacteristically cautious about "private revelation", entitling one article during his tumultuous period as secretary and editor of the Society's newsletter "Private Revelations? Grant Them Plenty of Privacy!"<sup>52</sup> Despite this, however, Dupont's penchant for conspiracy theory and apocalyptic prophecies, which he heavily promoted in *World Trends*, formed a major part of the Lefebvre's own worldview and that adopted by some of his followers, and the kinds of material circulated in *World Trends* left a lasting impression on the traditionalist subculture, particularly in the Anglophone world.

*World Trends* continued publishing until May 1977, though its circulation in Australia dropped somewhat following a decision by at least one Catholic newspaper, the Brisbane based *Catholic Leader* (and probably others too), to refuse advertising space for Dupont and his radical ideas. Today *World Trends* might appear eccentric, but it is clear that Dupont's ideas appealed to many of the disenfranchised reactionary Catholics in the Latin Mass Society, who felt they had been betrayed

49 The first two Australian Seminarians travelled to Switzerland to attend Ecône in 1973, one of them Fr Gerard Hogan was ordained in June 1976 and remains a member of SSPX.

50 'The Seminary of the True Faith', *World Trends*, no. 2, August 1971, 15.

51 'Archbishop Lefebvre in Australia', *World Trends*, no. 33, April 1973), 1-18. Tissier de Mallerais, *Marcel Lefebvre*, 452.

52 *Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society*, January, 1975, n.p.



(L-R) Yves Dupont, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, Michael Foley, and an unnamed LMS member from Sydney at Tullamarine Airport, February 17th, 1973. *World Trends*, no. 3, April 1973, 1.

by the post-conciliar changes and who could only explain such a world-shattering experience with reference to an overarching conspiracy theory at the heart of the Vatican itself and perhaps to diabolical influence. It is worth noting here that Pope Paul VI's infamous 1972 allocution in which he rhetorically stated "the smoke of Satan has entered the temple of God" was taken literally amongst some traditionalists as an admission of supernatural evil at play within the Vatican.<sup>53</sup> Today we might scoff at writers like Dupont and Gibson's suggestions that Annibale Bugnini, the architect of the *Novus Ordo Missae*, was a secret Freemason,<sup>54</sup> or that the shift in direction found in *Dignitatis Humanae* and *Nostra Aetate* were dictated to Cardinal

Augustine Bea SJ by the board of B'nai B'rith,<sup>55</sup> but these ideas found fertile soil among those who felt abandoned by a demonstrably unsympathetic hierarchy and yearned for some explanation, however unlikely or fantastical it might be.

*World Trends*, with its marriage of supernatural portents, right-wing conspiracy theories, and a cantankerous critique of theological modernism, provided an explanatory framework through which readers could discern the signs of the times. The ideas are certainly radical, but they also had a recognizable pedigree in the counter-revolutionary Catholic tradition that emerged over the course of the nineteenth century in response to the processes of widespread secularization and dechristianization that follow the Revolution in France. Dupont had become something of a missionary for this counter-revolutionary tradition, in the words of Hutton Gibson, "a dedicated firebrand",<sup>56</sup> and having examined *World Trends* it is

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53 'Be Strong in the Faith'. *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly (English) ed., 13/7/1972.

54 Though this accusation is still repeated regularly among traditionalists, e.g. Michael Davies, *Liturgical Time Bombs in Vatican II*, Rockford: TAN Books, 2003.

55 However, that representatives of B'nai B'rith met with Bea before the Council and that Cardinal Bea was sympathetic to the plight of the Jewish people is beyond dispute cf. A Bea, *The Church and the Jewish People*, New York, Harper & Row, 1966. On the traditionalist conspiracy interpretation of this event see Lefebvre, *They Have Uncrowned Him*, 67.

56 *Newsletter of the Latin Mass Society of Australia*, June, 1974, n.p.

important to now look at the historical background to Dupont's radical ideas.

### **The counter-revolution: Dupont's intellectual horizons**

The kinds of apocalyptic ideas that featured heavily in *World Trends* require further explanation and as with any other figure in Australia Catholic history it is important to look at Dupont's intellectual horizons. Three aspects of Dupont's worldview, in particular, stand out as requiring further elaboration: (1) his obsession with popular prophecies and Marian apparitions; (2) his belief in a complex amalgam of Judeo-Masonic conspiracy theories; and (3) his implacable anti-communism. Each of these aspects of Dupont's thought and writings are sufficiently explained with reference to the French Catholic counter-revolutionary milieu from which both

Dupont and Lefebvre emerged, and which forms an important historical backdrop to the wider opposition to Vatican II, particularly in France.<sup>57</sup> Drawing on ideas beginning with the writings of the great royalist and Ultramontanist philosopher and theologian Joseph de Maistre (1754-1821), the counter-revolutionary tradition argued that only a divinely sanctioned authority, both in the Church and in the State, could safeguard the unchanging Christian tradition passed on from time immemorial and protect it against the demonic forces which the Revolution had unleashed. For the counter-revolutionaries, the Revolution in its rebellion against Throne and Altar, was clearly of diabolical inspiration and the struggle against its principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, was elevated to the level of a dualistic conflict between Good and Evil; between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan. Both Dupont and Lefebvre were staunch royalists reared in this French counter-revolutionary milieu and both were convinced that the same diabolical spirit of the French Revolution had been at the heart of the post-conciliar reforms, and thus, in Lefebvre's terms the Council was "Satan's masterstroke."<sup>58</sup> They were also, however, influenced by other French reactionary currents.

#### *(1) Popular Prophecy and Marian Apparitions*

Popular prophecy, in the written form of what are sometimes referred to as "letters from heaven" had been popular amongst the French for centuries, providing what social historian Judith Devlin described as "a means of expressing popular dismay, of legitimizing violence, even violent criticism of existing ecclesiastical

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57 G Cubitt, 'God, Man and Satan: Strands in Counter-Revolutionary Thought among Nineteenth-Century French Catholics', in F Tallett and N Atkin, *Catholicism in Britain and France since 1789*, London: The Hambledon Press, 1996), 135-150; P Davies, *The Extreme Right in France, 1789 to the Present From de Maistre to Le Pen*, London, Routledge, 2002, 26-52.

58 Lefebvre, *A Bishop Speaks*, 101.

and political authorities.<sup>59</sup> Often bitterly anti-clerical, these private revelations drew on themes such as a coming chastisement for the collective sin of the people that could only be averted through reparation in the form of moral rectitude or the performance of some form of traditional devotion. These popular prophecies also dwelt in great detail on an alternative popular eschatology which centred on a series of stock medieval motifs including the emergence of a particularly holy Pope (*Pastor Angelicus*) and a Great Monarch who would restore a persecuted Church both spiritually and materially, convert non-believers (usually Muslims), and usher in a millennial kingdom in anticipation of a final apocalyptic battle between Christ and Antichrist.<sup>60</sup> As we have seen above, Dupont's thought can be quite comfortably slotted into this historical tradition.

With its emphasis on medieval ideas of a divinely sanctioned monarchy, coupled with the central role which the French nation was allotted in many of these prophecies, it is unsurprising that popular prophecy underwent an extensive revival in the years following the Revolution, when these disparate popular traditions were picked up by various royalist groups who began to utilize such prophecies for the purposes of restorationist propaganda.<sup>61</sup> Prophecies about the 'Great Monarch' and of France's unique role in salvation history became extremely popular amongst various legitimist groups which emerged over the course of the nineteenth century and remained alive well into the twentieth century in a dwindling right-wing royalist subculture associated with figures like the Breton stigmatist Marie-Julie Jahenny (1850-1941) and her great promoter, the self-proclaimed Marquis de La Franquerie (1901-1992). Dupont, like Lefebvre, remained, until his death, a devoted monarchist in this cast and the influence of this French royalist prophetic tradition accounts for much of the content contained within *World Trends*.

This same nineteenth century context also saw the integration of the popular prophetic tradition into the wider Church through the popularization of major Marian apparitions such as Lourdes.<sup>62</sup> The institutional encouragement given to approved apparitions like Lourdes lent credibility to less orthodox variants of

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59 J Devlin, *The Superstitious Mind: French Peasants and the Supernatural in the Nineteenth Century*, Yale University Press: New Haven, 1987, 43.

60 These prophecies draw on a rich body of medieval texts, for a systematic overview of these traditions and their permutations see McGinn's *Antichrist*.

61 T A Kselman, *Miracles and Prophecies in Nineteenth-Century France*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1983; S L and P F Zimdars-Swartz, 'Apocalypticism in Modern Western Europe', in J J Collins, B McGinn and S J Stein (eds), *The Continuum History of Apocalypticism*, London, Continuum, 2003, 607-627.

62 B C Pope, 'Immaculate and Powerful: The Marian Revival in the Nineteenth Century', in C W Atkinson, C H Buchanan and M R Miles (eds), *Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1985, 173-200.

Marian enthusiasm and, as with the wider prophetic tradition, the hijacking of devotion for the purposes of reactionary politics.<sup>63</sup> The most important apparition in this regard was that of La Salette in 1846, which closely coincided with the fall of the July Monarchy in 1848 and a fresh spout of enthusiasm amongst right-wing royalists supporting various pretenders.<sup>64</sup> One of the visionaries of La Salette, Mélanie Calvet, eventually became involved with the legitimist intrigues of Baron de Richemont, who through his father Karl Wilhem Naundorff (d. 1845) – who claimed to be none other than Prince Louis-Charles and thus the rightful king of France Louis XVII – claimed a divine right to the French throne. While de Richemont's intrigues failed, the political movement of Naundorffism was born, which linked aspects of Calvet's prophecy pertaining to the eschatological 'Great Monarch' with their own aspirations to the French crown.<sup>65</sup>

While Naundorffism survives as a marginal phenomenon to this day, Calvet's short-lived involvement with its propagandists amply demonstrates how easily Marian apparitions could be hijacked for the purposes of reactionary politics, a risk that was to continue into the twentieth century in various locales.<sup>66</sup> While it is doubtful (though not impossible) that Dupont was a Naundorffist, he certainly had sympathies for similar reactionary royalists who held hopes about the rise of the 'Great Monarch' of the French tradition, as clearly demonstrated in articles he published on the topic of monarchism and by his promotion of the strongly monarchist prophecies of La Fraudais associated with Marie-Julie Jahenny.<sup>67</sup> It is also interesting to note that advertisements for the Monarchist League were also published in the early issues of *World Trends*.

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63 J Webb, *The Flight from Reason: The Age of the Irrational*, London, MacDonald, 1991, 188-217.

64 M Introvigne, 'Modern Catholic Millennialism', in C Wessinger (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Millennialism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011, 549-556 and S Zimdars-Swartz, *Encountering Mary: From La Salette to Medjugorje*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1991, 165-189.

65 E Appolis, 'En Marge Du Catholicisme Contemporain: Millénaristes, Cordiphores Et Naundorffistes Author Du "Secret" De La Salette.' *Archives de sociologie des religions* vol. 7, no. 14, 1962, 103-21.

66 While their case is extremely over-stated see N Perry and L Echeverria, *Under the Heel of Mary*, London, Routledge, 1988. For a more balanced example see the excellent work of Dutch anthropologist P J Margry, 'Marian Interventions in the Wars of Ideology: The Elastic Politics of the Roman Catholic Church on Modern Apparitions,' *History and Anthropology* vol. 20, no. 3, 2009, 243-63.

67 'The Prophecies of La Fraudais: Disasters to befall the Church, France, Europe, and the World'. *World Trends*, no. 49 (May, 1977).





Advertisement for the Monarchist League in *World Trends*, no. 16, September, 1968, 16.

(2) *Judaeo-Masonic Conspiracies*

A third feature which marked the French reactionary matrix out of which Lefebvre and Dupont emerged, was a virulent strain of paranoid anti-Semitic and anti-Masonic conspiracy theory. Dupont's writings, while not necessarily representative of the wider traditionalist subculture,<sup>68</sup> are certainly related to this historical background, even if Dupont personally attempted to downplay this. In one article, with the suggestive title "The Jewish Question," Dupont repeats the medieval belief that Antichrist would be born a Jew and notes that:

Their [i.e. the Jews] own mental attitudes have made them proficient in the pursuit of earthly ambitions such as money and power; proficient also in the formulation of secularist and materialist philosophies. There is no doubt that the control of international finance by Jews was, and still

is, responsible for a great many evils in the world... It is no exaggeration to say, that today's evils can be to a considerable extent be laid at the door of the Jews.<sup>69</sup>

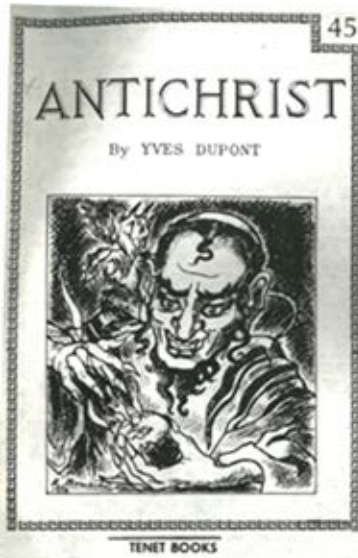
Such anti-Semitic stereotypes were already common in traditionalist publications and owe their origin to reactionary Catholic nineteenth century anti-Semitic propagandists who saw the hand of Jews and Freemasons behind the events of the Revolution and its aftermath.<sup>70</sup> As Norman Cohn describes this milieu "those who identified themselves with the *ancien régime* had to account somehow for the collapse of a social order which they regarded as ordained by God. The myth of the

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68 There are, however, solid reasons for considering that an "elective affinity" exists between traditionalism and anti-Semitism see e.g. J C Pryor, 'Traditional Catholicism and the Teachings of Bishop Richard Williamson', *Journal for the Study of Anti-Semitism* vol. 1, 2009, 233-51.

69 "The Jewish Question," *World Trends*, December 1969, 7.

70 L Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism, Vol. 4: Suicidal Europe: 1870-1933*, New York, The Vanguard Press, 1985, 30-66. This topic has been touched on in this journal before in James Franklin's, 'Catholics Versus Masons', *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society* vol. 20, 1999, 1-15.



Antichrist depicted as a Jew taken from *World Trends*, no. 45, September 1975, 1.

Judeo-Masonic conspiracy supplied the explanation they craved.”<sup>71</sup>

The details of this tradition (like all conspiracy theories) are complex and developed over time through writings like Gougenot des Mousseaux’s *Le Juif, le judaïsme et la judaïsation des peuples chrétiens* (1869) and the Abbé Emmanuel Chabauty’s apocalyptic *Les Francs-Maçons et les juifs: Sixième Âge de l’Eglise d’après l’Apocalypse* (1881) and *Les Juifs nos maîtres* (1882), but in essence the conspiracy narrative ran something like this: from time immemorial a cabal of diabolically-inspired Jewish conspirators, through the auspices of various Christian heresies and secret societies, have, by the accumulation of economic power and influence, been plotting to overthrow the Church and enslave the Christian people in preparation for the reign of Antichrist.

Over the final decades of the nineteenth century this counter-revolutionary conspiracy theory was merged with an earlier conspiracy theory which had first emerged in late eighteenth century writings of the Jesuit Abbé Augustin Barruel, who assigned the role of chief conspirators against the Church and plotters responsible for the French Revolution to the Freemasons in his massive tome *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire du Jacobinisme* (1797-98).<sup>72</sup> This tradition was continued throughout the nineteenth century in reactionary periodicals like *Le franc-maçonnerie démasquée* (1884) founded by the Archbishop of Grenoble Amand-Joseph Fava, and with traditions about the mysterious Carbonari document known as *The Permanent Instruction of Alta Vendita* (1859), which still circulates in right-wing Catholic circles, claiming to outline a Masonic plot against the Church.<sup>73</sup>

However, pride of place in ensuring the survival of the Catholic anti-Masonic tradition must go to Pope Leo XIII whose anti-Masonic encyclical *Humanum genus* (1884) claimed that Masons “followed the evil one” and had the aim of “overthrowing

71 N Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide: The myth of the Jewish world conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, London, Serif, 2005 [1967], 34.

72 On Barruel and the history of Catholic anti-Masonic writings see J M Roberts, *The Mythology of Secret Societies*, Watkins, London, 2008 [1972].

73 Cf. Lefebvre, *They Have Uncrowned Him*, 145-149.

all the religious and social orders introduced by Christianity.<sup>74</sup> The complex fusion between similar conspiracy narratives about both Jews and Freemasons gave birth to what is now referred to as the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy. This tradition found its earliest full expression late in the nineteenth century in a book by the French Archbishop of Mauritius Leon Meurin SJ, *La Franc-Maçonnerie, Synagogue de Satan* (1893), who wrote that “everything in Freemasonry is fundamentally Jewish, exclusively Jewish, passionately Jewish, from beginning to end” and that: “Some day history will tell how all the revolutions of recent centuries originated in the Masonic sect under the supreme command of the Jews.”<sup>75</sup>



An advertisement for Maurice Pinay's *The Plot Against the Church*, appeared in *World Trends*, no. 37, January, 1974, 15.

Such ideas continued to permeate the entire twilight world of late nineteenth and early twentieth century right-wing anti-Semitism captured so evocatively in Umberto Eco's recent novel *The Prague Cemetery* (2010) and were revived amongst reactionary Catholics of the post-Conciliar era by the epic anti-Semitic tirade *The Plot Against the Church* (1962) by the author Maurice Pinay, a *nom de plume* for the Mexican former Jesuit and later sedevacantist writer Fr Joaquín Sáenz y Arriaga (and possibly others) who was excommunicated in 1972 and (in their Masonic form) by books like the Bishop of Regensburg Rudolf Glaber's anti-conciliar work *Athanasius and the Church of our time* (1974).<sup>76</sup> These works, and others like them, were regularly advertised in *World Trends* throughout the late 1960s and 1970s. Dupont thus played a role in the spread of this particularly virulent brand of conspiracy driven anti-Semitism and anti-Masonry within the wider traditionalist subculture.<sup>77</sup>

### (3) Dupont's Anti-Communism

The counter-revolutionary netherworld of popular

74 On *Humanum genus*, its background and aftermath, see J Ridley, *The Freemasons*, Robinson, London, 2008, 222-235.

75 Cited in Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*, 54.

76 My thanks are due here to Massimo Introvigne for alerting me to Pinay's identity.

77 An earlier Australian work utilizing the Judeo-Masonic conspiracy themes discussed above, *Communism Unmasked* (1943), was written by a Melbourne-based Carmelite priest and devotional writer named Fr. Patrick Gearon under the pseudonym Jean Patrice and published by the League of Rights.

prophecy and Judeo-Masonic conspiracy are largely unfamiliar to most Australian Catholics, however, with the world of anti-communism they are far better acquainted, owing to the major role played by 'The Movement' in opposition to Communism in Australia from the 1940s onwards.<sup>78</sup> While in general *World Trends* was almost unremittingly hostile toward the Church hierarchy, Dupont did have a kind word or two for Archbishop Daniel Mannix and his staunch ally B A Santamaria, both of whom he considered fellow-warriors against communism.<sup>79</sup>

Whether Dupont had any involvement with The Movement is an interesting question, not least given his uncharacteristic praise for both Santamaria and Archbishop Mannix. What is more probable is that Dupont was aware of the activities of Movement groups, a matter he appears to hint at when he wrote that "apart from small study groups, Catholics at large have never been taught the political, social and economic doctrine of the Church."<sup>80</sup> This said, Dupont's brand of anti-communism is of a far more apocalyptic nature than even the most exaggerated of editorials from *News Weekly*.

Even in this more familiar context of Catholic anti-communism, Dupont's work has an apocalyptic twist, and his opposition to communism was intimately related to the Marian apparition at Fatima in 1917 and the request that Russia be consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.<sup>81</sup> During the 1940s and 1950s, devotion to Fatima and other Marian devotions and apparitions had become a rallying-point for Catholic anti-communism,<sup>82</sup> both in Australia and abroad, and proved so useful politically that it is little surprise that Fr Patrick Peyton, whose "Family Rosary Crusades" in the 1950s drew massive crowds across the globe, had been paid by the CIA for propaganda purposes.<sup>83</sup> To conclude then on a more familiar note, in this regard even Dupont, the counter-cultural Frenchman par excellence, found himself within the wide boundaries of the Australian Catholic mainstream!

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78 See e.g. Bruce Duncan, *Crusade or Conspiracy? Catholics and the Anti-Communist Struggle in Australia*, Sydney, University of New South Wales Press, 2001; R Fitzgerald, *The Pope's Battalions: Santamaria, Catholicism and the Labor Split*, St. Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 2003.

79 'The Danger of Communism, 1', *World Trends*, no. 4, May, 1964, Supplement No. 2, 1.

80 Supplement No. 2, 4.

81 Supplement No. 2, 4.

82 T A Kselman and S Avella, 'Marian Piety and the Cold War in the United States', *The Catholic Historical Review* vol. 72, no. 3, 1986, 403-24; K Massam, 'The Blue Army and the Cold War: Anti-Communist Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary in Australia', *Australian Historical Studies* vol. 24, 1991, 420-28.

83 H Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2008, 167-196.

## **Conclusion**

Dupont's death in 1976 did not see the immediate end of *World Trends*, with the magazine continuing to publish until May 1977, the final issue, entitled "Voices from Hell" being comprised of the transcript of an exorcism from Switzerland in which the possessed individual decried 'liturgical abuses' like receiving communion in the hand and the abandonment of the Tridentine Mass.<sup>84</sup> Dupont's beloved Latin Mass Society of Australia had already split over sedevacantism in 1976, but a large percentage of members remained loyal to Lefebvre and SSPX, with the Sydney group going on to form the core of what became the Child Jesus and St. Joseph Parish in Rockdale, the first SSPX parish in Australia in 1983. The Australian SSPX community split again in early 2014, with a group following the suspended anti-Semitic Bishop Richard Williamson in forming enclaves of what Williamson dubbed the "Catholic Resistance,"<sup>85</sup> an organisation whose apocalyptic ideas closely resemble those promoted by Dupont and *World Trends* decades earlier.<sup>86</sup> With the rise of the Internet, Dupont's writings, especially *Catholic Prophecy*, have achieved something of a cult status within the traditionalist subculture and amongst sedevacantists worldwide,<sup>87</sup> ensuring that many of these radical ideas have survived Dupont and that the counter-revolution has lived on in the Antipodes.

## **Acknowledgments:**

Thanks are due to a number of colleagues for help with aspects of this paper including: Massimo Introvigne and PierLuigi Zoccatelli, director and co-director of CESNUR (Centro studi sulle nuove religioni) in Turin, Italy, for sharing their vast expertise on this topic. R J Stove, for sharing his experiences with various Roman Catholic Traditionalist groups. Dr David Hilliard for sharing conservative Catholic ephemera he had been collecting in the hope that one day another historian might take an interest in this topic. Dr Chris Hartney of the University of Sydney for frequently reminding me of the importance of the French connection. Tom Campbell for offering sage advice and a frequent sounding board in the preparation of this paper. The dedicated staff in the Petherick Reading Room at the National Library of Australia, for their diligence in always making archival

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84 'Voices from Hell', *World Trends*, no. 49, May, 1977.

85 'Communique of the General House of the Society of St. Pius X', 24/10/2012. Available at: <http://www.dici.org/en/news/communique-of-the-general-house-of-the-society-of-saint-pius-x-october-23-2012/>

86 Bishop Richard Williamson, 'And Now?' *Eleison Comments* 3/11/2012. Available at: <http://stmarcelinitiative.com/andnow/>

87 P Apolito, *The Internet and the Madonna: Religious Visionary Experience on the Web*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2005.

material available. Finally, I would like to thank several Traditionalist Catholics (who prefer to remain anonymous) for offering their insights into this subculture, their openness to talk with an outsider, and their willingness to correct some of my early misperceptions about their beliefs. The opinions and ideas expressed above are the sole responsibility of the author.

## BOOK REVIEW

### *This Historian is a Master Storyteller*

#### *Australian Catholic Lives*

Author: Edmund Campion  
David Lovell Publishing, Melbourne, 2014  
ISBN 9781863551458  
Paperback, 228 pp; \$24.95.

Reviewed by Michael Costigan\*

Three autobiographical fragments in his Introduction to this wonderful book tell the reader something about Father Edmund Campion's approach to the writing of its 71 brief chapters.

He recalls first his three years as a young student from Enmore in the Arts faculty of the University of Sydney, where he came under the formational influence of the Newman Society and its chaplain, Father Roger Pryke. That experience of a Catholicism preparing for and anticipating change under wise and flexible guidance animates many of the biographical entries in *Australian Catholic Lives*.

Years later, as a history professor and much published writer, he was one day in Alice Springs introduced thus to a respected Aboriginal elder, called the 'story man' of his people: 'This is Father Campion. He is our story man'. It was, for him, a proud moment, fittingly remembered here, when introducing, as a master storyteller, his gathering together of true, simple and highly instructive stories. Campion's third remembered event was the invitation he received 25 years ago from Father Michael Kelly SJ 'to write a regular biographical column in one of the Jesuit spirituality magazines that had recently come under his care'. The result has been the hundreds of short articles about both well and little known Catholics, most of them lay people, that have appeared since then under Campion's by-line, first in the now defunct Messenger and since then in Madonna, originally a monthly and now a quarterly. It is fitting that this selection of Madonna articles is dedicated to Michael Kelly, who, like the author, is a clerical star in the Australian Catholic media and journalistic firmament.

*Australian Catholic Lives*, published late in 2014, is the second collection of some of these essays. An earlier collection, of similar length, is titled *Great*

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\* Michael Costigan was editor of *The Advocate* [Melbourne]; Director, Literature Board of the Australia Council; and Director and Executive Secretary, Australian Bishops' Committee for Justice, Development and Peace.

*Australian Catholics* (Aurora Books, David Lovell Publishing, 1997). The author reveals that government statistics gathered for the Public Lending Right scheme show that it has kept its popularity in school libraries. The new anthology can be regarded as its sequel or companion volume. It differs slightly in that its subjects are limited to those now deceased, some fairly recently. This was true at the time of most but not all of those covered in *Great Australian Catholics*. One of them, the Melbourne-born publisher Geoffrey Chapman, who was very much alive then, died in 2010. He is the subject of a second essay in *Australian Catholic Lives*, where the writer concludes that 'his place in history is assured by the fact that no one can tell the story of Vatican II without reading the books he published'.

These life stories are not presented chronologically or in any obvious groupings. A few are about people who made their impact on the Catholic Church in Australia in the 19th century, including, in one chapter titled 'Holding to the faith: Our Foremothers and Forefathers in faith', the mainly anonymous lay Catholics who kept faith alive before priests arrived officially in 1820. Other portraits are of 20th century believers in the pre-Vatican II period. And many others, the majority, are of people who were active, several until just a few years ago, during the half-century since the Council closed in 1965. Close to half of those profiled were women.

Among the fairly large number of subjects who could be thought of as Catholic celebrities one could name the likes of the internationally acclaimed pianist Eileen Joyce; the Rome-based promoter of the lay apostolate Rosemary Goldie and her party-loving mother of the 1920s Dulcie Deamer; the priest-ophthalmologist Frank Flynn msc; the 'great Vatican II bishop' Guilford Young; the convert and one-time Master of the Queen's Music Malcolm Williamson; the social workers Mary Lewis and Sister Margaret McGovern rsm; the outspoken defender of Catholic orthodoxy Dr Leslie Rumble msc; the writer and diplomat Paul McGuire; the much loved facilitator of good relations between Australia and Indonesia Liz O'Neill; the Irish Jesuit and self-described 'court jester' to Archbishop Mannix Father William Hackett; the hugely admired rectress and fundraiser for Sydney's St Vincent's Hospital Sister Bernice Elphick rsc; and the founder of the priests' Manly Union Bishop Terence McGuire.

Some other names and achievements featured in the book will be less known to many readers. They could include Prue McGoldrick, author of *My Paddock*, an account of growing up Catholic 70 or 80 years ago; Margaret Moses, who died in a plane crash while seeking to rescue abandoned Vietnamese children; Stephen Tompsett, a computer scientist who died in the terrorist attack on New York's World Trade Centre; Bernadette ('Berna') Foster, for many years an active member of one of Melbourne's model Vatican II parishes; Howard Harrison, a gifted academic and heroic family man whose life was centred on Sunday Mass; Eileen Davidson, a social



worker in Sydney whose work foreshadowed today's CatholicCare; Arthur Rolfe, who played a key role in Goulburn's Catholic school strike; and two prisoners-of-war in Changi and then on the notorious Burma railway – Les Bolger, who survived the experience, and Jim Lynch, who did not.

Not all of Professor Campion's essays contain summarised life histories of his subjects. A limit of around 750 words for each contribution did not leave space for that in some cases. Instead, the emphasis is often on a specific contribution made to the life of the Church. This could apply to Father William McEvoy OP's founding of the Holy Name Society for men; Jean Daly's success as an early moving spirit on behalf of the women's St Joan's Alliance, after withstanding Cardinal Gilroy's hostility towards it; experiments in alternative rural living by Ray Triado at Victoria's Whitlands and later by the writer Niall Brennan and his large family in another woodland north of Melbourne from the 1960s until his death in 2005; the theologian Camille Paul's co-editing of the important journal *Women-Church*; the launching of the annual Red Mass in St Mary's Cathedral by Vincent Pike and other Catholic lawyers; the contribution by the academic and Catholic Action bureaucrat Frank Maher to the creation of the Campion Society; Moya Merrick's long-term leadership of a Grail study group, together with her activities in Redfern and elsewhere; Father Con Keogh's forming of the Grow organisation for people recovering from psychiatric episodes; Julian Miller's involvement in the birth of the National Council of Priests; Dr Paddy Ryan msc's anti-communist crusade, in which he became a kind of John the Baptist preparing for the coming to Sydney of B.A.Santamaria's men (after which the precursor was sidelined); and the devotion of Sister Peg Flynn ibvm to the Nyungar people in the remote WA town of Gnowangerup.

Campion writes generously about fellow historians and writers in his entries on Archbishop Eris O'Brien (a close friend of Manning Clark), Patrick O'Farrell, Oliver MacDonagh, Sister Margaret Press rsj, Julian Miller, 'Patricia Mack', George Collingridge, Mary Marlowe, Francois Maurice Lepailleur and H M Moran.

In his search for subjects he does not turn his back on the fallen. The most renowned of his sinners is the sly-grog operator and occasional gaol inmate Kate Leigh, who, in spite of her many crimes, retained a deep devotion to St Therese of Lisieux and was buried with honour from the Surry Hills parish church. Then there is the 19th century Benedictine monk and sculptor Jean Gourbeillon, a former rigid observer of monastic rule who succumbed after difficult times to the charms of a French woman and was exiled by Archbishop Polding back to Europe where, repentant, he re-entered an abbey. It would be understandable if, as the author of a fine biography of Father Ted Kennedy, Edmund Campion were to nominate, as his own favourite contribution to this book, what he writes so feelingly about Kennedy

and the Redfern pastor's associate and teacher Shirley Smith ('Mum Shirl'). He speaks of the pair's respective funerals as being a double 'recognition and validation' – the priest's on Redfern's Block, 'the open paddock of Aboriginal life there', and Mum Shirl's in the grandeur of St Mary's Cathedral. A possible competitor for the author's favour could be his article on the renowned educationist and lawyer Mother Yvonne Swift rscj, principal of Sancta Sophia College, University of Sydney, whose full biography is expected to be *Campion's* next (and 16th) volume.

His range of topics chosen for *Australian Catholic Lives* shows that the author, a skilled researcher as both an historian and a journalist, looks far and wide for inspiration. While New South Wales is prominent in the selection, he does not neglect the rest of Australia, finding subjects from the Kimberley to Tasmania, from Darwin to Adelaide, from Perth to Canberra and from Melbourne to New England and to the Queensland that gave Archbishop Young to the Church. Nor does his choosing neglect the multicultural history and nature of Catholicism in this country. On my count, some 20 of the 70 or so characters appearing in the book as its main subjects were born outside Australia. A few returned to where they originated after making their mark as Catholics here, although one such, the Irish-born Cistercian Dom Kevin O'Farrell OCSO, a former Abbot of Tarrawarra, Victoria, was so homesick for Australia after being re-assigned to Ireland that he was allowed to return to the Yarra Valley, where he spent his last years humbly helping to look after the abbey's guests.

Another who was forced more unjustly into exile from his adopted land was the Passionist priest Charles Jerger, whose German origins gave rise to hysterical demands by conscription supporters for his incarceration during the first world war and eventually, with deplorable success, for his deportation.

Readers wishing to learn more about members of this diverse cavalcade of personalities, who have lessons for all of us, will be helped by the resource guide at the end of the book. The author located useful information in biographies, diaries (like Sister Mary Hyacinth Donnellan op's trenchant account of her voyage to Australia from Ireland in 1865, in a sailing ship) and in unpublished journals and out-of-print books.

He found material for several of his articles in *Opening Up* (John Garrett Publishing, 2009), David Bollen's history of the little known but quietly effective Institute of Counselling. Father *Campion* offers that Institute as one of many examples quoted in these pages of the accepting and implementing of the Second Vatican Council's teaching and spirit. Without disdaining past or present manifestations of traditional spirituality and piety, he has clear sympathy for the Council's emphasis on the role of the laity, for the Church's refreshed attention to social justice and for the move towards small group Catholicism. His chronicling of

these and other developments is a notable achievement in a book which confirms Edmund Campion's status as a leading Church historian and as arguably our greatest story man.

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### **BOOK REVIEW**

#### *Verguet's Sketchbook: A Marist Missionary Artist in 1840s Oceania*

Authors: Mervyn Duffy and Alois Greiler

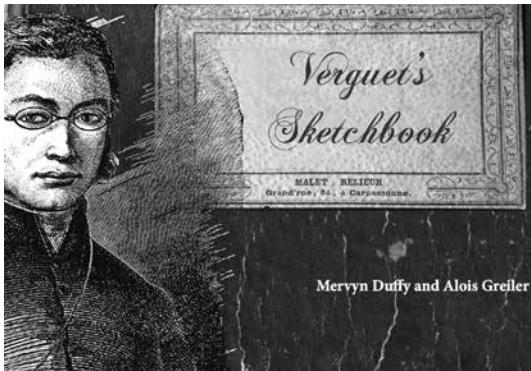
Published by ATF Press, Hindmarsh, SA

Publication date: 30 December 2014

ISBN: 9781921511264

Paperback, 96 pages: \$35.95

By Peter McMurrich sm\*



Leopold Verguet was an ordained French Marist missionary who first came to the Pacific in 1845. He spent about 2 years in this part of the world, returning to Europe and leaving Sydney for the last time in October, 1847. His particular skill was as a sketcher and map maker. In the years prior to photography, one of his responsibilities was to send

back sketches and maps for the information of Marist administrators in Europe.

His two years in the Pacific were eventful to say the least.

The mission band he was part of left London for the Pacific in February, 1845. It was tasked with establishing a Marist Mission base in the Solomon Islands. The leader of the expedition was Bishop John Baptiste Epalle. On the way to the Solomons they spent several months in Sydney, from late June until late October, 1845. During those months Verguet sketched a number of public buildings in Sydney;

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\* Peter McMurrich sm is historian and vicar-provincial of the Australian Province of the Marists, and the author of *The Harmonising Influence of Religion: St Patrick's, Church Hill, 1840 to the present*.

his sketch of this church, St Patrick's, is the earliest known depiction of the church, and is included in our book. So too are sketches of the first St Mary's cathedral, and several other Sydney landmarks. Verguet also spent considerable time linking up with aboriginal people living on the fringes of the town, and sketching them.

The missionaries finally left Sydney late in October, 1845. When they arrived in the Solomons they decided to take their chances on the island of Santa Isabel. On 16 December, 1845, Epalle, several of the missionaries, and some sailors, went ashore as they had done on the previous three days. They immediately came under attack and Epalle was fatally wounded. The sailors drove off the local warriors with their guns, and the bishop was taken on board the ship, where he died 3 days later. Verguet's skills soon came into play: the bishop was secretly buried on a nearby island, and Verguet prepared detailed maps which were used 55 years later to locate the grave and retrieve the remains.

Incredibly, the now leaderless mission band remained undaunted, and on 28 December they attempted a second landing, this time on the island of San Cristobal. At first the locals seemed to be friendly, and with the help of the sailors the Marists built a compound. However their situation was precarious and dangerous for the 3 years they remained there, and they were often under attack from marauding tribesmen. In February, 1846, one of the missionaries, Xavier Montrouzier, was speared in the back while washing in a stream. Verguet heard his cry for help and succeeded in getting him back to the compound, where he eventually recovered. A less dramatic danger was malaria. Most of the group developed it, and after 12 months Verguet was seriously ill, and was taken to Sydney in February, 1847, by a chartered supply ship. Two months after Verguet's departure, 3 of the missionaries were killed and eaten by cannibals.

By May, 1847, Verguet had recovered sufficiently in Sydney to accompany Epalle's successor, John George Collomb, to New Zealand for Collomb's episcopal ordination. Collomb and Verguet then sailed for the Solomons, calling first at the Marist mission on New Caledonia, and arriving there in June, 1847. Shortly after their arrival the mission base there came under attack from local warriors and the storehouse was looted; one of the missionaries, Br Blaise, was killed, and the chapel was burnt to the ground. For several weeks the missionaries were under siege in their compound, using firearms to scare off their attackers. They were eventually rescued by a French naval vessel, and the mission on New Caledonia was abandoned. Along with the other evacuees, Verguet arrived in Sydney on 27 August, 1847.

In the space of about 20 months he had been there for the violent death of Bishop Epalle on Santa Isabel in December, 1845; the spearing of Xavier Montrouzier on San Cristobal in February, 1846; and the killing of Br Blaise in New Caledonia in

March, 1847. On two occasions, firstly in the Solomons, and then in New Caledonia, he survived extended periods of siege by local warriors. And he had been seriously ill with malaria.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, by the time he had escaped from the New Caledonia siege, and arrived in Sydney in August, 1847, Leopold Verguet had had his fill of the Pacific missions and life as a Marist.

He returned to France, left the Marists, and resumed life as a French diocesan priest. He died in 1914, at the age of 97.

Wherever he went during his 20 eventful months in the Pacific: Sydney, New Caledonia, the Solomons, and New Zealand, Verguet recorded his observations in his sketchbook. It contains sketches, watercolours, and maps, recording the local people and their customs, the flora and fauna he discovered, and the violent events he lived through.

In 2000, Mervyn Duffy saw for the first time Verguet's sketchbook when on a visit to the Marist archives in Rome. It made an impression on him.

In 2009 Duffy, and the German Marist, Alois Greiler, discussed the sketchbook while together in Rome, and decided to produce a book based on the sketchbook, which would be primarily visual rather than heavy on text.

With typical German efficiency, Greiler almost immediately set to work to write a narrative text, suggesting the illustrations from the sketchbook and primary documents which might accompany his text.

In 2013, while on a sabbatical in Europe, Duffy photographed the sketchbook, revised Greiler's original narrative, and married it with illustrations and primary documents.

The result is the very attractive book we are launching today. I believe that the authors have done a wonderful job. Verguet's Sketchbook is a fascinating window into a world which is radically different from our own. It records the firsthand impressions of European man with the peoples and places of the Pacific in the mid-19th century. It shows us at one and the same time extraordinary bravery, side by side with reckless and ill-considered interactions with the society and culture of the Pacific. Albeit with the very best of intentions and the loftiest of motives.

Verguet was essentially a recorder of events and places, a pragmatist rather than a romantic, a sketcher rather than a painter or artist. It's interesting and instructive to note that when he returned to France he enthusiastically embraced the new medium of photography, and became one of its pioneer practitioners.

He probably realised, that for his purposes, photography was a better way of recording events and places and people than any image he could create with his own eye and hands.

The authors deserve real admiration for what they have achieved in this book.

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Editor: Please see the wrap-around cover illustration for an example of Verguet's sketches: "Marists under attack on New Caledonia".

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**BOOK REVIEW**

*A Saviour of Living Cargoes: The Life and Work of Caroline Chisholm*

Author: Carole Walker

Published: Connor Court, 18 September 2011

ISBN: 9781921421945

Paperback, 239 pages; \$19.95

Reviewed by Irene Franklin\*

Caroline Chisholm is unique in Australian history as a Catholic woman living in a very bigoted age as regards religion and the role of women in society. Her self-sacrificing work, ably supported by her husband, Archibald, achieved changes that were important in helping establish society in the new colony as well as surpassing the state of affairs in the U.K.

Caroline was born in 1808, the seventh and last child of Sarah and William Jones. Sarah was William's fourth wife, a previous two having died in childbirth.

William Jones was a kindly person who helped people less fortunate than himself, even taking a particularly destitute person into his home to care for him for a while. William died at 70 when Caroline was six years old. His will shows that with his hard work and not being afraid to turn his hand to new endeavours he raised his standard of living so was able to leave Sarah £500 and properties to several of his children.



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\* Irene Franklin is a Catholic woman who was brought gratis by the Department of Immigration from England to New South Wales, where she found a husband.

Not much is known about Caroline's mother Sarah. Caroline seems to have been a serious child, who had no bigotry. Sarah is unlikely to have formally educated her daughter as she made a mark rather than signing her name at her wedding and on her will. Sarah was a member of an evangelical church while William was buried in a Church of England churchyard.

Caroline, from her writing, was obviously well educated. She grew up at a time of great social upheaval because of industrialisation and the Napoleonic War. The result was high unemployment and food riots. Some of the Jones family had radical tendencies so Caroline would have been aware of the social conflicts.

Archibald Chisholm was ten years older than Caroline; they met when she was in her early twenties. He was the son of a farmer. The family were Roman Catholic Scots, who spoke Gaelic as well as English. Scotland then had a better education system than England and Archibald went to Fortrose Academy to acquire a classical education. He joined the East India Company and was sent to Fort St George in Madras in 1818. Conditions were unhealthy. After ten years' service he was entitled to two years leave at home.

When he returned to England, he met Caroline in Northampton and proposed marriage. Caroline had a strong belief that she had a divine mission so she gave him one month to consider whether he would accept a wife who would make all sacrifices to carry out her public duties. Caroline may have chosen Archibald because she saw his army career as widening her own horizons and his higher social status as an opportunity to undertake a wider sphere of philanthropic works.

Archibald must have realised that accepting such a wife might make life difficult and that the style of marriage would be unconventional. They were married by special licence in the Church (of England) of the Holy Sepulchre in Northampton in 1830. (Although Archibald was a Catholic, Catholic clergy were not allowed to conduct marriage services.) It is believed that Caroline converted to Catholicism at that time. Catholics still faced many difficulties – only in 1829 did the Catholic Emancipation Act lift restrictions on Catholics such as standing for Parliament, double land tax and education restrictions. Anti-Catholic feeling was rife. Fortunately the Jones family was more broadminded and kept contact with Caroline.

Caroline sailed to India to join her husband when he was posted back to Madras. The climate and lifestyle were very different from England. Caroline learned to ride, which proved a great help later in Australia. While Archibald was posted around India, Caroline largely stayed in Madras looking after their two young sons. She took the opportunity to establish the Female School of Industry for the Daughters of European Soldiers in Madras – girls had been running wild while the boys were drafted into the army. The school taught the three Rs, cookery, needlework, knitting

and laundry skills, religious instruction and moral conduct. Caroline was able to raise money from the Governor of Madras. The aim was to help girls to flourish in their lower socio-economic background. No one religion was favoured.

The school was such a success that young mothers begged to join the classes. Young non-commissioned officers sought wives and servants from the young girls who had completed their education at the school.

After seventeen years in India, Archibald's health had suffered and he requested two years' medical leave in New South Wales. The couple arrived in Sydney in 1838, at the beginning of depressed times. They settled in Windsor, "a wearisome drive of five or six hours" from Sydney. Archibald was recalled to India but Caroline and their now three sons stayed in the healthier climate of Australia (to which Archibald returned on his permanent discharge in 1845).

Caroline is known best for her work in keeping young women who arrived by ship from predators waiting for them at the quayside. She tried to encourage women who were well settled in the colony to help her work but there were a number of people who were ill disposed towards her because she was Catholic and soon withdrew the earlier promised support. Even some Catholics did. It all seemed too difficult but her firm belief that she was called by God to this work kept her striving.

Caroline's aim was to help these women to keep to a high moral standard, be self-reliant and independent, not subservient.

Later she was able to encourage families and free young men to emigrate

Caroline lived in Australia (for the first time) only seven years, in which period she achieved a great deal. The Sydney (female) Emigrants Home placed 735 young women in employment at wages varying from £10 to £18 per annum. Of these 291 found work in country districts. 394 were Catholic, 238 Church of England, 103 Presbyterian. 516 were Irish, 184 English and 35 Scottish. In total Caroline had found work for 11,000 immigrants.

The fear of her children contracting diseases from the new immigrants meant that they were cared for by their nanny, Miss Galvin, at the family home in Windsor.

Caroline would not accept financial assistance because she wanted to be independent and able to serve all creeds to the best of her ability. She had lent £100 or so in small sums to the labouring poor while conducting the emigration home in Sydney but only lost a total of £16, the rest of the money being repaid.

Soon after her arrival in England Caroline wrote to Earl Grey, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, offering her views on the wrongs of the current system of emigration and gave suggestions of practical remedies.

She tried to interest the government in opening up more land for poorer people to settle and to enable family migration. She failed, so in 1849 founded the Family Colonisation Loan Society, which helped families to save up for half their fare with



the Society loaning the rest, to be repaid within two years in Australia. Caroline made sure that the Society's ships were superior in accommodation to the usual ones, with several practical innovations including a type of air conditioning, washing facilities for people and clothes including ironing clothes.

Archibald did everything to aid and support his wife in her charitable works, to the extent that both of them suffered ill-health, physical and emotional, as a result. His contribution deserves to receive more acknowledgement.

Caroline continued to work on improving the living conditions of working class people by lectures which were attended by a number of MPs.

There is much more to write about the Chisholms' work and a more thorough discussion of the issues of those times. For that you must read the book, mull over what you have learned and, perhaps, re-read it.

This book is very enjoyable to read, interesting and filled with as much information in a readily accessible form as a volume of this size will allow.

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### **BOOK REVIEW**

*St. Benedict's School, Broadway: a History of a Catholic School 1838-2012*

Author: Kelvin Canavan

Published by: Catholic Education Office Sydney, Leichhardt, NSW Sydney, in association with the University of Notre Dame Australia, 2014

ISBN: 1863828443

Paperback: 123 pages; \$15

Reviewed by Graham English\*

*A pattern of a community*

Cyril Halley the late Columban priest and sociologist liked to say that when Catholics spread over Australia and New Zealand they had a pattern. "First they'd build a school," he'd say, "then a tennis court and eventually a church." Halley was making the point that Catholic schools here were primarily about community building. The school building was where children were schooled in the basics, the four R's of reading, writing, 'rithmetic and religion, and where Catholics met as a community, Mass on Sundays as well as working bees, social occasions where young Catholics met and married their fellow religionists (hence the tennis court)

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and everything else that led to what Catholicism had become just before the Second Vatican Council.

Halley's pattern began in the nineteenth century, that extraordinary time when basic public education for all was the aim of liberal minded and conservative thinkers and politicians alike, when in France, Ireland and Australia many of the religious teaching orders were beginning, and when Irish bishops in Australia set out to build the Catholic Church here. And when these same bishops realised that they had a workforce who would go almost anywhere and work for almost nothing and could be relied on to mostly do as they were told.

These schools and tennis courts were almost everywhere from the suburbs and the inner cities to the smallest and remotest of villages. In the area I know best, the south west slopes of NSW there were tiny Catholic schools with a convent attached at Wombat, Murringo, Koorawatha, and Galong. Three of these took boarders. Josephite Sisters, brown and black, and Mercy Sisters lived in harsh conditions far from the bigger towns and from clergy, and usually depended on the poor Catholics they served for their food, firewood and other necessities. And these same schools turned out Catholics and for the time, sufficient young people to enter the seminaries and novitiates to keep the schools and the parishes flourishing.

The Catholic schools also set up a Catholic network. Students and former students began to identify with the orders that taught in their school. People became Josephite, Mercy or Brigidine girls, Christian Brothers' or Marist Brothers' boys. And when Brother Valentine, say could be moved from Cairns to Adelaide or Sister Romuald could be moved from Floreat Park to Randwick, Catholics who met in military camps or sporting teams or other places could quickly form links. "What, you knew old Valentine eh?" The tribalism that was a feature of Catholics in general was also an 'orders' tribalism. It was a Catholic form of Tarzan's Grip.

Most schools were attached to the local parish. Some were owned by a particular religious order. There were a few more prestigious schools in the cities. A number of these have celebrated their centenaries in the last thirty or forty years. Some have had fine histories of their school written. Two that stand out are the late Susan Emilsen's *Dancing St Dom's Plot*, a history of Santa Sabina College at Strathfield, and *Up on the Hill*, David Bollen's monumental history of St Patrick's College Goulburn.

Among the books and articles on the history of Catholic schools in Australia the Marist Brothers have had an honourable part to play. In 1959 Brother Ronald Fogarty, Master of Scholastics at the Marist Brothers' training college published his still definitive *Catholic Education in Australia 1806-1950*. Fogarty was a noted scholar and the two volume work was based on his doctoral thesis. Fogarty set a high standard. Another Marist Brother John Luttrell has written articles and books

documenting Catholic schools and the struggles for state aid. Now another Marist Brother, Kelvin Canavan has written a history of St Benedict's School at Broadway in inner Sydney, the school that counts among other ex-students the late Cardinal Gilroy.



*The story of one school*

Kelvin Canavan has a solid background in Catholic education. He taught in Marist schools then in 1968 moved into the Catholic Education Office Sydney eventually becoming Director of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese. In the 1980s Brother Walter Simmons then Director of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney wrote of Catholic schools, "Yesterday our schools were the object of despair. Today they are the envy of our critics." Kelvin Canavan was his successor in Sydney. It was people like Simmons and Canavan, and their predecessor Monsignor John Slowey who encouraged, organised, supervised and sometimes goaded Catholic schools into moving from objects of despair to the envy of their critics.

St Benedict's School, Broadway: a history of a Catholic school 1838-2012 is a small tightly packed book, a record of a series of events and people. It is chronological, recording the details rather than entering into the politics, Church and state, or the great themes. And, while it is about a particular school, indeed two schools, one run by Marist Brothers and another by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan, it sets out to be typical of Catholic schools of its period rather than specifically about one school community.

There are accounts of difficult conditions, inadequate buildings, noise from surrounding roads and industries including the constant smell of hops from two adjacent breweries, large numbers of students with often unprepared teachers, but also of kindnesses, schools caring for the poor and marginalised, and successes in sport and exams. But it is more than just an account.

The researcher in me suggests that it is a collection of possible theses in educational theory and the history of education, Catholic and otherwise in New South Wales. For example, the catechism used in the school was the same from 1908 until it was retired in 1964 even though the inspector Father Tom Pierse had written in 1945 "while we use the Catechism of Christian Doctrine as a text

book, the teaching of religion will be uninspiring.” There is a thesis there on the development of religious education. The old supervisor in me hopes that some readers will take up some of the questions Canavan is asking or the directions he is pointing to. The overview on pages three and four would be a very good place for some honours or doctoral researcher looking for a topic.

Kelvin Canavan is of that generation of Australian Catholics who grew up in the Church as it was before the Second Vatican Council, before state aid for non-government schools and the great social changes of the 1970s and since. He experienced the changes in Catholic education from the days when almost all teachers in Catholic schools were members of religious orders to now when almost none are. He also experienced a period when not all teachers in Catholic schools were qualified (some were well and truly trained and competent of course!) turn into one where they are all well qualified and many are leaders in educational theory and practice. He was part of the process of the changes as well as someone affected by them. He is also one of those people who has committed his adult life to education. His enthusiasm for the subject is evident in the book.

*A reminder of times past*

St Benedict's school follows Cyril Halley's pattern. It began as a gathering place for Irish Catholics; we were nearly all Irish or of Irish descent when it began, and it grew until it needed a church building as well. It began as a lay conducted school as many other Catholic schools did in NSW but with the introduction of state run schools and the disappearance of state funding it needed the services of religious orders, in this case the French Marist Brothers and the locally founded Sisters of the Good Samaritan. It had large classes with often fierce competition and basic religious education centred on the catechism and bible history as well as devotions. The school and the parish were closely knit. Catholic schools like it were about Catholic identity and Catholic bonding. For a long time it was very successful at establishing and maintaining a particular kind of Catholic community.

For a Catholic my age, a few years younger than Kelvin Canavan the book is full of memories. The school photos, the processions, memorabilia, the school exams and the text books are all familiar. Several of the orders had their own texts, the Marist Brothers English Book, the Christian Brothers' English Book. As a bursary boy at a Christian Brothers' school I covered both sets of books and the Marist book had lots of examples of similes, metaphors, collective nouns and tools particular to special jobs. I learnt what a tailor's goose is from the Marist Brothers' book. There were also Catholic school magazines even though the state sponsored ones were very good and for many years were edited by a Catholic.

There are also accounts of some wayward students who became criminals and

quiet pride in those who became leaders or just good ordinary members of the community. There are some moments of quiet humour. May Shrines in honour of the Virgin Mary tempted some boys to take flowers from council gardens. A similar thing happened at Christian Brothers' Paddington this time with agapanthus from Centennial Park. At religious processions the provincials of the various teaching orders, De La Salles, Marist, Patrician and Christian Brothers kept an eye out to see how many novices the others had. They weren't above comparing their men with the others either, for better and for worse. Canavan acknowledges that while the Marist Brothers dressed formally when they were teaching and when they were out of the monastery they did not always wear their hats. As a young Christian Brother on retreat I remember us being warned by the provincial not to be like the Marist Brothers, we were to always wear our hats when we went out!

Being a former member of a religious order I especially enjoyed Canavan's account of religious life before Vatican II though I didn't always enjoy it when I was living it. It was semi monastic, based on devotions, business and hard work, and for the men at least sport. It was semi enclosed. Although the Marists lived in the inner city they seldom visited it. Some Marist Brothers taught at St Benedict's for several years and never once spoke to the Sisters of the Good Samaritan in the schoolyard next door. I have asked men and women who were religious in those days and lived in Perth, for example. "What was Perth like?" "I don't know! I could have been anywhere."

For someone who also worked in the CEO it is full of familiar faces either from the walls of the office or from almost daily contact. I was a Christian Brothers' boy, trained to try to beat the Marists and the De La Salles but the language and the culture were remarkably similar and I feel at home in it. Among other things Kelvin Canavan's book is a picture of a life and culture that was once vigorous but has now gone, some for the better (the boy in the 1840s who was late for school because his parents had allowed him to witness a hanging at Darlinghurst jail is the most glaring example), and some things that are missed.

### *More than just a school*

While St Benedict's School is typical of inner city Catholic schools in its beginning as a gathering place for Catholics, Halley's pattern, in the kinds of schools it was and the kinds of educational strategies it pursued, in its patterns of cities evolution from a large school population to technical and business schools to extinction, the St Benedict's site is more than that.

When the pattern changed from parish to systemic schools St Benedict's buildings eventually became the Catholic Education Office. Because of its central situation it was a venue for Catholic teachers learning the new theology. When

the Catholic teachers' colleges amalgamated into Catholic College of Education, Sydney and then into Australian Catholic University the buildings became part of Catholic politics again when it became the site for Sydney's second Catholic university, Notre Dame Australia.

St Benedict's site is more than just another Catholic school. It is a palimpsest of most of the changes in Catholic life and Catholic education in Australia.

I enjoyed reading *St Benedict's School, Broadway: a history of a Catholic school 1838-2012*. Brother Kelvin Canavan has provided an outline not only for the history of a Catholic school but also for the history of Catholic education in Sydney. In its way it is a small marvel.

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### **BOOK REVIEW**

*Daniel Mannix: his legacy*

Editors: Val Noone and Rachel Naughton

Publisher: Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission (Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne), 2014

ISBN: 9780646596983

Paperback, 178 pages; \$20

Reviewed by John Carmody\*

The arrival of Daniel Mannix in Australia in March 1913 was one of the most important milestones in the history of Catholicism in this nation. In fact, it was one of the most important events in the secular history of the country. No other cleric, not even the renowned Fr Therry, has exercised so powerful an influence on the Catholic community here: indeed, it is difficult to think of any other churchman, of *any* denomination, who is a remotely comparable figure in our history.

It was appropriate, therefore, that on 16 March 2013 – a century, almost to the day, after his first Mass in St Patrick's Cathedral – the Historical Commission of the Archdiocese of Melbourne sponsored a conference devoted to Mannix and his influence; it is even better that a book has recently appeared to document that thoroughly enjoyable and well-attended event.

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We were reminded by most of the speakers that he came to a very different Australia from the one which we know. This is made clear by Dr Brian Costar (Professor of Victorian Parliamentary Democracy at Monash University) in his chapter, *Mannix: loyalism, sectarianism and communism*. Referring *inter alia* to Mannix's "political naïvety" (to balance his "political progressivism"), Costar wrote, "A check of the religious affiliations of the twenty Legislative Assembly Labor members in 1914 would have shown him that only two were Catholics and that eight of the twenty were Presbyterians. Catholics voted Labor because they were working class, not because they were Catholics." The cataclysm of the conscription-induced split, which drove so many Protestants from the ALP, was yet to come (it was the first of the two Labor splits, indeed, in which Mannix was crucially involved). Catholics were then only about 20.7% of the Australian population of just 5 million (i.e. close to 1 million), though their density was remarkably heterogeneous (a remarkable 41% in Campbelltown and 36% in Goulburn, but only 15.5% in Newcastle). Mostly they were of Irish descent, though the majority had been born in Australia.

It was also a different Catholicism. The first Vatican Council had been held only about 40 years earlier and Bishops were still quasi-Princes. "In Australia," Patrick Morgan writes in his insightful chapter, *Archbishop Mannix's public roles*, "Mannix was technically an aristocrat, a Prince Bishop in the European mould, with his own coat of arms. But even before he became a prelate, he was known at the Maynooth seminary as the 'Roman Emperor' – like de Gaulle, he was a natural born aristocrat." That is a reflection of Morgan's perceptive comment about the social schism – a mixture of politics and class – which generated the rampant Australian sectarianism of that time. "The geographic unit which the British call the British Isles is a misnomer, as Ireland remained atmospherically a European nation in a way England didn't. During its long centuries of deprivation, Ireland's native culture was nourished by two external sources: Europe and Catholicism."

The essays of this book take us back to that almost unrecognisable Australia. Our forebears led more austere and less materialist lives and Brenda Niall's fresh approach to perhaps the most written-about man in Australian history (with the possible exception of that other Irishman, New Kelly) shows that, by any contemporary standard – and certainly for an aristocrat – the Archbishop's life in "Raheen", his mansion in Kew, was spartan and hermitic. I remember that she told the conference that there was no hot water there (apart from what a chip-heater offered) until 1948 when a system was installed in time for the visit of the sybaritic Cardinal Spellman from New York.

Michael McKernan's characteristically informative chapter, *Mannix and conscription: counting the cost*, cogently rebuts the assertion of the renowned

doctor-writer, H M (“Paddy”) Moran in his great book, *Viewless winds*, that Mannix’s campaign against conscription in Hughes’s zealous referenda of 1916 and 1917 (especially the second) somehow exacted great retribution against Catholics across the country. “It was a painful epoch for Catholic citizens,” Moran wrote; “they became now the scapegoats for every social evil... Doctor Mannix... penalised severely the poorer Catholics and the little Catholic tradesmen. He caused social ostracism of professional Catholics.” The penalty on the poorer classes would be regrettable if it occurred; one’s heart bleeds for those ostracised ones! McKernan argues to the contrary. “It is certain that some Catholic workers were tipped out of their jobs as society fractured... We cannot know if Daniel Mannix slept peacefully at Raheen” (one of Moran’s slurs) “... but to accuse him alone... is to ignore a dam wall that had threatened to burst long before Mannix spoke about the war publicly.” In truth, the Protestant churchmen were far more lurid, intemperate and bigoted in their pro-war comments.

The book has an interesting chapter on the later, and somewhat tart, correspondence between Mannix and Dr Frederick Waldegrave Head, the self-important former Cambridge don who became Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne in 1929. In particular, Head told Mannix that the “Eucharistic Festivals” of the 1930s had “distressed a good many Christian people” who objected to the “Secularisation of the Lord’s Day” because, apart from the fact that the heavy demand for public transport to Sunbury required railway employees to forgo their day of rest, “the large crowds in the railway stations and in the trains... helped to turn that day into a holiday instead of emphasising it as a day of religious observance.” Head’s blindness to the Catholics’ serious purpose in holding the event is astonishing. A later proposal for a Eucharistic procession through the streets of Melbourne (as part of the celebrations of the founding of the city) generated rival legal opinions and, eventually, the decision by the State Attorney-General (R G Menzies, the later Prime Minister) that the event “posed no offence against the law”. A joint-letter of protest from several prominent Protestant clergymen appeared in the press and Mannix retaliated by publishing his and Head’s correspondence, with the assurance, in a piece of sardonic wit, that he would not reply to those objectors because he was not “equal to the task of controversy”. This chapter, by David Schütz, makes fascinating reading.

Gabrielle McMullen’s essay, *Mannix on inducing “Catholics to take their proper place in the Universities”* makes very clear that Mannix was determined, as he declared in his first public statement, on Easter Sunday 1913, that Catholics should “take their proper place in the universities”. Furthermore, he said, “Australia... must spare no effort... to bring the advantages of higher education within the reach of all those who are fitted to profit from it”. Unlike Gilroy in Sydney, who seriously



considered the establishment of a Catholic university, Mannix “advocated that the key role of the Australian Church in improving Catholics’ access to higher education was through the provision of residential colleges in secular universities.” He strongly supported Archbishop Carr’s plan for Newman College and was crucial in the choice of Burley Griffin’s striking design, despite the opposition of the important Sydney donor, Thomas Donovan, a lover of neo-Gothic, who considered that the Griffin plan was “outrageous” and an “atrocious”. I, for one, am delighted that Mannix prevailed.

The longest essay in the book is Dermot Keogh’s, *Mannix, memory and Irish independence*: whereas the average length of the others is 8-9 pages, Keogh’s is 60 dense pages. It complements Patrick Mannix’s piece, *Archbishop Mannix and Eamon de Valera* and presents the prelate as an international figure, dealing with his triumphant visit to the USA in 1920; his extraordinary arrest at sea, on Lloyd George’s seriously misguided order (“Since the Battle of Jutland,” Mannix later said, “the British navy has not scored a success comparable with chasing the *Baltic* from Irish shores and the capture, without the loss of a single sailor, of the Archbishop of Melbourne.”); his time in England when he was forbidden to visit his ageing mother in Ireland; and his last trip, in 1925, amongst almost inconceivable scenes of adulation and official endorsement.

That year, Mannix was greeted with what can only be termed mass demonstrations of a simply amazing enthusiasm and was appointed “Freeman” in numerous cities and towns. He made countless speeches, many of them supporting a republican Ireland rather than the *status quo* of the “Free State” as a part of Britain, a position which, by contrast, most of the Irish bishops supported and which led to many of them proving gracelessly and rudely inhospitable towards him. He was as unpopular with his episcopal confrères as he was beloved by the populace. This extract seems typical of his approach to that divisive, even fratricidal, political question. “I have had a splendid drive from Dublin, right across Ireland. I don’t think Ireland ever looked so well, but I only wish that Ireland were half as well as she looks. We know right well, in spite of everything some people might wish us to believe, that Irishmen, the real true, broad Irishmen are not ruling in Ireland; there are forces and influences at work controlling Ireland that are not making for the good of Ireland, but are rather making for an Ireland permanently settled within the British empire. I have nothing to say to the British empire, except as an Irishman I never wanted to belong to it.”

Keogh’s story of Mannix’s popularity and passion for Ireland – in fact, his great *political* significance there – is meticulously researched and is never less than interesting, but it is hampered by the author’s disinclination to omit any of the research which he has done and by the lumpen character of his prose. If he were a

finer writer, if he could force himself to recognise that writing is often enhanced by judicious omissions, his story would have been far more than interesting: it would have been enthralling.

Apart from a synopsis of a number of films and clips (from 1920, 1954, 1958-59 and 1962), there was little in the conference (or the book) which bore upon the later Mannix, including his appallingly scurvy treatment of his coadjutor, Dr Justin Simonds, and his pernicious infatuation with BA Santamaria. Whatever the reasons for that lacuna, it does distort the panorama of his history and influence on Australia which the book presents.

Of course, others have, with various degrees of rigour, considered those matters in the numerous books which have been published about Mannix, with two more published in 2015: *The real Archbishop Mannix: from the sources* (compiled by James Franklin, Gerald O Nolan and Michael Gilchrist) has just appeared and Brenda Niall's *Mannix* is scheduled for April. There will always be contention about his Australian achievements, not to mention what he did in Ireland, in part through his friendship with and intense support for Eamon de Valera. Such strong personal relationships or animosities seem to have been a crucial aspect of the ways in which Mannix operated and lived his life; balanced judgement is nettlesome because Australians seem uncomfortable with such publicly-expressed and acted-out passion and commitment. Professor Edmund Campion concluded his masterly summary of the conference (and this book) by quoting the most recent biographer, the late James Griffin (another passionate man): "Of the dead, speak only the truth." The rub here was eloquently expressed in 1625 by Francis Bacon in the opening sentence of his essay, *Of Truth*: "What is Truth? said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer".

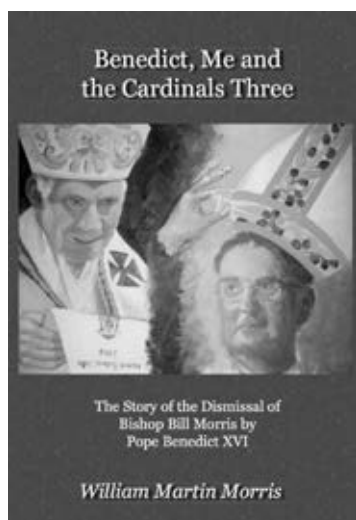
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## BOOK REVIEW

### *Benedict, Me and the Cardinals Three: The Story of the Dismissal of Bishop Bill Morris by Pope Benedict XVI*

Author: William Martin Morris;  
Publisher: Hindmarsh: ATF Press, 2014  
ISBN: 9781921511417  
Paperback, 437 pages, \$54.95

Reviewed by Bernard Doherty\*



Few events are more likely to make history in the Church than an episcopal dismissal; an occurrence that, while rare, this book demonstrates is not a unique occurrence even here in the faraway antipodes. Bishop William Morris' book is a twenty-nine-chapter account (with twenty-two appendices!) of the events surrounding his dismissal by Pope Benedict XVI and a group of highly placed Cardinals and provides an important witness to the fraught relationship between parts of the Australian episcopate and parts of the Roman curia over recent decades.

While Morris includes a few autobiographical details, the vast bulk of this book deals with events which transpired from the late 1990s through to early 2014 and will be of interest to historians and contemporary observers for the light it sheds on the relationship between Australia and Rome in the wake of the much-debated 1998 *Statement of Conclusions*, a document outlining the allegedly parlous state of the Catholic Church in Australia which upon its release caused a minor furor over claims its conclusions were based on a minority opinion and not reflective of the Australian reality. The great strength of this book is its extensive documentation, including Morris' correspondence with Rome and pastoral documents, which allows the reader to assess many of the claims made within the body of the text.

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By now the rough outline of events leading to Morris' downfall is well-known and in purely factual terms can be summarized thus: Morris fell afoul of a minority of his parishioners and various Roman dicasteries due to his alleged lax attitude toward individual confession and overutilization of the Third Rite of Reconciliation and, more seriously, his perceived "advocacy" for women's ordination and the recognition of Protestant orders in a 2006 Advent pastoral letter. He was ostensibly sanctioned on the grounds that all public discussion of women's ordination had been closed following Pope John Paul II's *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* (1994) and the view in Rome that raising this matter showed poor pastoral sense. In the eyes of Rome this pastoral letter, coupled with other aspects of his episcopal ministry (not all of which are made clear and some clearly based on errors of fact), warranted his removal from his role as bishop. What remains hotly disputed, as the mixed-reception of Morris' book among reviewers indicates, is whether Morris was culpable for the second accusation leveled at him, and more importantly in the eyes of Morris and his supporters whether he was denied natural justice in the proceedings against him. Only history, and fuller access to documentation, will satisfactorily answer these questions, nevertheless Morris' account offers a valuable primary source for understanding the recent history of the Church in Australia.

The preexisting cleavages with the Australia Church which crystallized in the wake of the 1998 *Statement of Conclusions* – in particular through an emboldened attitude amongst disaffected conservatives and a series of arguably conservative appointments to key positions within the Church – and the marked contrasts in pastoral style, ecclesiology, and attitudes toward Vatican II which divide many Australia Catholics form the immediate context of the events which led-up to Morris' effective dismissal as Bishop of Toowoomba in 2011. In essence this book is a narrative about conflict between two styles of Church leadership and pastoral ministry.

Following a brief autobiographical introduction, Morris launches into substantive matters outlining his pastoral vision and the events of the 1998 Synod of Oceania which led to the penning of the *Statement of Conclusions*. These prefatory chapters and the related appendices outline Morris' position as someone who embraced dialogue and who earnestly sought to keep uncomfortable questions on the agenda of discussion. Morris' candor here is commendable, though as anyone familiar with the tone of discussion in more conservative sectors of the Church will clearly perceive the seeds of his eventual downfall were clearly present in his theological ideas about matters like collegiality and his interpretation of certain Vatican II documents.

Morris' intervention given at the Synod, in which in a single breathless sentence he manages to mention 'the divorced, celibacy, married clergy, the unspoken issue

of women, appointment of bishops, the adaptation and translation of liturgical texts, the problems surrounding general absolution and the Communal Rite of Reconciliation, inculturation of the liturgy and many more' (p. 17), could only have worked like a red rag to a bull amongst more conservative observers, and when the *Statement of Conclusions* was imposed upon the assembled bishops in what Morris tellingly describes as an 'ambush' and a 'witch-hunt' (pp. 18f.), the proverbial writing was on the wall. These early chapters also outline Morris' commitment to a culturally sensitive vision of the local Church and effectively set the stage for the conflict which this approach was to occasion amongst some parishioners.

That Morris' pastoral vision did not gel with everyone within his diocese becomes clear early in the book and Chapter 2 records complaints about Morris' alleged dereliction of duty in failing to provide provision for a Sunday Mass during the Diocesan priests annual retreat weekend. That such a seemingly inconsequential oversight would be reported directly to the Papal Nuncio might appear an extreme measure, but this evidently reflects a culture of denunciation which exists amongst those whom Morris refers to as the 'temple police' or 'right wing' of the Church. A steady stream of complaints found their way to the Nunciature and various offices in the curia over the course of Morris' tenure on more serious topics like the continued use of the Third Rite of Reconciliation and on ultimately inconsequential issues like Bishop Morris having his face-painted at a community event or allowing his priests to wear ties rather than Roman collars. The tone of these complaints is best illustrated by an anecdote in Chapter 15 regarding the discovery of a copy of the cantankerous *Lepanto* magazine on the desk of Cardinal Re during one of the final ill-fated attempts to reconcile Morris with his detractors.

Clearly Morris' collaborative style of leadership, engagement with the laity, and emphasis on collegiality cast him in an unfavorable light with those who felt the need for a more hierarchical ecclesiology and a rigid approach to liturgy, and his creative initiatives to address the pastoral needs of a sizable rural diocese (a point he often repeats) clearly ran counter to the received wisdom in Rome that only a steady stream of priestly vocations or the importation of foreign priests are suitable means for addressing gaps in pastoral care and the ravages of secularization.

From a historical perspective the Morris's situation offers a case study of the kinds of divisions which are becoming more acute in the Church more broadly (as evidenced during the recent Synod of Bishops in Rome), but which are often dismissed as the complaints of a few malcontents on the extreme fringes of ecclesiastical life. While talk of a 'crisis in the Church' amongst conservatives temporarily abated during the short Papacy of Benedict (only to return of late as a response to the much discussed "Francis Effect"), Morris' book amply demonstrates, that major ideological fissures remain a live issue and if nothing else perhaps offers

a salient lesson of how quickly the tide can turn and the evil-eye can rest on those who fail to toe the party-line,

One interesting omission from the book is an account of Morris' handling of the sectarian Magnificat Meal Movement (MMM), a conservative Marian prayer group who developed into a disruptive sect within the Diocese of Toowoomba that Morris issued a public statement against in early 1999. Over the course of the 1990s Morris showed exemplary leadership and pastoral sense in dealing with this problem in consultation with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). Given the clear similarities between the forms of devotional traditionalism exhibited by the MMM and the parishioners who credited their 'Eucharistic adoration' (p. 203) with ousting Morris, it seems quite strange that Morris would not mention his more cooperative relationship with Pope Benedict (then Cardinal Ratzinger) in dealing with the canonically challenging problem of alleged apparitions and private revelations.

Given his role in overseeing the complex canonical procedures involved such an investigation, including anonymous reporting, it seems rather unlikely that Morris could realistically expect to see the contents of the brief against him or be unaware of the confidential nature of any Vatican investigative procedure. Unfortunately, in this case, the seal placed on documents held by the CDF will only fuel speculation as to the exact content of Archbishop Chaput's report following his apostolic visitation in 2007 and it will be left to future historians to revisit the Morris case when more documentation becomes available.

Like any autobiographical account this book could be read as self-serving (perhaps an *apologia*) and certainly at times the reader is made acutely aware of the exacerbation and frustration which the stonewalling process of the so-called 'fraternal dialogue' with Rome entailed for Morris and his supporters. At the same time one also senses that there is less-candor than might be found were this book written with more distance from the events described. Morris is still clearly healing from the wounds inflicted on him and while vague allusions abound to divisions within the Australian episcopate, Morris has been understandably circumspect in pointing the finger at some of his less sympathetic 'brother bishops' who were clearly glad to see the back of him.

From both a contemporary and a historical perspective Morris' book highlights what has always been a perennial tension between how things have been done in Australia and how actions are perceived in Rome, and the potential that exists within a global Church for cultural misunderstandings. Morris' account of meetings with both Cardinal Arinze and Pope Benedict highlights the challenge that a global Church faces in ensuring its highest office-holders can communicate effectively; a matter perhaps most strongly evidenced in the VatiLeaks memo quoted in Chapter

21 from Pope Benedict to Cardinal Re which demonstrates the all-too-human limitations at play in the Pope's admission to having misunderstood Morris during their meeting. While many of the difficulties between Morris and Rome could be put down to cultural differences or theological stalemates, some of the actions of various parties in Rome to Morris' entreaties remain perplexing. The complete pastoral disregard shown for Morris' support for victims of clerical child abuse and Rome's apparent inflexibility in terms of a date for his resignation in Chapter 23 stand out here. Similarly Morris' encounters with Vatican intrigues, while at times a tad baroque, do ring true. Anyone familiar with other disciplinary cases surrounding figures as divergent as Marcel Lefebvre and Hans Küng would be aware that the Roman attitude toward due process leaves a lot to be desired. In the end, upon concluding Morris' book one is left with the discouraging impression that the Vatican is a lot like Las Vegas in two regards: what happens in the Vatican stays in the Vatican and the house always wins!

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#### COMMENTARY

##### *When a non-Romanised Bishop Confronts Rome*

By Michael Costigan\*

When drafting these notes I had not seen Bernard Doherty's review of Bishop William (Bill) Morris's book. My contribution is in no sense a second or alternative review of the Emeritus Bishop of Toowoomba's *Benedict, Me and the Cardinals Three*. I am simply taking up the Editor's kind invitation to offer a few reflections of my own after reading a book that I see as unique and significant.

My first observation is that, as Toowoomba's Catholic leader from 1993 to 2011, Bill Morris was in the best sense a bishop formed and animated by the teachings and pastoral orientation of the Second Vatican Council. Secondly, I believe that, unlike some other past and present members of the Australian hierarchy, Morris was, in a praiseworthy way, "non-Roman" (but never anti-Roman) in his thinking and actions.

That this bishop was profoundly influenced by the Council is evident from the

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way in which he encouraged dialogue in his huge rural diocese. He fostered the creation of diocesan and parish structures wherein the laity, religious and clergy could all participate and be consulted. In his eyes all of them formed “the People of God”, to use a term enshrined in *Lumen Gentium*, the Council’s major document on the Church. He was, as Father Frank Brennan SJ emphasised when launching his book in Sydney and Adelaide, essentially a team player. Morris believed that the principle of collegiality, which was at the heart of the conciliar teaching, should apply not only to the hierarchy, but, with appropriate adaptations, at other levels in the Church.

Bishop Morris also approached relations with the Holy See in a manner reminiscent of some of the more forthright conciliar fathers, including a few auxiliary bishops and the leaders of relatively obscure dioceses as well as the incumbents, often cardinals, of more famous sees. Their approach, like his, was marked by courage, a high regard for speaking the truth as they perceived it, pastoral zeal and the expression of frank and open beliefs. Among such bravely assertive “back bench” conciliar participants were reformers like Belgium’s Bishop Joseph De Smedt and Italy’s Bishop Luigi Bettazzi, together with traditionalists like Italy’s Bishop Luigi Carli and even Australia’s Bishop Thomas Muldoon.

Would Bishop Morris have had a different style in his dealings with the Vatican if at least some of his clerical training had taken place in Rome? I understand this has been suggested by one or two other Australian bishops. While sympathetic with him in his difficult relationship with the Roman Curia, they noted that he had never even visited that city until five years after becoming a bishop. That led me, an old Roman myself, to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages experienced by clergy and religious who have spent some years in the city.

It has long been accepted that many bishops and religious superiors have sent some of their more academically successful charges to Rome so that they would return imbued with that spirit of loyalty and devotion to the papacy and to the Vatican’s ways which is often called Romanità. If, however, that has indeed been a key element in what motivated those leaders, it must be said that over the years the aim has been only partly successful – and in some cases not at all.

Prominent among the Roman institutions for the priestly training of Australians and others, mainly from 40-odd missionary countries, has been the Pontifical Urban College for the Propagation of the Faith, often called Propaganda Fide College or more colloquially “Prop”. Several Australian commentators, most of them Prop graduates, have written about life in that college and the real or intended Romanisation of its alumni. One such is the Canberra-based historian, Emeritus Professor John N. Molony, formerly a priest of the Ballarat Diocese.

One of the earliest of Molony’s many books, *The Roman Mould of the Australian*



*Catholic Church* (Melbourne University Press, 1969), advanced the view, challenged by his fellow historians Patrick O'Farrell and Edmund Campion, that the decisive influence on the character of Catholicism in this country came from Rome, directly and indirectly, rather than from Ireland. He pointed out that most of the Irish bishops appointed to Australian dioceses in the 19th and early 20th centuries, including Cardinal Moran (but not Daniel Mannix), had strong Roman backgrounds and connections, which determined the way they viewed doctrine and acted as pastors here. Molony held that this prevailing Roman influence continued well into the last century, when many of the Australian-born bishops were graduates of Propaganda College. His argument was reinforced when appointments made shortly before the publishing of his book resulted in all seven Australian archdioceses being headed by Prop men.

Later, in two personal memoirs, *Luther's Pine: an Autobiography* (Pandanus Books, Canberra, 2004) and *By Wendouree: Memories 1951-63* (Connor Court, Ballan, 2010), John Molony wrote of his own years (1947-53) in the same college. He admits with what could be seen as an element of distaste that he too was unable to withstand completely the college's Romanising pressure.

The late Father Peter Brock of the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese was another who wrote a book, *Home, Rome, Home* (Spectrum Publications, Melbourne, 2001), about his Propaganda College memories. Towards the end of Brock's years (1964-68) in the splendidly located college on the Janiculum hill, he had contact with a new group of fellow Australians who reached Rome late in 1967.

Like most of the newcomers, Peter Brock was an admiring disciple of Father Carlo Molari, a young professor of theology at Propaganda's neighbouring Pontifical Urban University. Unlike some other theologians at the university, Molari was dedicated to Vatican II and happily accepted its radical effect on theology and its teaching. As his biographer, Tess Livingstone, makes clear, George Pell, who had left Prop for Oxford earlier in 1967, was another admirer of Molari and a supporter of Vatican II's reforms – although, in later times, as a critic of some ways in which the Council was being received and interpreted, he was to modify his youthful enthusiasm (see *George Pell: Right from the Start*, Duffy and Snellgrove, Sydney, 2002).

Apart from passing references to “new dynamics” in the college and some loss of equilibrium there, Father Brock has little to say about the crucial part played by Australian students, especially some of the 1967 newcomers, in what has been labelled “the Propaganda College affair”. He does note (page 190) that college life and relationships with the superiors began to take on an unfamiliar air of tension from 1997. The best description of this quasi-revolution has been supplied by Peter Howard, a former Melbourne priest. Although not a Prop man himself, he studied

in Rome in 1985-86 and went on to live for about fifteen years in Florence. There he became an expert on Italian culture before returning to Melbourne as a priest-lecturer in church history.

Howard's account of the ways in which Propaganda's Australians tried to change their college's approach to priestly formation is in the 18-page Chapter 14 ("Australian Clergy in Italy after Vatican II") of a collection of essays edited by Bill Kent, Ros Pesman and Cynthia Troup, *Australians in Italy: Contemporary Lives and Impressions* (Monash University Publishing, 2008 and 2010). With permission, Howard draws on unpublished letters written to his Melbourne family from Prop by one of the 1967 newcomers, Terry Curtin, who commented perceptively in that correspondence on what was happening at Prop during the four years he spent there before his ordination in Australia in 1971. Monsignor (to give him his later title) Curtin, much esteemed in Melbourne as a theologian and pastor, was ordained as an Auxiliary Bishop for that Archdiocese in December 2014. John Molony could be interested to note that Curtin is now one of only two active Australian bishops who can call Propaganda College their alma mater. The other is Bishop Michael Kennedy of Armidale, a former Wagga Wagga priest whose residence at Prop in the late 1990s (rare for an Australian by then) was thirty years after Curtin's.

Peter Howard's essay confirms the conclusion that many Australian seminarians in Rome did not automatically absorb and accept the more rigid forms or characteristics of Romanità.

As an alumnus of Prop and the Urban University myself (1952-56) and then of the Pontifical Lateran University (1956-61), I grieved over Howard's account of the troubled final years of Monsignor Felice Cenci as Rector of a college that he had headed and where he was much loved for close to a quarter of a century. My own time under him was his vintage period, when in certain ways his open and trusting *autoformazione* methodology anticipated the spirit of the Council. The type of Romanità he tried to encourage in us certainly included veneration for the Pope, while featuring respect for diversity and, by his own example, an attempt to foster Christ-like devotion to anyone suffering poverty, disadvantage and injustice. It was far removed from the extreme kind of Romanisation which often engenders ambition, careerism and an unquestioning acceptance of all that a narrow school of theology lays down.

My late friend and classmate, the progressive English-born historian and theologian Adrian Hastings, confirmed my positive recollections of Cenci's Propaganda in the 1950s in his memoir, *In Filial Disobedience* (Mayhew-McCrimmon, Great Wakering, 1978). He concluded that "the personal achievement of Mgr Cenci, uncharacteristic of the Roman approach" was "fully compatible with a commitment to full-blooded Catholicity" (pages 46-66).

The fact is that the Romanisation of priests, seminarians and religious has multiple forms and degrees. It affects different people in diverse and sometimes contradictory ways. Seminaries and other houses of formation are not like sausage factories, producing identical outcomes from an assembly line. Among Propaganda College's Australian episcopal ex-students, randomly named here, were Norman Gilroy and Guilford Young, Geoffrey Robinson and George Pell, Patrick Power and Thomas Cahill, Matthew Beovich and Francis Rush, Thomas Muldoon and Bede Heather, Bernard Stewart and Lancelot Goody, James Knox and Leonard Faulkner, Frank Little and James O'Collins, Patrick Lyons and Barry Hickey. The many other Australian clerics and ex-clerics with a claim to Prop as their alma mater have included Paul Bongiorno, Grove Johnson, Patrick Cunningham, Con Keogh, Richard Connolly, Percy Jones, Ian Burns, Julian Miller, Frank O'Loughlin, Vincent Tiggeman, Kevin Barry-Cotter, Des Cahill, Don Victory, John Ware and Aldo Rebeschini. I rest my case.

If Bill Morris had belonged in this company, would he have acted differently when faced with the attempts by such powerful and thoroughly Romanised officials of the Holy See as the Nigerian Cardinal Francis Arinze (actually a contemporary of mine at Prop), the Italian Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re and the American Cardinal William Levada – not to forget the German ex-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) – to remove him from his diocese? While this is a purely speculative question, my own opinion, as a friend who knows well the honesty, integrity and other qualities of Bishop Bill (we worked together for years for the Australian Bishops Conference in the area of social justice and human rights), is that, notwithstanding a hypothetical Roman background, he would still have reacted as he did to what he (and the likes of Frank Brennan and many other wise and competent onlookers are in full agreement) saw as unjust and ill-founded treatment.

Would a Pope Francis have handled the William Morris case in the same way as Pope Benedict and his advisers? I do not believe so. Making or allowing others to make repeated demands for a resignation for which there was no justification would not have been his style. Apart from other considerations, the Argentinian Pope could well have a special feeling of empathy with the Australian country bishop. Both are non-Romans who were never Romanised. Answering the Italian journalist Franca Giansoldati, Francis said: "Are you aware that I don't know Rome? Just consider that I saw the Sistine Chapel for the first time when I took part in the conclave that elected Benedict XVI (in 2005). I haven't even been to the museums. The fact is that, as a cardinal, I didn't come here often."

In more than one respect, the Bishop of Rome and the retired Bishop of Toowoomba are twin souls. May their very different ministries continue to bear abundant fruits.

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## BOOK REVIEW

### *Between The “Mysticism of Politics” and the “Politics of Mysticism”: Interpreting New Pathways of Holiness in the Roman Catholic Tradition*

Author: David Ranson

Adelaide: ATF Theology, 2014

ISBN: 9781922239365

Paperback, 303 pages, \$39.95

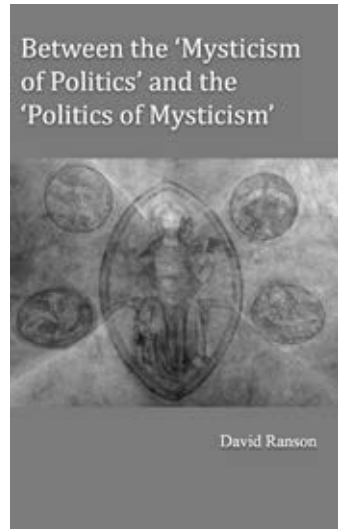
Reviewed by \*Robert Gascoigne

I am glad of the opportunity to review this book but must, however, declare an interest, since I was supervisor of the doctoral thesis which lies behind it. Since Fr David Ranson was already an accomplished author and academic when he undertook the thesis, supervising his work was much more a matter of scholarly conversation than supervision in the usual sense of the word. I recall from our conversations that Fr Ranson emphasized that his primary goal was to write a thesis on spirituality, on the meaning of living a Christian life in our contemporary, secular world. In this light, his book focuses on a fundamental concern of post-Vatican II Catholic life, namely, the universal call to holiness. He shows how Vatican II's *Lumen Gentium* made a far-reaching change in the Catholic Church's understanding of holiness, moving beyond two-tiered conceptions and distinctions between religious and lay life to an emphasis on holiness as a call to all members of the Church, whatever path of life they may lead. This, in turn, necessitated a re-appraisal of secularity, and of the ways in which holiness can characterize an engagement with the secular in the life of a Christian.

In the different chapters of the book, Ranson skilfully describes the historical background for these changes, including the medieval period, the nineteenth-century, with detailed discussions of such figures as Lamennais, Lacordaire, and

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von Ketteler, and into the twentieth century, considering the influence of a number of key early-twentieth century figures such as Weber and Péguy, and philosophers and theologians who influenced the intellectual climate before Vatican II, such as Jacques Maritain, as well as significant participants in more contemporary debates, such as Paul Ricoeur, David Tracy, Edward Schillebeeckx, Gustavo Gutierrez and William Cavanaugh. The book is based in a fascinating and impressive range of historical and scholarly reference – one sign of which is a 50 page bibliography!

Ranson has shaped this scholarship through the development of an original and illuminating conceptual framework, namely his exploration of the dialectic between what he has aptly named the ‘mysticism of politics’ and the ‘politics of mysticism’. These two modes of interrelating the mystical and the political – the love of God and engagement with and for our neighbour – are interpreted as the two fundamental forms of relationship to secularity, and the striving for holiness, in our own time. Ranson understands the ‘mysticism of politics’ as the form of life which finds holiness in and through solidarity with our neighbour, engaging various social and political contexts for the sake of human liberation. Politics, in this sense, is not the process of gaining and using power, but rather a concern for the polis, the common good, which is engaged in for the sake of love of neighbour. The ‘politics of mysticism’, on the other hand, is evident when Church communities or institutions experience a threat to their identity from their environment and seek to use institutional power or control in order to respond to this threat. Rather than engaging with the world for the sake of the common good, the politics of mysticism seeks to control the world for the sake of preserving the identity of a church that experiences itself as embattled.

Yet the sophistication and insight of Ranson’s approach is further demonstrated in the way in which he interprets these two approaches as living in dialectical tension with each other. Neither is completely self-sufficient, and their appropriateness and fruitfulness for the Christian life can vary according to historical circumstances. The ‘mysticism of politics’ can become political apocalypticism. The ‘politics of mysticism’, in turn, can be justified when the Church does need to affirm its identity in some environments – and the intensity of such a politics of mysticism can be a kind of barometer of the level of perceived threat. Where it becomes less fruitful is when it moves from affirming identity to becoming a form of control, exercising power in ways which preclude engagement with human needs in particular social contexts. In the last chapters of the book, the author demonstrates the helpfulness of his conceptual framework in interpreting the ‘New Ecclesial Movements’ that have emerged since Vatican II, and he concludes by emphasizing that the truest meaning of the lived tension between the mystical and the political is to be found in biography, in the striving of an individual Christian to respond to the call to holiness

by immersion in both prayer and social action – something he finds exemplified in Thomas Merton, summed up with intensity in Merton’s experience, standing on the intersection of Fourth and Walnut streets in Louisville, Kentucky, of his love for the ordinary people he saw around him, whom he saw ‘walking around shining like the sun’ (228).

I congratulate David Ranson on the important contribution that his book will make to our understanding of the meaning of the universal call to holiness and of Christian engagement in the secular world – I wish his book the success that it richly deserves, complementing the many contributions that Fr Ranson has already made to reflection on the Christian life today. I would also like to thank and congratulate Hilary Regan and ATF Press for his work in publishing this book and so giving it a wider readership.

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## **BOOK REVIEWS**

### *Australian Chinese Catholic Community: 60 years of service and ministry*

Reviews by Carmen Kong

In 2014, the Australian Chinese Catholic Community (ACCC) of Sydney celebrated its diamond jubilee. A special commemorative book was produced to mark the 60 years of service and ministry. A copy of this ACCC Diamond Jubilee Souvenir book was forwarded to the Australian Catholic Historical Society, along with the following three books which have previously been produced:

- *In a Journey Together for Half a Century*, produced in 1998 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the Priestly Ordination of Fr Paschal Chang OFM
- *Asiana Centre Sydney Australia Golden Jubilee 1963-2013*
- *4th Worldwide Overseas Chinese Pastoral and Evangelization Convention*, October 2009, Sydney Australia.

It was with great pleasure that I reviewed these four books. Although I arrived in Sydney as a small child and integrated quickly into the mainstream English-language Catholic community, I have fond memories of my encounters with the ACCC. My grandmother regularly attended Mass in Cantonese, and the late Fr

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\* *Carmen Kong has a Master of Arts (Asian Studies) from the Australian National University, and has an interest in the history of Christianity in China.*

Paschal Chang OFM, founder of the ACCC, celebrated her funeral Mass. I have some vague memories of attending the Chinese language school run by the ACCC, during the period of my parents' futile attempts to help us retain some knowledge of our native tongue.

When asked to look over these materials, I found myself wondering:

- With the White Australia Policy in place for the first half of the 20th Century, and the abolition of the policy taking place in stages over 25 years, how many Chinese Catholics would there have been in Sydney in 1953 for Fr Paschal to minister to? Who were these Chinese Catholics?
- What is the range of activities undertaken by the ACCC to serve and minister to Chinese Catholics? Have these changed over the last 60 years, particularly in response to any changes to the Australian Chinese Catholic population over this period?
- What have been the contributions of the ACCC to the wider Church and society in Australia?

The four books illuminated me on these topics as I read them, and I was fascinated to learn the stories of the many Chinese Catholics who have come before me in Sydney. They have played a part not only within the ACCC, but contributed more widely to the Catholic Church in Australia, as well as the wider Australian society too.

#### *Overview of the material*

The four books consist of three jubilee commemorative or souvenir books, plus the convention proceedings from the 4th Worldwide Overseas Chinese Pastoral and Evangelization Convention hosted by the ACCC in Sydney during October 2009.

The three jubilee commemorative books are quite similar in presentation. They begin with letters of congratulations from important personages, for example, the Apostolic Nuncio, the Archbishop of Sydney, the Franciscan Provincial Minister, and leaders of other religious congregations. Hidden amongst the expected well-wishes conveyed in these congratulatory letters are nuggets of information about the various works, struggles and achievements of the ACCC. These letters are presented in their original language: no Chinese translation is provided for English letters, and no English translation for Chinese letters.

The letters are then followed by articles. Some are in Chinese, some in English, and in a few cases, both Chinese and English versions are provided. Many of the articles are recollections and reflections of people who have been involved with the ACCC in some capacity or another – whether as collaborators of Fr Chang in various ministries, or as recipients of the ministerial service of the ACCC. These

articles reveal the breadth of the work of the ACCC, which was not limited only to the spiritual care of its members, but provided for their material and other needs e.g. providing housing and accommodation, organising social activities etc.

Each of the commemorative books also includes a timeline of key events. These are provided in both Chinese and English.

The books include photographs – perhaps as printing costs decreased, and with the advent of digital cameras photography itself became more common, the later books contain more and far better quality photos than the first commemorative book.

The fourth book contains the convention proceedings from the 4th Worldwide Overseas Chinese Pastoral and Evangelization Convention hosted by the ACCC in Sydney during October 2009. It starts with the blessing from the Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, followed by a letter from the Archbishop of Sydney and the homily given by the Archbishop of Sydney at the Opening Mass. There are then talks by the keynote speakers Bishop Ignatius Wang and Fr Savio Hon SBD, and by two other speakers Dr David Ho and Msgr Robert McGucken, are included. I am unsure as to why talks by any other speakers were not included. Where the original text is in English, a Chinese translation is provided. Where the original is in Chinese, no English translation is given.

The convention proceedings tell less about the story of the ACCC in particular, but give a glimpse of the global context in which the ACCC is a part. For example, the very brief minutes (in Chinese) of a meeting of leaders of the various overseas Chinese Catholic communities lists representatives from overseas Chinese Catholic communities in eleven different countries.

All four books are interesting as collections of the experiences of Chinese Catholics in Australia. They would be more accessible to a general audience if translations were consistently provided (i.e. English articles into Chinese, and Chinese articles into English). This way, the reader need not be conversant in both languages to appreciate fully the wealth of materials in these books. The translations which are provided are adequate, although in a few cases, nuances and some humour were missed. This is always a challenge in translation and the problem is not uncommon.

#### *Who are the Chinese Catholics in Sydney?*

Although the Immigration Restriction Act (1901) was still in place, the first steps towards the abolition of the White Australia Policy were taken after World War II, when some non-European refugees were allowed to remain in Australia, and Japanese war brides admitted. The revised Migration Act (1958) abolished the controversial dictation test and avoided references to questions of race. During



the 1950s, overseas students arrived in Australia under the Colombo Plan, and they were joined by students from Asian families which had the means to invest in their offspring through overseas tertiary education.

With the growing Asian population, Cardinal Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney, recognised the need to provide for their pastoral needs. He requested Fr Paschal Chang OFM and Fr Leonard Hsu OFM to come to Australia and minister to the Chinese students. The priests experienced the same struggles as the students, having to master English, which became the *lingua franca* of the ACCC as students arrived speaking different Chinese dialects.

In fact, when the ACCC established its community centre, they chose to name it the Asiana Centre, to avoid any particular racial or nationalistic overtones, and reflecting the fact that there were people of Chinese descent of nationalities other than China. After the liberalisation of migration laws in 1973, increasing numbers of students and other migrants arrived particularly from Hong Kong, and Mass started to be celebrated regularly in Cantonese. In 1900, the Western Sydney Catholic Chinese Community (WSCCC) was started under the ACCC umbrella, and regular Masses in Mandarin began to be offered, providing for the needs of the growing Mandarin-speaking community.

#### *What are the activities of the ACCC?*

As the population of Chinese Catholics in Sydney has grown, and the composition of the population changed, so the activities undertaken by the ACCC have also grown and changed. From amongst many varied activities, I have described a few to demonstrate the breadth of the ministry undertaken by Fr Chang and ACCC.

The Catholic Asian Students Society (CASS) had been established before the arrival of Frs Chang and Hsu. As many of these students were of Chinese descent, chaplaincy was transferred to the Chinese priests upon their arrival. CASS supported Asian students in Australia by organising social activities and encouraging Catholic students to support each other in their faith. The Asiana Centre also provided accommodation and other housing services to assist the young people who had come to Australia to study.

As Australia's migration laws were relaxed, some of the overseas students remained after completing their studies, and from the 1970s onwards, migration from Asia increased. Fr Chang recognised the need to assist migrant families, and established a weekend Chinese language school to support migrant parents teach their children about their own cultural heritage. Fr Chang also supported an English language school to assist new migrants.

Apart from ministering to the youth, Fr Chang and the ACCC recognised the needs of the aged and the dying. The Sisters of Our Lady of China were invited

to Sydney to operate a nursing home for elderly Chinese people. In addition, Fr Chang sought the allocation of burial plots to form the Chinese Catholic lawn in Rookwood Cemetery, where Fr Chang himself is buried now. A memorial roll has also been established, where the names of deceased family members can be enrolled, so that members of the ACCC can fulfil their traditional duties of paying respects and praying for the dead.

In 1973, the ACCC acquired what is now called Francisville in St Albans, just outside of Sydney, as a place for retreat and recreation. It has continued to be developed and is used regularly not only by ACCC members but other community groups.

#### *Contributions of the ACCC to the wider community*

Through the ministry of the ACCC, its members have contributed to the wider community, both in the Australian Catholic Church and beyond. Reflections by early ACCC members tell of the community facilitating the hosting of Asian students by Australian families during vacations, giving these students a taste of life in rural Australia, and enabling cross-cultural understanding and friendship. Over the years, the ACCC has also published bilingual newsletters to promote cross-cultural understanding. Clearly the assistance provided to new migrants, helping them settle into life in their new country, has great benefit to Australian society as a whole.

The weekend Chinese language school for children and English school for migrants were pioneering works, which have since ceased with such works being taken up by other community groups in Australia. However, at the time of their establishment by the ACCC, such schools were visionary.

As the ministries of the ACCC grew, Fr Chang invited other religious to Australia to assist in providing for the needs of the growing Chinese Catholic community. These groups then extended their work to meet the needs of the wider community. For example, the Sisters of St Paul de Chartres first came to Australia to minister to overseas students, but now also operate a nursing home in Brisbane.

The ACCC continues to evangelise within the Australian Chinese community, with Chinese-language catechism classes being run. A library service also provides reading material for anyone interested in learning more about the Catholic faith.

The ACCC has also sponsored young priests from China to further their studies in Australia. These priests not only gain valuable experience and contribute by serving the ACCC, some have continued working for various diocese in Australia, and others have returned to serve the Catholic communities in China.

In hosting the 4th Worldwide Overseas Chinese Pastoral and Evangelisation Convention, the ACCC demonstrated the contribution of overseas Chinese Catholic

communities to the whole Church. In his Opening Mass homily, the then-Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal Pell, highlighted the importance of handing on the faith to descendants. Bishop Ignatius Wang continued on this theme in his keynote address to the convention, noting the similarities between traditional Chinese philosophical teachings and Christianity. He exhorts the overseas Chinese Catholic communities to persevere in handing onto younger generations both the Chinese cultural heritage and the Catholic faith, even amidst the many challenges faced by the communities.

*Concluding comments*

The four books provide a fascinating insight into the Australian Chinese Catholic Community, and its role in the history of Chinese Catholics in Sydney. The ACCC continues to provide for the pastoral and other needs of its members, and to evangelise those of Chinese descent in Australia. It also plays a part in supporting the work of priests in China, and belongs to the community of overseas Chinese Catholics.

The continuing work of the ACCC contributes to the building of multicultural Australia, and is an example of the ways cross-cultural understanding and friendship can be developed. Indeed, the witness of the Catholic Church is vital in promoting respect for people from different cultures. Fr Chang reveals that early on in his mission in Sydney, he intended to abandon the ministry, and was told that despite the fact that the Australian Government maintained its White Australia Policy, the Catholic Church had no such policy.

Thus these books tell the story not only of Australian Chinese Catholics within a Church context, but of the experiences of migrants and minority ethnic communities within Australia itself.