



arcvoice

A Report from Australian Reforming Catholics Inc.
December 2013 Issue No. 50

Editorial

Is it just possible that Catholics might be able to communicate with the Pope without having the impact of their message filtered by a hierarchy of clerics? If we assume this is so from the indications given by Pope Francis, then it would be for the first time in many centuries. What a wonderful thought to have for the fiftieth edition of *ARCvoice*! As we mentioned to you in the last edition, a networking group of many reform-minded Catholic groups across the English speaking world under the banner of Catholic Church Reform have decided to unite in sending letters to the Pope expressing solidarity with his intentions to reform and renew the direction of the Church.

Your Secretariat signed a letter on your behalf to this effect and now a new letter to which we have had input has been prepared which refers to the Synod on the Family that the Pope intends to convene in October 2014. This Synod is of vital importance when we consider just how many issues around family life need to be addressed yet the questionnaire that has been sent out to dioceses for distribution is quite inadequate for gaining input from Catholic families. The contributions need to be made by far more direct representation and this new letter is being presented to the Pope to this effect. Again we will be signing it on your behalf but we also recommend that you sign it as an individual. You will be able to find it and sign your acceptance during the next month on the website

www.catholicchurchreform.com

and a copy of that letter is contained in this issue.

At this stage we do not know whether the Pope has received the previous letters since we have not yet received any reply. If we do not receive a reply after this third letter we will re-examine the approach we are taking. However, independently of this, documentation that synthesises the thoughts and recommendations from dozens of reform groups will be prepared for presentation to the Synod even if direct representation from those groups is not achieved. The development of new approaches to the issues of sustainability and family life are vital to the sacramental life of our Church and every effort should be made to ensure that the Pope knows just how much Catholic people support

him in his desire to make our Church “the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems” (*Evangelii Gaudium* – The Joy of the Gospel).

Getting through to Pope Francis may be difficult if you are not in the hierarchical chain of influence. However, we have to assume from his statements that he wants to hear from us and we need to respond with the responsibility that it implies.

John Buggy

NB: In the last issue we notified you that Michael Morwood would be guest speaker at a meeting in January. Unfortunately, as Michael is not able to keep to this arrangement, the meeting has been postponed until later in the year when we hope he will be available.

In this issue

<i>Editorial</i>	1
Letter to Pope Francis	2
Sheila Gibson: <i>A Stocking Filler for a Better Christmas...</i>	3
Bernard Thorogood : <i>Crossing the Divide On the Ecumenical Journey</i>	4-5
Gideon Goosen: <i>Sexuality and The Role of Sisyphus (Part II)</i>	5
ACCCR	5
Emmy Silvius: <i>How much will Pope Francis change the culture of the Church?</i>	6-7
Kevin Treston: <i>We need to re-think the Creation story mythology!</i> (Part two)	8-9
Christopher Geraghty: Film Review: <i>In Bob We Trust</i> ...	9-10
Terry Herbert msc: <i>Displacing Jesus from the Centre!</i> ..	11
Eric Hodgens: <i>Can We Save the Catholic Church?</i>	12-13
Stuart Rintoul: <i>Priest defrocked and excommunicated...</i>	13
Rosie Scott & Tom Keneally (Eds) <i>A Country Too Far: Writings on Asylum Seekers</i> (Review)	14-15
ARC Secretariat – Have Your Say – Subscription form ...	12

Third Letter to Pope Francis

(Please go to www.catholicchurchreform.com to sign it)

Dear Pope Francis:

We trust that our proposals in letters dated September 19 and November 27, 2013 and signed by Catholic organizations and individuals throughout the world have been helpful to you. In anticipation of your third Advisory Council meeting, we now send this letter concerning the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops to be held in October 2014.

We welcome your decision to convene this Synod and to engage the pressing pastoral challenges of the family in the context of the Gospel. In a recent homily you asked: "How do we keep our faith as a family?" We have struggled with this very question as a critical aspect of our own lives and for those of so many in our Church communities. We all see our Church at a crossroads where you offer hope for compassionate renewal.

We particularly welcome your unprecedented call for "input from local sources" via the distribution of the questionnaire from Archbishop Baldisseri, recognizing the importance of the *sensus fidelium* to the Magisterium of the Church. This initiative begins to address the need you identified in *Evangelii Gaudium* to promote the growth of the responsibility of the laity, so often kept "away from decision-making" by "an excessive clericalism." But, in our opinion, this survey doesn't go far enough. The Holy Spirit can no longer be ignored in her expression in the voices of the faithful.

You are no doubt aware that there are very different approaches by bishops and their conferences to the Synod's request for local input on the 39 questions contained in the questionnaire. While some conferences have facilitated participation among the faithful in this challenging survey, others have made minimal attempts to engage parishioners in this vital dialogue, many of whom still feel excluded.

It is our deeply held conviction that in addition to the information that may be gathered through questionnaires, an effective Synod on the Family requires the participation of committed lay Catholics from the diverse regions of the universal Church at all stages of the Synod. For example, in order to allow for research, discussion, debate, and recommendations, we would suggest that you call on every diocese in the world to hold a diocesan synod in 2014 to discuss the topic, and direct every diocesan bishop to invite every Catholic in the diocese to offer input. Discussion at these synods should be open and frank, but respectful. The conclusions and recommendations of each diocesan synod would then be submitted either directly to the Synod of Bishops' preparatory commission, or, preferably, to a specially convened National or Plenary Synod with lay participants constituting up to half of all the synod members. We anticipate that this process would lead naturally into meaningful representation from the laity at the ultimate Synod of the Family.

Pope Francis, however you choose to proceed, we respectfully offer our assistance and experience gained from living Christian lives as families in all their various forms. We would appreciate confirmation of your receipt of this letter, and, in due course, your response to our proposal for the involvement of the faithful in the Extraordinary Synod and its formal preparations. We again assure you of our deep concern for making visible Christ's mission of love and justice among the families of our world.

Yours in Christ,

A worldwide network of Catholics and
Catholic Organizations

[list of signers and organizations attached]

CC: Cardinal Giuseppe Bertello, President of the Vatican City state administration
Cardinal Francisco Javier Errázuriz Ossa, Archbishop Emeritus of Santiago, Chile
Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Mumbai, India
Cardinal Reinhard Marx, Archbishop of Munich and Freising, Germany
Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya, Archbishop of Kinshasa, Congo
Cardinal Sean Patrick O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston, USA
Cardinal George Pell, Archbishop of Sydney, Australia
Cardinal Oscar Andrés Rodríguez Maradiaga, Archbishop of Tegucigalpa, Honduras

A Stocking-Filler for a Better Christmas

Sheila Gibson

“A decent society is a society whose structures do not humiliate its members”

This is a quote from work by Avishai Margalit, who was born in 1939 and grew up in Jerusalem. He is our contemporary. He has studied and lectured widely and shares his time between USA and Jerusalem. This quote was used at a recent CCJP meeting in Croydon where we heard about the Sydney Alliance from a visiting speaker, Sr Maribeth Larkin from USA. (The Sydney Alliance is a group of people who work at bringing forth better systems at a local level).

But what of this specific quote which totally absorbed me: **“A decent society is a society whose structures do not humiliate its members”**.

With Christmas racing closer towards our society, right now might be a good time to reflect upon what we are trying to achieve, to identify our aims and get our nautical vessel of activity on course. Otherwise we won't arrive in the right port. “Peace on earth and good will to all” would be a good starting place, straight from the heart of our Christian Scriptures. With fresh eyes perhaps we could explore the essence of Margalit's words.

“A decent society is a society whose structures do not humiliate its members”. It is great to aim high, to have high ideals as long as we are grounded in reality. Perhaps this is why the concept of a **“decent”** society can be appealing. It could be within our grasp to be decent, to be acceptable, to be fair and just, “to do unto others as you would have them do unto you”. We are not aiming for equality of wealth, but for the opportunity for all people to have dignity in life and to have a place to stand in, in the community.

At least we can give it a go and, if we fail, it won't kill us. It's not as if we have fallen off the highest rung of a tall ladder. We can start all over again with our sights set on a decent society. We have a poetic quote in our Scriptures about a **utopian** situation when the lion will lie down with the lamb. That's just not going to happen in reality – unless one of those animals stops doing what comes naturally. That **concept** is meant to be **poetic**; our poetic minds probably get the general idea. With Margalit we are into **philosophy**! We are trying to be a decent society.

As Catholics we probably have a good idea of what a society is all about because we have our Eucharistic Celebration with **Comm-union** at the heart of our liturgy. We profess to be a society, a group of people with an appreciation of each of the members. We support each other; we share our joy and grief.

In a broader area, our National Anthem reminds us that we are “Australians all”. We currently include other members into our concept of a global society when we sign certain documents with the United Nations Organisation. We profess to unite people rather than divide them. It's not about rich/poor, good/evil. We try to focus on the whole of society, all of it originally quivering with the life of God. Hopefully, a decent society is a group of people aware of their own dignity and the dignity of others.

Structures and organisations are important in society to bring order out of chaos. This is their true purpose. For the benefit of the people. Sometimes we get off course! Indeed. Some organisations do it better than others. Every so often we take stock as a society, complain loudly, hold enquiries, evaluate, blame and call for change. We seem to sense when our institutions need tweaking or a radical pruning. Any institution that humiliates its members has problems.

If I have an issue with Margalit's quote it is the final phrase: **“Not humiliate its members”**. It is expressed as a negative idea, something that should not be done. Remember the well-known version of the Ten Commandments telling us the long list of the “thou shalt not's”? Perhaps we can now add “thou shalt not humiliate people”. I would have preferred the Beatitudes' style, “Blessed are they that affirm the dignity and self-esteem of all people”. **However I would hesitate to challenge a philosopher**. I suspect the word “humiliate” is so powerful and emotive that it simply HAD to be used. It can hit our gut and really get our attention. It can shame us, tear off our masks of respectability, and bring forth empathy for the vulnerable and marginalised. Perhaps we need a real shake up to bring out the best within us, to get us on a right path in our journey towards “peace and goodwill”, towards a decent society.

Hopefully your own philosophical and spiritual reflection on Margalit's words might bring forth something enlightening to make this Christmas a key experience in your life. Perhaps it could serve as a mantra during Advent, as an accompaniment to all the hustle and bustle, preparation and socialising.

Sheila Gibson is a committed catholic parishioner in the Sydney Archdiocese. B Theology Graduate of CTU Hunters Hill. Married with family.

CROSSING THE DIVIDE

On the Ecumenical Journey

Bernard Thorogood

As an old Uniting Church friend of the ARC, I appreciate the ecumenical spirit of many articles in ARCVOICE. It is now about 60 years since I was introduced to the Ecumenical Movement; it has been one of the themes of my ministry, achievements and disappointments included.

I have come to see that the unity of the Church is not a target which we aim at and hit with a chorus of 'We've made it', but rather a constant process towards the Kingdom of God. The process may be slow and handicapped by our prejudices, fears and misunderstandings, but it will persist since it is the work of the Holy Spirit to bind us together into one body. Resigning from the Ecumenical Council does not help. It is not for us to act as the judges of history, and there surely have been good, conscientious reasons for some of the sad divisions of the People of God. But the *koinonia*, the common life, the 'all nations', the wholeness, the healing community – that is where the prayer of Christ leads us.

At the primary level we discover that some things are better done together. Action to serve the needy in times of crisis does not need a denominational flag, but the application of all our resources. Appeals to Governments are more effective if we have a united voice. The high cost of using the mass media leads us to share the burden. The expert study of the biblical text is a common task. And pastoral care, as described in the article about Lucerne in ARCvoice 49, may be offered more adequately if we are together.

Probing a little deeper, I am very conscious of how narrowly most of us approach the abiding mysteries of our being. Why do we not learn from each other? I am confident that God does not offer the truths of eternity on a denominational basis. Every Uniting Church Synod should have a Catholic member, ready to remind us of the gifts which that tradition has to share. Every Vatican congregation should, as a matter of fellowship, have a Protestant and an Orthodox participant. The more the Catholic Church emphasises its catholicity, the greater its need to listen to other disciples of Christ. A Japanese

theologian, Kosuke Koyama, has written that Christianity has 'a teacher complex', always ready to tell others what to do but pathetically unable to listen. Yet we are all pupils in the school of Christ.

I wonder now, after quite a long innings, whether we do not all need to take human history more seriously. Human life has changed both inwardly and outwardly since the first century AD. We can no longer think in the language of the ancient texts, nor can we view the world and the human place in it as those writers could. We have come to know the multi-faith human family, in its fragility and its promise. We know that there are millions of people living good, honest, generous lives without any belief in Christ or even any religious belief at all. We cannot consign them all to hell, as much of the church tradition would do.

In the same way, the causes of our divisions mostly belong to history rather than to critical issues for today. I was brought up in the Congregational tradition in England. That tradition honoured the struggle for religious freedom in 17th century Europe. All the claims, made then by martyrs, have long been accepted in public life. Methodism stood for the power of the Spirit to move and guide the church to win the hearts and serve the needs of the disadvantaged in 18th century England. Those concerns are now common to all the Churches and many are written into the Welfare State. Pope Francis is not Pius IX. The Archbishop of Canterbury awarded me, a nonconformist, a DD. Nearly half the ordinands in the Church of England are women. The medieval synthesis is no more. We are called to live in our times and discover how better we may serve Christ in this fractured world

So I find that the old arguments between the churches do not engage me now, but I long to see how we can together face the critical issues of today. How is this for a start to the agenda:

- how can we together work for peace and freedom of religion in a world where fanaticism is a pressing danger?
- how is the life and death of Jesus Christ significant for the unemployed in Barcelona, the rice farmers of Taiwan, the single mother in Johannesburg, and can we express this in simple language?
- what possible form would the Church take if it became truly catholic and embraced all the lovely diversities of the followers of Christ within one fellowship?

I continue to be thankful for all who have shared the ecumenical journey with me, from Indian bishops to Polynesian pastors and Orthodox scholars. What good things God has in store for all who walk in faith and in fellowship. In spite of our stumbling journey, there will indeed be one Holy Table open to all who follow Jesus Christ.

Bernard Thorogood was ordained in 1952 and served in the Cook Islands and the Gilbert Islands (Kiribati) with the London Missionary Society 1953 to 1970. From 1970 to 1980 he was the General Secretary of the Mission Society, which became the Council for World Mission. 1980 to 1992 General Secretary of the United Reformed Church in the UK. Chairman of the British Council of Churches 1983 to 1991. Member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches 1980/1990. Retired 1992 and settled with his Australian wife in Pymble as a minister of the Uniting Church.

Sexuality and The Role of Sisyphus (Part II)

Gideon Goosen

Some time ago I wrote a segment for ARC on Sexuality and the Role of Sisyphus. This is Part II. Sisyphus was a Greek mythological king whose punishment was to push a huge boulder up the mountain.

Margaret Farley is the new Sisyphus. She has joined the number of Catholic scholars calling for a revision of the sexual ethics. She follows in the line of advocates for change such as McNeil, Kosnik, Keane, Curran, Salzman, and Lawler and others. Her book is *Just Love: A Framework for Christian Ethics* by Continuum. The book first saw the light of day in 2006 but in 2012 it was reprinted five times! That says something about it!

The Vatican response to her book when it first came out was: this is not Catholic teaching. And her retort was: it was never intended to be! It is an attempt to probe the meaning of sexuality and how it has changed over the years and to suggest a framework for determining sexual ethics. Even the Vatican has changed a teeny weeny bit over time when it dropped the talk about the “primary aim” of marriage as the raising of children and also when it quietly dropped some of the biblical references it used to cite as an argument against homosexuality. However, the official Catholic teaching is still bound to old anthropologies.

Farley systematically develops in the course of six chapters, six norms for just sex. They are: 1) Do no unjust harm, 2) Free Consent, 3) Mutuality, 4) Equality,

5) Commitment, 6) Fruitfulness, and 7) Social Justice. These are very helpful and could be used as a guideline for young and old. Other than theologians who will consider them, discussion of these norms would be very appropriate in high school when sexuality and relationships are discussed, or in marriage preparation courses.

Let me give one example of the gems in this book. There is an intriguing section on theories of the body (p. 111ff). There are theories that separate body and soul (dualism) and those that see the human as one entity with two distinguishable parts (monism). Dualistic theories have dominated Christianity where the soul is valued over the body. Says Farley: “It is easy to see how such dualisms have influenced the moral evaluation of sex” (p. 114).

There is an informative section (Chapter 7) on family, homosexuality and divorce and remarriage. Farley considers new information (and old taboos) from all quarters – philosophical, theological as well as sociological and scientific. I look forward to the Catholic Church’s re-visiting these areas under the leadership of Pope Francis!

Gideon Goosen is a Sydney-based theologian. He is editor of a book on receptive ecumenism, *The Gift of Each Other: Learning from Other Christians*, NSWEC 2013.

ACCCR

Australian Reforming Catholics have agreed to join forces with Australian Catholic Coalition for Church Renewal (ACCCR), with whom we share the same hopes for a better Church. We look forward to advising members of further developments in this relationship.

How much will Pope Francis change the culture of the Church?

Emmy Silvius

The writings and discussions that have reached us since the election of Pope Francis have been quite overwhelming to say the least – particularly the sense of jubilation and optimism that Jorge Mario Bergoglio could possibly be the one to bring about the reforms that the Second Vatican Council alerted us to all those years ago.

Back in March of this year I was often asked how I felt about this new Pope and I must admit that my opinion diverged somewhat from what the media and many others were expressing in their writings and conversations. My initial response was: ‘He seems like a humble man and it is great to see him distancing himself from some of the pomp and ceremony that normally befits his office, but as far as I’m concerned words are not enough. Time will tell if he indeed is able to act on what he apparently expresses.’

Of course, time is relative. How much time is required to bring about radical change within such a top-heavy authoritative male-driven institution? Well, I suspect quite a few years. So why put pen to paper when the Pope has only been ‘on the throne’ for less than a year? The reason is that amongst this current euphoria I feel urged to express words of caution. We really need to keep in mind that Francis is one man amongst a whole legion of men who run the Vatican office. These other men have been chosen by previous conservative Popes for their convictions, and I dare say those convictions are most likely well and truly set in stone.

Admittedly, there are many positives about the words and actions coming from the Pontiff thus far and quite a bit has already been written about these, so I will move my focus to what in my view is (still) missing. On top of my list is the issue of justice when it comes to the equal rights of women in our Church. There are many concerns, one of which is of course the topic of female priests. However, Pope Francis seems unwilling to

participate in any form of dialogue regarding this issue. During his now infamous interview with journalists after World Youth Day he said: ‘On the question of the ordination of women, the church has spoken and said no. John Paul II, in a definitive formulation, said that door is closed.’^[1]

What I don’t understand is how a statement by one man (John Paul II) can be accepted as the one and only correct (or should I say: infallible) statement when all other matters appear to be ‘up for discussion’? Could it be that this issue has simply been placed in the ‘too hard basket’ because it is such a controversial topic? I hope that in the near future Francis will find the courage to embrace controversial issues. In that regard, he could take a leaf out of Bishop John Shelby Spong’s book.^[2] For example, Spong did not shy away from controversy by ordaining gay clergy and blessing same-sex marriages or having a female presiding Bishop, Katharine Jefferts Schori, the first woman elected to lead a national church in the Anglican Communion.^[3]

Regarding our Pope’s response to questions about the role of women in the Church, during the same interview onboard the plane, he perhaps aims to soften his earlier comment by explaining that he is open to investigating the issue (read: the role of women in the Church – not priesthood) further:

It is necessary to broaden the opportunities for a stronger presence of women in the church. I am wary of a solution that can be reduced to a kind of ‘female machismo’, because a woman has a different make-up than a man. But what I hear about the role of women is often inspired by an ideology of machismo. Women are asking deep questions that must be addressed.^[4]

What are the questions that Pope Francis is referring to? Is this an off-the-cuff remark or has he indeed been speaking to a variety of women on this issue and taken to heart what they are saying? I am not aware of any direct consultations having taken place. However, it is of course possible that he is basing his views on meetings he may have had prior to taking on the most senior role in the Catholic Church.

I have to agree wholeheartedly on one issue in relation to women and that is that the role of women cannot be that of replicating the male. This simply would not work and go against the genuine nature of women who wish to serve their faith community as true followers of Christ. Yet what the Pope means by this comment and what I mean could well be worlds apart.

My concern is that in the culture of machismo, the idealised woman is submissive, conservative, family-centred – the exact opposite of many characteristics of the macho gender role.

My thinking would be to look at the wonderful qualities and gifts women have and to cultivate and channel these gifts in such a way that women can freely and unapologetically be themselves while in service of the wider Church. Would this ideal entail a woman to clothe herself in robes similar to what we see male priests wearing today? Would it mean that once a woman takes on a priestly role that the congregation needs to adhere to her policies? Would the woman feel that in order to be non-submissive she needs to be dictatorial? I would sincerely hope not as that would not alleviate many of the issues that church-goers currently struggle with.

What is the role of a priest today?

This then brings me to the big question of how we interpret the priesthood today. What does it mean to function as a priest in the type of communities that people are yearning for? What, if anything, can the priest – male or female – bring to enhance a person's spirituality and help them to grow in faith, which in turn will enable them to become even more valued citizens whatever their status in society? With this latter I mean that a faith-filled valued member of a church community will be able to freely share their joy and freedom with everyone around them thanks to a nurturing faith community which has given them the space to search and question rather than be told what to think. Members of these communities will no doubt be able to live a kind and compassionate life because they have touched the fundamentals of who they are and their sense of purpose on this earth.

I think it would be beneficial for all spiritual leaders to hear from a variety of people what qualities they seek in their priest/spiritual leader. Perhaps this can be further discussed on the *Catholica* forum?

I suspect that one of the top priorities will be that their faith leader be more pastoral rather than dictatorial. I doubt we would like to have leaders determine who's in and who's out. Perhaps if nothing else, our new Pope has given us the sense that we can deliberate and speak out and, dare I say, be controversial in doing so? In light of this, I'd like to end this commentary with words by John Shelby Spong when looking back on some of the changes he has been able to bring about:

'It was really a very exciting time', he said of the fight for rights for gays and women. 'That battle was very controversial. But that battle is so over today. That battle is won.'

Yet, while he finds the victory deeply satisfying, he says he doesn't take personal pride in this tectonic shift.

'I was simply interpreting a rising consciousness. Whether it was race or women or homosexual people, the issue was always the same: fighting against anything that dehumanizes a child of God on the basis of an external characteristic.'

Regarding speaking out, the pope also suggests (and I couldn't agree with him more in this regard):

'Being prophets may sometimes imply making waves. I do not know how to put it.... Prophecy makes noise, uproar, some say 'a mess.' But in reality, the charism of religious people is like yeast: prophecy announces the spirit of the Gospel.'

May we, together with Spirit Sophia, whip up a storm of change and ride high on those massive waves!

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] John L. Allen Jr, NCR 29 July 2013 "Aboard The Papal Plane" Accessed 28/09/2013
- [2] John Shelby "Jack" Spong (born June 16, 1931) is a retired American bishop of the Episcopal Church. From 1979 to 2000 he was Bishop of Newark (based in Newark, New Jersey). He is a Protestant liberal Christian theologian, religion commentator and author. He calls for a fundamental rethinking of Christian belief away from theism and traditional doctrines. The Episcopal Church in the United States is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion. The Episcopal Church describes itself as being "Protestant, yet Catholic".
- [3] David Gibson, NCR 12 October 2013 "An aging maverick, Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong has no regrets". Accessed 13/10/2013
- [4] Antonio Spadaro, SJ, AMERICA The National Catholic Review, 30 September 2013 "A Big Heart Open To God", Accessed 30/10/2013

Emmy Silvius has a Degree in Theology (Melbourne College of Divinity), is a founding member of Catholics for Renewal, and has a passion for social justice.

Part two

We need to re-think the Creation story mythology!

Kevin Treston

continuation from ARCvoice No. 49

A re-interpretation of the Genesis origin mythology ...

From the perspective of evolutionary science, this book considers an interpretation of the Genesis origin myth as a sacred story of the Emergence of human consciousness on the great journey of enlightenment and not exclusively interpreted as a Fall from a graced life. The evolutionary journey of the human species is told within the overarching evolutionary story of the universe.

The theme of Emergence is explored at two complementary levels. At one level is the evolutionary emergence of human consciousness and cultural change. At another level there is the growing interest in the science of Emergence where new modes of being that are fundamentally different from what has come before come into existence. New, unpredictable properties emerge from other elements which are at a lower level of existence. The science of Emergence has far reaching implications for how a new paradigm of the Christ story might be composed.

In the book there are many references to scientific information. Rather than expound on a diversity of scientific theories, I have chosen those findings distilled from a general consensus of scientific evidence.

The inspiration for the book arose from my own thinking and research on reconciling the traditional literal interpretation of the Genesis origin myth and its subsequent context on the Christian story with the findings of modern evolutionary science. The very idea of God punishing all humankind for all time because of a purported primal moral failing by Adam and Eve simply beggars belief. Likewise, there is surely a problem with the belief that each child is born into a state of

original sin instead of beliefs about a child born into a world that is characterised by what is both beautiful and morally flawed.

An added motivation for me in composing this book was reflections on the pastoral experiences of people involved in the communication of the Christian story. Those teaching theology, religious education teachers in schools and colleges, RCIA catechists and people in adult life and faith education groups struggle to communicate the teachings that are specified in the Catechism of the Catholic Church about the Fall myth, original sin and the nature of Christ's redemptive mission. The literalism of the official interpretation of the Genesis myth is at variance with the insights of evolutionary science. Any religion must be faithful in its pursuit of truth; otherwise it lacks credibility in communicating its message.

A basic contention in the book is that Christianity, with its core belief in the incarnation, must take evolution seriously and communicate its beliefs within an evolutionary framework. Evolution is perhaps the most important scientific movement in the last 150 years.

My special interest during over fifty years of ministry in many countries is for practical rather than academic theology. My abiding concern in theology is: how does the Christian story impact on the life journeys of people and the wellbeing of creation? Do the origin stories make sense within scientific consciousness and is the Christ story transformational? The problem is not with the Genesis myth itself but with the traditional literal interpretations of the myth. During the composition of this book, I have watched several TV programs on the evolution of the human species. While watching the programs on the various theories about the evolution of the human species, I found myself musing on such questions as:

I wonder what thoughtful Christians would make of this exposition of the various strands of the human species, some of which became extinct or other strands which merged to constitute the modern human species?

What does the evolutionary story of the human species mean in the light of Christian beliefs about the Adam and Eve and the Fall story?

Can a scientific understanding of the evolution of the human species be reconciled with Christian traditional teachings, especially teachings on the mission of Christ?

The book is not directed at professional theologians who have access to a plethora of resources on this topic but rather to Christians at the grassroots levels. The theme of the book is not new and has been discussed for centuries. However, I believe that it is facile to maintain that the topic is exhausted. My pastoral experience suggests that the literalism of the Adam and Eve Fall story and the literalism generally in how dogma are communicated are still firmly entrenched in the lives of ordinary Christians. The many references in the liturgy to the Fall tradition and Christ rectifying the consequences of the Fall attest to its enduring presence in Christian worship and theology.

The word 'evolution' is not even mentioned in the Catechism...

What is quite disturbing for Catholics is that the Catechism of the Catholic Church simply ignores the issue and seems oblivious to the findings of modern evolutionary science in its teachings on the Genesis myth. The word 'evolution' does not appear in the 803 pages of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. To understand the reluctance of the official

church to engage in the challenges of evolution to its teachings, one needs to appreciate the daunting enterprise of developing a new theological paradigm. An alternative interpretation to the myth as a Fall from grace to an interpretation of Emergence of the human species would open a veritable Pandora's box of theological issues, especially those relating to Christology (a study of Jesus as Christ). However, the option of holding the line on traditional teachings about the Fall is less and less tenable within contemporary scientific consciousness.

Three authors have been very significant in influencing my own thinking on this topic. The works of Adrian Smith [d 2011], Thomas Berry [d 2010] and a recent work by Jack Mahoney SJ have enriched my understanding of Christianity and evolution. After I had completed the first draft of the text, I became aware of *Christianity in Evolution: An Exploration* by Jack Mahoney. I would highly recommend this work for those who wish to further pursue the themes of this book. The resources listed in my book point to the growing interest in this topic and have been invaluable to me in composing the text.

Republished on *Catholica* with permission of Kevin Treston & Mosaic Press

Film Review:

In Bob We Trust

Christopher Geraghty

In Bob We Trust begins with Father Bob's potted version of the history of the Roman Catholic Church. Five minutes of fun and irreverent theology. Over two thousand years passing in the blink of an eye. Then Father Bob, assisted by his sinister chess opponent, John Safron in the guise of the Angel of Death, gets down to more serious business – an old priest's herculean struggle with an ecclesiastical dragon in Melbourne – the iron institution led by Archbishop Denis Hart and his mob. The story is a hoot.

The Father Bob in whom we trust is a bit mad – but so are John Safron and Denis Hart. In fact most of the characters in the film, with the exception of a couple of faithful canine companions, Franklin and Rosie, are at least a little off the planet. But unlike Hart, who is endowed with the shape and gravitas of a Renaissance

prelate, Bob is also a little touched in a special way – touched by the Spirit of God, touched by the message of the Jesus Gospel, with compassion for the poor, the smelly, the homeless, the unwashed and underprivileged. Father Bob had been running the parish of South Melbourne for nearly forty years, opening the church doors every morning, closing them at night, greeting all comers, welcoming the dwarfs, feeding the hungry. But the Archdiocese uptown wanted to get rid of him, the sooner the better, hopefully without any fuss. An embarrassment. A trouble-maker. He was making them all look ridiculous, poking fun at them, talking to people in the street, showing them up, enjoying himself and doing in South Melbourne what they should have been doing throughout the Archdiocese. So he was “invited to retire” despite the fact that he was in rude health and there was a serious pastoral crisis caused by a dramatic fall-away of vocations to the priesthood.

Pressure was applied. Questions were asked of Father Bob at the Cathedral touching the very heart of the Gospel message. The book-keepers suspected maladministration. Father Bob's pastoral shadow, his black poodle, was probably being fed off the parish

account. Wasting church funds. The Cathedral's Captain Queeg was on the trail of a clerical mutineer. Strawberries were being counted by the men in charge while the boat was floundering.

This movie is funny, sometimes very funny, so you'll need to take your laughing gear along to the cinema with you. It is also challenging, even confronting, especially for any practising Catholic. It captures the conflict at the heart of modern Christian institutions – the struggle between property and power, money and influence, pomp and circumstance on the one hand, and a glorious message of service, inclusion and love, especially to the poor and downtrodden. But my overall reaction was one of profound sadness. How blind and stupid those at the controls can be!

Father Bob was obviously a good man doing a good job for his Church in the parish of South Melbourne. The people loved him. His life and mission were transparently, obviously allied to the Gospel and to Jesus. He was a Melbourne, perhaps even a national, identity in a way Archbishop Hart was not, and could never be. He was a priest all Catholics could be proud of. He was the best of us. So why close him down? Why cut off his arms and legs, and take him out of circulation? It was silly, in anyone's language – just stupid. He provided an opportunity to focus the community's mind on the values of the Gospel and on the real work of the institution. At the very least, he could have continued his work as a priest in the parish, a consultant, gradually training others in the real work of the Church, handing over to them, watching his work thrive. But no – a rare opportunity lost. Let the faceless ones work until they drop, but for heaven's sake, let's get rid of this one. He's having too much fun.

A similar story in Sydney...

Archbishop Hart's mentor and powerbroker had done the same when he had bumbled into Sydney, fresh and uninvited from Melbourne. No consultation. No warning. Appointed from the other side of the world, in the dead of night. A stranger from out of town.

Like a craggy, crazy prophet, Father Ted Kennedy had worked wonders in his parish. He had transformed his Redfern presbytery into a drop-in centre for

Aboriginal people from the city, from the country areas of New South Wales and around Australia. Everyone was welcomed. He had lived and shared with his black brothers and sisters, baptised and buried them, welcomed those in trouble, visited them in prison, nursed their babies, put his arms around them and loved them. The parish looked unkempt but it was in truth a centre of excellence. It had huge potential to project the image of a different world to Sydney-siders at large. A constant reminder of what we could be, of our better selves.

The Redfern community needed someone with pure eyes to see what they were doing, to encourage them, to give them space, to continue Father Ted's work after a stroke had crushed him. But no. Another rare opportunity wasted. Captain Queeg's work is never complete. George Pell could have been the toast of his new domain, a champion of the poor in tinsel town, a visionary, a new Dan Mannix-type for the aboriginal people of Sydney and Australia. Instead, the narrow-minded, ultra-conservative, anal-retentive and culturally foreign Neo-Cats took over the parish, with a mission to destroy all that Father Ted had done with thirty years of his life and more. A tragedy. A golden opportunity missed again, and the Church is suffering. Dumb.

When will they ever learn?

When will they ever learn to trust the Spirit, to trust the people, to trust people like Father Bob?

Of course, they are only institutional men, elected to office by the organisation because they possess the qualities most valued by the organisation – obedience, loyalty, submission. Trained team players who will not rock the boat.

But the good news is that the team has a new coach who wants to play the game in a different way. A new style. Playing on the front foot. More panache. More risks. Playing to win and, even though they are rare, using the gifted players. Bob and Ted, living and working today, would be Pope Francis's strikers playing the full eighty minutes, playing till they drop, while Denis and George, given their present form, should be on the bench – or in the stands. □

Published in *Catholica* 07 Nov 2013

(NB: Publication in a parish newsletter was refused on the grounds that any criticism of the Church and the hierarchy may upset some of the parishioners!)

Displacing Jesus from the Centre!

Terry Herbert MSC

The author's response to Cardinal Pell's critique of 'charism' in religious life, demonstrating that his experience of the charism of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart priests has drawn him to a deep intimate relationship with Jesus who is the hub of all life:

'.....even in regular Christian formation Christ is too often displaced from the centre, His hard teachings obscured or neglected. While disinterest is usually the greater problem, we have a whole range of alternatives, e.g. the charism of the founder ...'
(Cardinal Pell: *The Snag*, Winter 2013, p.16)

If I were a younger man, George, I'd probably invite the formation of a (very) large cumulo-nimbus cloud to rain down fire and brimstone we mellow, so I'll simply try to elaborate on what is so central in the lives of us Religious. And anyway, it's too dry for such a huge (or even any!) cloud, at present.

A Charism is a gift of the spirit, totally undeserved, a beautiful surprise, freely given, discerned over time to impel one to seek life in a particular religious congregation and now, after 50 years as a professed Missionary of the Sacred Heart, I'm realising a little better just how this Charism colours my whole life and ministry and relationships; that it's not mine, but a gift to be shared with all whom I meet or minister-to, honed ever so subtly over time, in prayer, reflection and retreats, and always attracting constant, also subtle, personal conversion.

A Charism is a particular way of looking at Jesus....a bit like the spokes of a wheel. The spokes represent the many Charisms of different Congregations, all focussing on Jesus at the Centre (hub). I repent of using the pronoun 'it' in the same breath as 'charism'; like referring to sex as 'it' ... having 'it'! We're referring to an intimate personal life-giving and open-to-life relationship (between marrieds). Likewise, a Charism is really a deep, intimate life-receiving life-giving relationship with Jesus, expressed in ways unique to each Congregation.

A few years ago, at the Diocesan Mass for Religious, the Bishop remarked with great enthusiasm, that 'the wonderful variety of Charisms are a great enrichment for the Church of the Diocese'. There are about 28 Religious Congregations in our Diocese.

So all these similar but distinct ways of living are distinct ways of believing in, or being-in-love-with Jesus, deepened in one's personal prayer, and expressed in one's love, acceptance-of, all the people to whom one is privileged to minister. As well, the Cross of Jesus is central, in one's self-sacrificing love, body given, life

poured-out, time-invested, in the people we serve. Since a Charism is about a deep, personal, intimate relationship with Jesus, it offers the one so gifted a gentle way of growing into its spirit; for an MSC, reflecting more and more, something of the compassion, gentleness, hospitality, humour, forgiveness, patience ... and the other 'faces' of love, revealed in the Heart of Jesus; to 'be on earth the Heart of God'. The Zacchaeus story on Sunday 3 November beautifully reveals the Heart of Jesus in action. Nowadays, I realise that the many people who are or have been part of a congregation's Charism, have literally 'caught' much of its spirit, and are living it so much better than I, as is often the case with all gifts shared.

In our first year of training (Novitiate ...1962, for myself) we were well-educated in the spirit and life of our Congregation, when introduced to our (MSC) Constitutions: for example, that our lives (as MSC) are to reflect 'a sincere and fervent love of the Incarnate Word', 'the pierced heart of Christ is the sign of the incarnate love of God', 'when he laid down his life, when his side was opened, he gave us his Spirit, who pours love into our hearts and gives us the will to serve'. Have I/we got it wrong that the 'Charism of the founder' doesn't focus on Jesus as the centre of our lives?

All the many other Religious Congregations could likewise expand on their respective Charisms, much better than I have tried.

Yes, George, the 'charism of the founder' deeply and intimately centres on Jesus and as him crucified (but also risen). We are all invited likewise, to reveal 'Christ shown suffering', to reflect the glory of God on the face of Christ, to resonate with the charisms of the many we meet, to recognise our equality with all other people, sacred persons deserving the greatest respect and courtesy, who (also) are graced at the core or heart of their being, with the beautiful spirit of Jesus in all 'its' variety. □

Can We Save the Catholic Church?

Eric Hodgens

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. Dickens understood the dilemma. And so does that cohort of priests ordained between 1950 and 1975. They were ordained clerics but ended up anti-clerical. They were ordained servants of the doctrine and the law, but they soon morphed into real pastors. They discerned the core of the Gospel which they preached in everyday language, not church speak. They learned quickly that the Sabbath was made for man and that the law was our servant. They learned to love their quirky flocks, understood that life was messy, spoke to them with meaning, walked with them through life's maze and celebrated with them their lives' peak events.

Their seminary training had not helped them much. Most went in as boys and came out as boys. The quick learning curve was as young priests. They learned on the job from their elders, peers and experience. Unprepared, they nevertheless came to terms with superimposed celibacy one way or another.

It was Vatican II which made the difference. Liturgy became a living celebration rather than an awful mystery-rite. Homilies applied the Gospel of love, inclusiveness, mercy and forgiveness to life today. The people, not the hierarchy, were "the Church". The priest was now the conductor of the orchestra, not the solo performer. Father became Tom, Dick or Harry to his parishioners. As clerical dominance gave way to servant leadership, the Roman collar became the attire of the formal occasion. The laity were also enthused. They became more energised and involved. They joined in the renewed liturgy and parish pastoral life. Many did pastoral training and studies in scripture and theology. Catholic schools grew in numbers, quality and support. No wonder that personal questionnaires always show this cohort to have had high job satisfaction. It was the best of times. But was everything rosy? Not really.

Paul VI started putting the brakes on Vatican II. The 200 nay-sayers at the Council still had power in the Roman Curia. They had his ear. They knew that the most effective way to keep power was through the appointment of like-minded bishops. Paul made an example of the Dutch bishops by appointing anti-conciliar men to Dutch sees as they became vacant.

Then, in 1968 *Humanae Vitae* showed the world the new direction Rome was taking. The Church was split into reformers and restorationists. The Restoration Winter of John Paul II and Benedict XVI began in 1978. It lasted 35 years. 35 years of appointment of Rome-compliant bishops and cardinals. 35 years of Roman ideology and rules which priests and laity at large either did not understand or disagreed with. The reformers were the bigger group, but the restorationists had the power. This cohort of priests had experienced the full cycle – the awakening 60s, the exciting 70s, the suspicious 80s, the depressing 90s and now the imploding noughties. It became the worst of times.

The grass roots Church was in trouble. Mass attendance dropped; affiliation weakened. The ideological doctrinal fights were of no interest to the average parishioner. What Rome was saying did not speak of a God they recognised. And the rules preoccupying Rome appeared unreal. Women HAD to be treated as equal to men. Divorce was a major reality in today's culture. Sex was now liberating – and liberated from the embarrassing shame of the past. IVF was now a positive possibility. Celibacy looked like an odd hangover from the past. A significant percentage of the population was homosexual – a fact that society and the Church must accept and deal with.

While the hierarchy demonised this new awareness as secularism and relativism many priests found themselves thinking like their laity. As bishops painted themselves into a Roman corner they became even less relevant. Many priests found them an embarrassment, could not respect them and quietly went their own way. Life was still pastorally rewarding and emotionally satisfying in the parish. Just ignore central office. But could the Church be saved?

Unexpectedly we got a new pope. His doctrinal background is conservative but his approach is pastoral. He sees ideology as a disease – ideology which had been a pre-requisite for promotion under John Paul and Benedict. He dislikes obsessing about rules. He wants to meet people where they are and asks, "who am I to judge?". He has set in train a review of the curia – firstly by his group of eight cardinals – but planning to get in outside experts as well.

He has modelled a simpler lifestyle and called to account the Ratzinger-trained and promoted bishop of Limburg for extravagant, non-transparent expenditure. The old-boy network had failed again. Is Domus Australia next? Nobody knows how much it cost. Tess Livingstone says m\$35 while Paul Barry suggests m\$85+.

Next Hans Kung publishes the English translation of his book *Can We Save the Catholic Church?* He names most of the problems. Like the new pope, he sees the need for a pastoral approach to the issues of contraception, divorce, sexuality (including homosexuality), abortion and the status of women. He sees a need for appointment on merit, not the old-boy network. Restrain the ideological New Movements.

Bring transparency to finances. Introduce due process. Eliminate all repression. And in that vein he believes that the Inquisition should be abolished, not reformed.

Can we save the Catholic Church? It is still an open question. The 1950-1975 cohort is still hoping.

Published with permission of the author

Priest defrocked and excommunicated

Extract from article by Stuart Rintoul
in *The Good Weekend* (9.11.13)

Fr Greg Reynolds received his excommunication from the Catholic Church... It is written in Latin, a language he never learnt, it comes from the Congregatio Pro Doctrina Fidei (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, formerly known as the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition) and carries the authority of Summus Pontifex Franciscus, Papa (Pope Francis).

It convicts him of heresy (Canons 751 and 1364) and blasphemy (Canon 1369), which he has been told relate to his support for the ordination of women and his celebration of the Eucharist after his priestly faculties were withdrawn, and excommunicates him in accordance with Canon 1367, which refers to a person who “throws away the consecrated species or takes or retains them for a sacrilegious purpose”, which appears to relate to a strange incident where a dog received communion. [An old man in the congregation shared his host with his dog – nothing to do with Greg!]

He shakes his head and says he feels like an ant who has been hit by a hammer. “How can they, who are so big and so powerful, be so frightened of me?” He notes that paedophile priests have been defrocked, but not excommunicated: “How can they see this as so much more serious than that?”



Greg Reynolds - defrocked and excommunicated “for the good of the church”

Letter to the Editor

The Good Weekend, 30.11.2013

I am not a Catholic, but had the pleasure of meeting Greg Reynolds briefly in recent years at an inter-denominational and special event. It was clear then that I had met a man of God, someone for people from all walks of life and religious backgrounds. As an outsider to the faith, I have to say how deeply saddened I am to hear that the Catholic Church has excommunicated this much-loved priest over issues concerning his support for the ordination of women, among other matters. I would have thought that these days churches can ill-afford to lose such good souls.

*Judith Caine
Dovale, Vic*

A message for ARC Members:

Email is a vital resource for us to keep in touch with members and it is important that we have accurate, up-to-date e-addresses. If you have changed your address since registration, or have recently connected to the Internet, please let Rob Brian know on robertfbrian@gmail.com

Thank you.

A Country Too Far: Writings on Asylum Seekers

edited by Rosie Scott and Tom Keneally

review: *The Guardian*

We have been playing political word games over the bodies of asylum seekers in Australia lately. On the day I pick up *A Country Too Far: Writings on Asylum Seekers*, the new minister for immigration and border control, Scott Morrison, ordered his department to use the word ‘illegals’ rather than asylum seekers to describe those who arrive on our shores seeking refuge. It does not matter that they have broken no law.

Many Australians reject the word ‘illegal’ that inspires antagonism and misleads. On the other hand, I also disliked the Labor government’s press releases that flowed from its Department of Immigration and Citizenship’s 24-hour digital newsroom. The last one, issued just before the old department was disappeared by the new government, confirmed the ‘transfer’ of the 19th group of ‘irregular maritime arrivals’ to Nauru. On arrival, the imprisoned were called ‘clients’, a word that conveys a notion of choice, although the experience of indefinite detention is the opposite.

Now press releases have ceased in favour of weekly updates by the minister for ‘Operation Sovereign Borders’. Apart from that there is silence.

Words can demonise and they can sanitise. They can manipulate and they can normalise abuse. But words can also capture the essence of experience, send a message about shared humanity and express anger at injustice. This is the purpose of *A Country Too Far*, an anthology of short stories, book extracts, poems and essays edited by Thomas Keneally and Rosie Scott, both of whom are also among the 27 contributors to the book.

It is a powerful collective statement from a group of writers who Scott describes in her introduction as accepting invitations to participate ‘immediately with enthusiasm’ and a ‘community and generosity’ she found inspiring. One purpose of the book is to speak into political silence. As contributor Geraldine Brooks writes: ‘There is an ugly brilliance to this silencing ... If the truth is silenced, lies can fill the space. And this is what has happened.’

Other contributors include novelists Debra Adelaide, Kim Scott, Anna Funder, poets Judith Rodriguez and Ouyang Yu, and philosopher Raymond Gaita. There are some reprints of older pieces, such as Judith Wright’s account of her failure to assist a young Jewish friend who was desperate to leave Hungary before the Second World War: ‘I meant no harm to Andrei. That is why he haunts me. More deliberate cruelties I have forgotten.’

The strength of the book is its range of genres and depth of perspective across the past, present and even a dystopian future. There are reminders of the contradictions of Australia’s history of white occupation and migration, including Sue Woolfe’s story about her father who illegally left his British Navy ship – a criminal offence. He hid this secret and the truth about his poverty-stricken childhood from his family for the rest of his life.

There are pieces that remind us that fiction can bring alive intense moments where non-fiction might struggle. Rodney Hall’s description of a father’s night watch on a faltering boat ends with: ‘The cockroaches on deck are suddenly fighting uphill. The deadly clarity of space tilts its stars. A silky sheath of water folds in over the rail.’

Like most anthologies, this is a book to pass on to others who don’t necessarily share its perspective or those who do but need sustenance. But it’s also a book for holding onto and dipping into again.

A Country Too Far bears witness to a deeply felt angry dissent among a minority of Australians about our treatment of asylum seekers. Others may wonder, and we must ask ourselves what has happened to create a nation in which many of its best authors – and many others in the literary community listed as supporting the project – are so divided from Australia’s major political parties and many citizens.

In her introduction Scott asserts that the writers prove ‘through the power of their language’ that workable and compassionate ideas about this human tragedy are possible. The ideas are there, but sadly the

book cannot provide the political means or will to turn them into practice.

There is no easy political answer to Alex Miller's question about why our country, in which all of us are the beneficiaries of persisting Aboriginal generosity, can't make a few thousand desperate refugees welcome. 'Why don't we feel betrayed and shamed as Australians and as human beings by the cruel and inhuman treatment our government is meting out to refugees?' he asks.

Funder writes in a short introduction to extracts from her novel *All That I Am* that it emerged out of the 'personal disillusion, bordering on despair' that she felt about Australia's treatment of asylum seekers. This book meets disillusionment and despondency head-on,

in ways that tap into hope. We cannot leave action to the future. As Keneally reminds us, later apologies such as the one given to stolen generations 'will validate, not ease the pain' of those abused now.

A Country Too Far is part of a literary tradition in which authors attempt to face the social context in which they live. It is the role of literature to resist political word games with other words. As Rodriguez reminds us: if we accept the simple lie that asylum seekers are 'illegals' who 'chose their fate', the result is 'human waste'.

Rodriguez leaves us with a final question: if we accept the invitation to silence, what words should then be used to describe us?

RECOMMENDED READING

The Vatican Diaries

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at the Power, Personalities and Politics at the Heart of the Catholic Church

JOHN THAVIS

Penguin Group (Australia) 2013

"One reason I wrote this book is that journalists tend to focus exclusively on the Vatican's power and its institutional impact. I wanted to chronicle the human side of the Vatican – warts and all – that makes it such a fascinating place."

John Thavis, Author

The Vatican is typically viewed as a monolithic power structure that pursues a global agenda with a unified sense of mission. John Thavis, who covered the Vatican beat for 30 years, knows that the reality is far different. It's a place where Curia cardinals fight private wars, where leaks are common, where sex scandals simmer and where, increasingly, popes are embarrassed by their own missteps and the incompetence of their top aides.

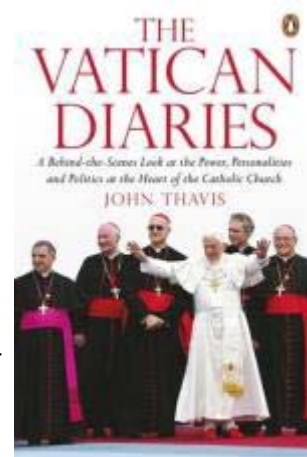
The Vatican Diaries pulls back the curtain on this surreal world. In ten chapters, it takes readers behind the scenes to meet the people who make things happen or screw things up. On several notorious issues – a religious order headed by a pedophile priest, a papal butler who smuggles documents to a reporter, the pope's

rehabilitation of a Holocaust-denying bishop – the book answers the question: "What were they thinking?"

The book's cast of characters includes little-known figures who are part of the daily Vatican drama: an archeologist battling a cardinal's parking lot, a Vatican spokesman waging an uphill battle for transparency, a papal preacher whose gaffes upstage the pope, a Jesuit who pulls every string to make Pius XII a saint. A final chapter, "The Real Benedict," describes journalists' frustrating and failed attempts to pin a persona on the enigmatic German pope.

This mosaic of true stories brings the Vatican to life. What emerges is a portrait of an institution brought repeatedly to the brink of crisis as it struggles to come to terms with the modern world.

Released in February 2013,
it became an immediate *New York Times* best-seller.



Have your say!

ARCvoice is a report of news, opinion and reflection on the renewal and reform currently experienced in the Catholic Church

Your contributions, letters, articles or comments are most welcome

The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the Editor or of ARC

Please send material to:

The Editor
ARCvoice

Unit 68/28 Curagul Road
NORTH TURRAMURRA NSW 2074

OR (preferably) email: Mknowlden@bigpond.com
Tel: 02 9488 7927

ARC Secretariat

Barbara Brannan 02 9451 7130
barbarabrannan@mac.com

Rob Brian 02 9371 8519 rbrian@vtown.com.au

John Buggy Spokesperson 02 9451 8393
jbuggy@ozemail.com.au

Alan Clague 07 3376 3879 clague@aapt.net.au

Amanda Jordan 0419 605 428
australisaj@optusnet.com.au

Margaret Knowlden Editor 02 9488 7927
mknowlden@bigpond.com

Peter Meury 02 4390 9208 petermeury@bigpond.com

Jim Taverne 02 9449 2923 jagota@ozemail.com.au

ARC Website: www.e-arc.org

contains all back copies of ARCvoice

+ indexes of subjects and authors

join the Yahoo Group

Standby Committee

(for special events)

Maureen Brian

Maureen Couch

Norma Piper



Annual subscription (from 1 July to 30 June): \$30
Concession: \$20 for Religious & Pensioners (NOT Seniors)
Renewal [] New Member []

Name

Address

..... Postcode

Telephone (....) Mobile

Fax (....) Email

Subscription \$
Donation (always welcome) \$
TOTAL \$

Payment can be made by cheque, money order, cash or by direct deposit to ARC's Westpac Account BSB 032-089 Account No. 14-7944 (Record your name at the bank and let us know)

Would you like to share in the work for ARC in any way? circle: YES / NO If yes, please let us know what you would want to do

send to ARC c/- Rob Brian
28 Lancaster Road, DOVER HEIGHTS, New South Wales 2030