



arcvoice

A Report from Australian Reforming Catholics
December 2005
Issue No. 18

EDITORIAL

How often do we stop to consider what we really believe? As we go through each prayer at Mass or special liturgy I am sure many of us wonder about whether we believe what is being expressed. But do we ever really examine it or just go through the motions because we have accepted it for quite some time?

We would like to make the assumption that readers of *Arcvoice* are concerned about what they express in liturgical prayer and how the underpinnings of their faith are presented to them. The ARC Conference in October gave those who attended it the chance to be challenged and to discuss how they would like the structures and practices of our Church to support that enquiry as illustrated by summaries of two of the conference presentations in this issue.

Some of our readers felt that we had taken the challenge too far when we published the thoughts of Bishop John Selby Spong in our last issue regarding what he found difficult to believe. Were we advocating throwing out most of what Catholics have been told to believe? We make it clear (back page) that articles do not necessarily express the position of ARC members, but we hope that readers are stimulated by what is presented. Hopefully, it will encourage us all to gain insight by further reading, since so much can now be obtained through the Internet without the expense of purchasing a lot of books.

Although recent indications, following the bishops' synod in Rome, are that conservative viewpoints dominate, it is worth reflecting on an unnoticed anniversary that occurred on November 18. This date marked forty years since the publication of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, the most forward-looking of all the documents of the Second Vatican Council. This somewhat neglected document

taught us that the scriptures are not to be read literally and that interpretation must be informed by modern science, archeology and the study of language. We may not be gaining the benefit of this in many Sunday sermons, but we should take heart that it is there. We look forward to the day when the 'events' in the Gospels are not presented in the liturgical cycle as if they were historical fact. When that day comes there will be more space created for reflection on the religious truth contained in the scriptures, the chance for more emphasis on what the writers intended to convey, and more reason to strip away explanations enshrined in dogma that often prevent us from drawing closer to Jesus and God.

Rest assured that we will do our best to keep the spirit of this insightful document alive in our publications and conferences.

John Buggy

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Letters to the Editor

I refer to the Morris West article in Issue No.17. I like what he had to say about the perennial nature of grace. I completed a three-year course in Christian Formation and Ministry recently and an enduring memory were the words of one nun-lecturer: The Holy Spirit can get round the most dreadful and messiest situation, despite appearances to the contrary. That is why we must always have hope and never give up on optimism.

MARGARET McCLELLAN Cardiff NSW

Thank you for what you are doing for the Australian Reforming Catholics. Unfortunately I can't manage to go to any seminars now as I am rather incapacitated at the age of 89. However, I was very interested to read very pertinent articles in the last newsletter. I would be very grateful to receive any further articles you may be printing. At least I can keep these problems in my prayers. With renewed thanks for the great work you and the Secretariat are doing – very much like the Public Life of Jesus.

BETTY MORIARTY rscj Kensington NSW

A big thank-you to everyone who created such a wonderful two days this past weekend. I thoroughly enjoyed the conference with the three other people from Newcastle. From the moment I walked in the door and was greeted so warmly by Mr Jim Taverne to all the catering so well offered, it was a great conference. I particularly wanted to say what a high standard of excellence was obvious in the talented guest speakers who shared themselves and their work with all attending. It was so uplifting to hear how

creative each person was with his or her beliefs and actions. We left and talked all the way home about how positive the conference material was and how encouraged we felt in our faith journey. It was also good to see the team working so well together and we felt disappointed to have to leave early and miss the last two sessions. I congratulate all involved and thank you for the caring and enthusiastic environment that welcomed us and sent us out again in joy. Your group spirit witnessed well and wisely. Many thanks.

WENDY SMITH Newcastle NSW

I was watching a program on television about the 'cult of the suicide bomber' (not an uplifting subject) and various thoughts went through my mind about phases within religious groups and 'crazes' of which Christians have also had extreme examples. The question which emerged from this musing was this: At what point in time did the term 'Christian' become discarded in favour of 'Catholic'? In fact in my growing-up years, and again now, I would say Catholics are strongly discouraged as describing themselves as 'Christians'. I think there was a time after Vatican II when many people did start to use the term 'Christian'.

Perhaps some time an erudite person would care to write on this, as I believe the story would throw light on a number of aspects of current Catholicism.

MARGARET GLEESON, Toongabbie NSW

(I have sometimes been asked the question: "When did you become a Christian?" so Margaret raises an interesting point. Can anyone throw some light on her conundrum? Editor)

Considering Strategies....

Imagining Church in Australia elicited a set of strategies for reform: public action, media use, position papers, key issues, small groups, networking, sharing resources, petitioning bishops, affirming positive action and achievable goal-setting. I propose that we start implementing two strategies which I outline below.

1. **Forming Small Groups:** Interested Arcers may organise themselves to meet up in local area groups, initially for getting to know each other. Later, they may wish to discuss a set topic, review a book, invite a speaker, collaborate on a strategy or project such as conference planning, web-site management or publications.
2. **Act on a Key Issue:** the exclusion of women from lay ministry. A woman can only be an acolyte in a *de facto* way. She cannot be formally instituted in this ministry nor properly called an acolyte. As the *Rites of the Catholic Church* makes clear, "institution in the ministries of reader and acolyte is reserved to men". Yet these are

lay ministries and no argument from ordination applies. Indeed, no argument is offered, other than "venerable tradition". If this was the rationale for racial discrimination we would all be up in arms!

Women only have to approach their parish priests and start requesting formal institution as readers or acolytes. If the women refuse to take "no" for an answer the bishop will soon hear about it and there will be an immediate crack down on parishes where women act as acolytes. Some parishes will refuse to comply and the ensuing publicity will expose what the hierarchy has tried to keep hidden in recent years by allowing the institution of these ministries to fall into disuse. This strategy is clear-cut, winnable and media friendly and it will build confidence in the reform movement.

Chris Crothers

If you are interested in this strategy or in meeting other Arcers in a small group, contact Jim Taverne: Tel: 02 9449 2923
jagota@ozemail.com.au

A Presentation of Michael Morwood's 'Christianity in A New Story'

Chris Crothers

The New Story, we were told, is not new; the science with which we filter it might be, but two thousand years ago the New Story was Good News. Within a hundred years however, the interpretation of the Synoptic Gospels was lost. Jesus was no longer Revealer of God's Kingdom in our midst, but Connector between us and an Elsewhere God. Why? Michael proposed that the separation from Judaism triggered an identity crisis for the fledgling Church which was resolved by adopting a high Christology. With Jesus as unique Saviour it was a small step to the Church as unique vehicle for Salvation. Christology bolstered the Church's authority and underpinned its identity, purposes and power.

The point Michael made was that we will never get genuine reform if we do not question doctrine – especially doctrine which gives bishops power, authority and a mindset that *they* speak with the mind of God and we don't. Basically, we need to return to the Sources, in the spirit of Vatican II, but in a more radical way. We need to address the religious imagination that shaped our Scriptures and Tradition – a localised deity in the heavens somewhere. The critical question then is: 'What kind of God are we being asked to imagine?'

Michael sketched out the proportions of the universe – with our planet just a grain of sand amongst billions of planet earths. Clearly, a cosmology for the 21st century cannot be built around planet earth as the focus of God's activity. We are engaging an awesome Mystery ... a universal mysterious Presence that energises and holds and sustains everything in connectedness and relationship. Most of us can't go back to a primitive cosmology nor concern ourselves with other people's questions. In Rome, however, the rubrics of access to an Elsewhere God are very much in focus. There is a lack of clarity in distinguishing personification and literalism and, as Michael sadly commented, our Church is suffering for lack of scholarship. We must return to the simple truth of our Catechism – God is Everywhere.

Jesus asked us to abandon negative images of God. He used the language of relationship and connectedness to reveal that God is in our midst and is made visible in our loving concern for each other. We must only open our eyes, see it and name it... when we live in love, we live in God and God lives in us. The more we open ourselves to love, the more we allow God's Spirit to come to the fullest possible expression in us – as the Spirit did in Jesus. Whatever life threw at him, it could not make him stop loving. We gather around the story of Jesus, not to proclaim how different he is from the rest of us, but to allow him to mirror to us who we are and how we are to live.

The task of reform, Michael urged us, is to ground ourselves in this spirituality and to convey its message to the world. It is a message that is relevant and timely for a world struggling to move beyond 'tribal' differences to more universal perspectives. Couched in the universal language of our common human experience, it affirms the sacredness of *all* our lives.

Michael's dream that Pentecost be celebrated as the symbol of this Story is an exciting possibility. Pentecost Revisited is not about the descending of an Elsewhere Spirit, but a wonderful celebration of the Spirit in everyone in every culture, time and place. We can express this Story of affirmation and challenge in liturgy if we first relinquish engagement with a God who is *really* somewhere else. Then we can celebrate who we are as Temples of the Spirit, and to what we are committing ourselves as the Body of Christ. As such, we will be called into social, political and economic justice.

Having been asked to write a presentation of Michael's talk, I recalled my hopes for the Conference – that we could begin to form a vision of who we are as Catholics and as reformers. Michael's contribution did not disappoint. He articulated for us a spirituality for our time: its cosmology, its language, its centrality to Jesus' life and teaching, its creative possibilities and its significance for the task of reform in our Church today. □

Introducing new Secretariat Members

Terry DeSouza: Migrated to Australia in 1968 with his wife (Othelia) and four children – they now have ten grandchildren. Retired after over 50 years of active business life in Finance, Consultancy and Business Directorships. Now involved in church reform and community service through ARC, VOTF (NSW Representative of Voice Of The Faithful, USA), Rotary, and as member of a Parish Pastoral Council.

Alan Clague: Alan attends St Mary's parish at South Brisbane. He is aged 64, married, with three adult children. He is about to retire as a Chemical Pathologist at Royal Brisbane Hospital. He is interested in modern interpretation of scripture based on its historical context, and review of the current appropriateness of Catholic teaching that originated from customs of past ages, such as compulsory clerical celibacy. Secular interests include gardening, tennis, golf and bridge.

Summary of the presentation of Sr Katrina Brill rsj:

Religious Life in a New Era

delivered at ARC Conference on 8 October 2005

Maureen Brian

Apostolic religious life is at the cutting edge of society. Like their Founders before them, religious communities are seeking to respond in a contemporary way to what is the essence of a religious charism – a gift which responds to what is missing in society/Church/world. Such a Gospel charism, which is spontaneous, independent of any exclusive lifestyle, demanding mutuality and inter-connectedness with others, is engaging religious communities through a path of inner conversion and transformation into a process not just of ‘adaptation’, but of ‘metamorphosis’.

Historically, in the founding periods, religious charisms became largely bound by a Church, which sought to control religious life by naming it ‘a life of perfection’. In Mary MacKillop’s day what was ‘missing’ was education and, in particular, education for the poor. For the Josephite sisters the appropriate response to mission was the building of schools, orphanages, convents, and this influenced much of the lifestyle and structures, which emerged. The post-World War II period of Catholic ascendancy witnessed an abnormal increase in numbers of religious, but with the inevitable reversal of the 1970s and 1980s, large numbers left convents, seminaries, and so on.

Today we are witnessing an enormous paradigm shift in which world views, traditional values and lifestyles are moving rapidly from what was a static, ordered, hierarchical, flat-earth model to a model of a vibrant web of inter-connectedness and inter-relationships. Accompanying such rapid change there is inevitably, for some, a level of dislocation and disconnectedness. In this context, religious life is looking for meaning and, in line with all rapidly growing ecclesial communities, this necessitates discernment, re-organisation and re-articulation of the essential charism for effective mission and leadership appropriate to today’s needs. While congregations will die, religious life will not die, but the form is changing. Some communities are dying and want to die with dignity; some are leaving great legacies; some are transferring into something new.

The legacy of Mary MacKillop to ‘seek out the poorest and most neglected part of God’s vineyard’, has called the Josephites into new forms of mission, stimulated by the questions: ‘who are we, and who is with us?’ Using diversity as the model, and collaboration and networking with a whole

range of individuals and groups as the method, the Josephites, as ‘leaven’ rather than ‘beacons’, are engaged in a wide range of initiatives with refugees and indigenous people in East Timor and the injustices in ‘trafficking’ of women, and so on.

Three hungers situate the present state of religious communities in Australia and these hungers are common to all people: a hunger for hope, a hunger for communion, and a hunger for ‘the more’. These hungers serve to stimulate leadership, which is authentically empowering of lay people. *Josephite Community Aid* (Ashfield) is one example of a justice initiative, where engagement with migrant families, asylum seekers, elderly and others, is co-ordinated by a committee of predominantly young volunteers who, on occasion, will call on the Josephite sisters to work with them in mission. This is a reversal of what might have been the traditional model of religious/lay leadership.

The fundamental leadership challenge of religious life today is the challenge of managing deliberately the disintegration of old forms of religious life and mission, and at the same time nurturing new forms that are beginning to appear. It requires a great capacity to bring together diversity and community. If this bringing together could be achieved, it would be a real witness to a world that cannot do it.

‘If today you hear God’s voice, harden not your hearts.’

Personal reflection on Katrina Brill’s presentation

Katrina’s challenging presentation led me to the following reflections. She presented a picture of many religious communities who are discerning the ‘signs of the times’ in the light of the Gospel, and who are embracing change radically with hopeful, pro-active initiatives, rather than with re-active, ‘no alternative’ responses. While not minimising the difficulties and uncertainties that are part of the process, Katrina left me with the sense that, like all prophetic initiatives, the Spirit is moving in the Church in new, energising and empowering ways. It is God’s initiative, and the results could be new models and new lifestyles not yet imagined by any of us.

I really appreciated the understanding of religious charism as a spontaneous and evolving response to what is lacking. It contrasts with some of the more traditional understandings of a respective religious charism as a ‘treasure’ to be guarded by a particular community and, in some cases, out of necessity to be passed on to others for safe-keeping. Katrina’s understanding ‘frees’ a charism to be free, and in its

continuing evolution it is formed and re-formed in the light of the Gospel and of mission by all those open to it, religious and non-religious.

Katrina's emphasis on the authentically collaborative nature of mission involving individuals, religious communities and other ecclesial groups, such as ARC, offers enormous possibilities for wide-ranging empowerment in service and leadership, and also in strong initiatives for justice and peace. It is also a visible challenge to a Church in Australia in which hierarchy, the dualistic division between clerical and lay roles, and the dis-empowerment of women and of others,

can serve to hinder, rather than enhance, the very mission of the Church itself. We are enormously appreciative of the very significant role taken over a number of years by the Major Superiors of many religious communities, particularly communities of religious women, in fostering the growth of life-giving initiatives through groups such as WATAC, CCJP, Affinity, Catalyst for Renewal, ARC, and others.

Katrina's final challenge – to bring together diversity and community – 'throws down the gauntlet' to us all. In the striving for such an ideal, ARC could be one real 'heaven' in making a difference.



Who are The Pearl Seekers?

Geoff Mulhearn

There is a group with the name Pearl Seekers that provides jewellery using South Sea Pearls. In this article I shall be speaking about an entirely different understanding of the term Pearl Seekers. My name is Geoff Mulhearn. I am a priest in the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. Along with others I have a dream of people meeting together as equals to share their experiences and their insights as they search together for a link between everyday life and faith. These are the people I call *Pearl Seekers*.

I strongly support the need for a significant change in our Church, leading to a much 'greater openness to legitimate debate', which is one of the main aims of Australian Reforming Catholics. I have tried to promote such openness ever since I was ordained a priest in 1962. After ordination I completed a science degree at the University of Newcastle. As I was already a searcher for truth, the training in scientific method and the exposure to so much of what modern science had discovered about our world convinced me that, if the Church is to have a future, it must listen to the voices of the people and respond to the modern questioning mind. Reflecting on recent events in Canberra, I am also rapidly coming to the conclusion that if our nation is to have a future then our government will need to find ways to listen more carefully to, and to take more seriously, the opinions of its citizens.

It was encouraging to read Cardinal Pell's comment in the Catholic Weekly of 6 November 2005 about the Synod that '... the changes which allowed more free discussion in the main assembly and the publication of the propositions which we voted on were good developments'. In *The Tablet* on 5 November there was mention of two Cardinals taking radically opposing stands on the issue of Holy Communion

for divorced and remarried Catholics. Knowledgeable Vatican-watchers indicated that this was the first time in recent memory that two such high-ranking Roman Curia officials had publicly taken such opposing stands on an important issue of doctrine and pastoral practice. They noted that John Paul II did not tolerate such 'questioning' of church practice, but that Pope Benedict had indicated greater openness to legitimate debate.

I am currently deeply involved in the project called *The Pearl Seekers*. This project offers an opportunity for people to reflect on issues of concern in an open atmosphere and to share their experiences and insights in an attempt to link spirituality and life. Often there is a lack of opportunities for such reflection and sharing. Hopefully people will find in the Pearl Seekers a place where they feel they can be heard.

Not many days before I began writing this article, *The Herald* newspaper in Newcastle had a front page article with the title: 'Clergy Abuse Shock'. I have seen the pain and confusion that victims of abuse, and their families, have experienced. At the same time I am conscious of the confusion among groups of parishioners and of clergy like myself. In response to a request we have set up a forum for survivors of abuse on the Pearl Seekers' discussion board.

A team of people of differing persuasions has been patiently developing the Pearl Seekers project. We would appreciate any suggestions and any personal involvement to help develop and promote the project. I invite you to visit the website and at no charge become a registered member to make your contributions to the forums on the discussion board there.

Further information is available on the website:

www.earlseekers.com.au

I do not believe that there can or will be on Earth one religion. I am striving, therefore, to find a common factor and to induce mutual tolerance. (Mahatma Gandhi)

Invalid, but real?

Jim Taverne

About Priesthood (1)

For a few months in 1952 we lived in the St Paul's parish in a new suburb of The Hague. It is only recently that I read the whole baptismal certificate (printed in ornate Gothic letters) of our second son Tom.

After declaring that the stains of original sin had been washed away and Tom had become a living member of Christ's body, the Holy Catholic Church, the certificate spells out the blessings of the seven sacraments. Following the statement that Tom may receive the sacrament of marriage for the preservation of Christ's Priestly Realm on earth, the document continues with:

"Should he be called to the higher state, then he would conclude with Christ Himself the virginal covenant of fidelity and love and, through his ordination, even enjoy the most intimate sharing in Christ's High Priesthood".

There must have been a different baptismal certificate for girls!

The spelling was from before 1934.

About priesthood (2)

On 5 and 6 November I attended in Melbourne the annual National Gathering of the Ordination of Catholic Women Inc. (OCW) with the theme: *Breaking the Silence – Women called to Priesthood*. It was a rich experience. People who are better qualified than I am will write about this Gathering (www.ocw.webcentral.com.au).

I only want to talk about the way in which women (and men) have decided not to wait any longer for the hierarchy to adjust to the present, but to start moving.

This has happened in several Christian denominations, where many ordained women still have a rough time through discrimination against them.

Aletta Jacobs, a Jewish girl living in the small town in the north of Holland, was the first girl allowed to complete high school, to study at a university and to become the first female GP in the Netherlands. That was in 1878. From the first day at high school she had to struggle for decades against ridicule, denigration and hostility. She was a trailblazer.

The OCW is committed to the ordination of women *within* the official church. At the same time OCW respects and admires the prophetic action of women who in full conviction of their calling to the priesthood seek the ordination denied them by the present structure of the church. Are they not trailblazers like Aletta Jacobs?

One of the speakers at the Gathering, a canon lawyer, proposed that the women who have in recent times been ordained in various places in the world may not have been *validly* ordained but their ordination was *real*, as received by their community.

About Priesthood (3)

Catholic women who have been called to the ordained ministry have become Anglican priests.

Catholic men who felt the need or were forced to leave the Vatican controlled priesthood have become Anglican/Episcopalian or Old Catholic priests.

Others were ordained in the United Ecumenical Catholic Church of which there is an Australasian Region including the Ecumenical Catholic Church of Australia.

Many have been ordained in the Priestly Society of Pius X, which was founded by Archbishop Lefèbre.

Pope Benedict XVI is continuing the negotiations, initiated by his predecessor, for the recognition of that society by the Vatican. Will he also talk with others?

Anglican priests, who did not accept the ordination of women in their Church, have been accepted by the Catholic Church.

Which of all these ordinations are valid, which are invalid, but real?

About priesthood (4)

We are told that the Catholic priesthood was inaugurated at the Last Supper. Many don't accept this.

Adolf Holl, philosopher and theologian in Vienna, was 'defrocked' in 1976 because he had written in his book *Jesus in Bad Company* that he did not think that Jesus wanted a church with priests and certainly not celibates.

At the OCW Gathering of 5-6 November we discussed the proposition that there were no priests at the birth of Christianity and that there is no particular necessity for an ordained priest as the only possible presider at a Eucharistic celebration.

In Australia and everywhere else in the world the Eucharist is celebrated without the presence of a 'validly' ordained (male, celibate) priest. Are such Eucharistic celebrations valid? They are real and accepted by the community!



Opening the windows

... (next page)

Putting the genie back into the bottle

Margaret Knowlden

*I want to throw open the windows of the Church so that we
can see out and the people can see in. (Pope John XXIII)*

For those of us who grew up in pre-Vatican II days, Pope John XXIII's reforms were like a breath of fresh air. So proposals from the recent Synod to close the windows he had opened so wide and revert back to the fifties can only raise alarm bells for concerned Catholics.

One of the many liberations we experienced was the awareness that Christ is all around us. No longer held captive (strait-jacketed) within tabernacles, hosts or monstrances, we are free to recognise Him in our neighbour, in strangers, even within ourselves.

An article entitled "Synod looks set to turn its back on reforms" in *The Tablet* (22 October 2005) is summarised briefly:

- The *scarcity of priests*, it seems, is to be solved by more intense prayers and efforts at promoting vocations, including eucharistic adoration, and a 'more equitable distribution of the clergy'. Part of the proposal includes re-opening minor (secondary school) seminaries;
- Regarding ecclesiastical celibacy, 'the synod fathers affirmed the importance of the inestimable gift of ecclesiastical celibacy in the practice of the Latin Church'. While 'some' have referred to the *viri probati* (married men of proven virtue), 'the small groups judged this as a path not to follow';
- Divorced and remarried Catholics 'cannot be admitted to Holy Communion'. However, if their first marriages cannot be declared null, and objective conditions render their cohabitation irreversible, they are encouraged to 'transform' their relationship into a 'loyal friendship'. Only then can they 'approach the eucharistic table';
- There is a proposal for the return to the pre-conciliar use of 'thematic homilies' that instruct on the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, or other parts of the Mass, rather than explain the scriptural readings;
- Among other requests to restore practices more common before the Second Vatican Council, the synod fathers 'strongly encourage' that eucharistic adoration, as recommended by John Paul II, 'be maintained and promoted in the Church';
- There is also a call for a 'revival of the teaching and practice of indulgences'.

Given the general decline in congregations and rival attractions of secular entertainments, one cannot but wonder: How many Catholics will be persuaded to return to old style rituals such as Benediction or 40-hours Adoration? Who will be gullible enough to swallow the ancient teachings on indulgences? and what parents would willingly encourage their sons to enter a junior seminary?

IT'S TOO LATE TO GET READY FOR THE PAST

One night last year I drank too much and took myself to bed,
And as I slept, a wondrous dream came drifting through my head.
I dreamt that I had passed away — a sad but certain fate —
And took my stand, with harp in hand, outside the Pearly Gate.
"You can't come in," St Peter said, "You have to go back down,
"We've got important messages we need to spread around.
"We need to find some prophets, as we often did before,
"To show that old realities aren't working any more."

REFRAIN:

It's too late to get ready for the past
For the boat we've all been in is sinking fast
And those will live who show
They have the courage to let go
And, like Peter, learn to walk the waves at last.
For the certainties of yesterday are gone
And we know as false the maps that led us on.
Those who dare to move ahead
Without shrinking back in dread
Are the ones to whom the future will belong.

You can't argue with St. Peter when he's in a mood like that,
So I took the notes he gave me and I left in no time flat
I read them on the way back down — they gave me quite a shock —
An en-cyc-lical letter from St. Peter to his flock
"We're getting very worried," — so St. Peter's letter ran -
"At the way in which so many heads seem buried in the sand,
"How the Church can save the world was once the focus of our search,
"But now we're wondering if in fact the world can save the Church."

REFRAIN:

"We've got problems in the Vatican — I hardly need to say,
"I don't just mean the banking debt that's mounting day by day.
"There's a bloke down there called Ratzinger" — St Peter nearly cried —
"And he's busy closing windows that Pope John had opened wide."
"I don't want to depress you all by giving you a list
"Of prominent Roman Catholics who wouldn't much be missed.
"We've decided to take action, the Holy Ghost and me —
"And this letter marks the first step towards Vatican Council Three."

REFRAIN:

"Now here's a draft agenda for the Council", said the saint.
I read a list of topics then that left me feeling faint
And standing out in larger print and underlined in red,
It said, "Listen to the women or the Church is surely dead!"
The letter's final chapter had a list of things to do,
They were mostly items left undone since Vatican Council Two.
And one last thing St. Peter said, just prior to signing off,
"Be sure you reinstate Hans Kung and Leonardo Boff".

REFRAIN:

I was full of holy zeal upon my mission to embark,
I thought I'd take my place in history as a modern Joan of Arc.
She braved the Church authorities and bade them all awake -
Then I remembered, Oh my God, they burned her at the stake!
I took St Peter's letter — it was worth its weight in gold —
I went to see the Cardinal and said what I'd been told.
He listened, full of interest, and then he simply said ...
But at that point the dream was gone, and I woke up in bed.

REFRAIN:

Dermot Dorgan

Songs of an Armchair Activist
Tape: *The Cockroach and the Vatican*
PO Box 8409 Woolloongabba Qld 4102
Tel: 07 3391 5159

ARC Policy Formation Survey of Members

At our Conference on 8-9 October 2005, Ted Lambert reported on the results of the survey held in September among members. 62 of those who received the survey responded – more than 50%. The 22 *proposals* of the survey form included:

- ARC is administered by a secretariat chosen by the members at AGMs;
- The Church is all its people, who are longing for a stronger, more visible Christian emphasis on love, not law;
- All Catholics, female and male, should have equal opportunity to assume responsibilities in the Church;
- Let the Church follow Jesus in his embrace of all who suffer discrimination;
- Inclusive language should be adopted in all liturgical texts.

All *proposals* received vast majority support from the respondents. It is the intentions to post the full survey results on our website.

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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 (maximum length: articles 700 words, letters 100 words)

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

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ARC Brochure

A new brochure has been produced and is available on request. It includes a Membership Application form and addresses the questions:

- ◆ What is *Australian Reforming Catholics*?
- ◆ How was **ARC** established?
- ◆ What does **ARC** do?
- ◆ How is **ARC** organised?

Distributing the brochure is an important way of helping our movement to grow. Enquiries:

Australian Reforming Catholics
c/- Jim Taverne,
4/1035 Pacific Highway, Pymble, NSW, 2073



Membership Application / Renewal

Subscription: \$30 p.a. (concession: \$20)

Subscription period runs for the financial year

Renewal New Member

Name: _____ Tel _____

Address: _____ Fax _____

Post Code _____ Email _____

Please send me _____ copy/copies of Conference Proceedings: ARC Occasional Papers (\$10 each) for year/s _____

Donations will always be welcome

Amount enclosed:	Subscription:	\$ _____
	Donation:	\$ _____
	Conference Proceedings:	\$ _____
	Total:	\$ _____

Send to: Jim Taverne, 4/1035 Pacific Highway, Pymble, NSW, 2073