

OPEN HOUSE

Comment and debate on faith issues in Scotland

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**A new partnership between
ordained and lay**

Why remember the Reformation?

THE CHILDREN OF ST NINIAN'S

The religious times of Robert Burns

Ian Fraser birthday tribute

Lessons from the early church

CHRISTMAS BOOKS

Reviews: book, film and music

The advent of something different

A good beginning, they say, is half the battle. Advent is the first season of the Christian year. If we get it wrong the rest of the year will be out of kilter.

Advent calendars are one of the fastest growing occasional items. This year, if you are quick, you can get one of Jeremy Corbyn (journeying to Number Ten). Only 250 have been printed with 10% of the profit to Save the Children. In Edinburgh images of winters past will be beamed on to Register House. Like most 'Advent' calendars both of these run from 1st Dec.

The date is not the biggest problem. Most of them offer little goodies in preparation for the binge to come. In the not too distant past, people prepared for a feast with fasting. It seemed natural. The Church regarded Advent as 'a little Lent'. Some parishes look for a colour different from the purple of Lent. Spanish speaking countries use blue to honour Mary at this time of her fulfilment. We should just say no to 'Christmas' dinners before 25th December. They are usually for the convenience of staff.

Advent is Latin for *Parousia* which is Greek for

'coming'. This shifts the perspective from the historical to the futuristic. It fits in more with the temper of the times. Most people don't believe that the salvation of the world has been achieved but many hope it could be. The media imagines many kinds of Messiah. This year is the shortest possible Advent – only three weeks and one day.

That leaves us with the Twelve Days of Christmas. Plenty of time to celebrate the birth of the Christian Saviour. Communal eating and drinking among relatives and friends is in order. Given that he was born in a stable there is the opportunity to visit those who are contemplating perhaps alone an unexpected future. And the chance to take back to the shops the presents we don't need and exchange them for something we could use.

Entering the New Year with a hint about the salvation of the world sets us up to listen again from the beginning the story (this year according to Mark) of the one pointed out by John the Baptist as the one who is to come.

Deep peace

Pope Francis' recent statement on nuclear weapons has a particular resonance in Scotland. He said that the threat of using nuclear weapons, as well as their possession, is to be condemned. This echoes the Scottish bishops' 1982 statement that if it is immoral to use nuclear weapons, it is also immoral to threaten their use. The pope's statement comes at a time when the UK government has revealed plans to 'invest' £1.3 billion over the next 10 years on the UK's nuclear submarine base on the Clyde. Faslane is home to the UK's Trident submarines, and warheads are stored at nearby Coulport.

The pope's condemnation was made at an international symposium on prospects for a world free of nuclear weapons which was held in Rome in November. In his address to participants, he conceded that the prospects for disarmament seemed remote. But he pointed out that weapons of mass destruction create nothing but a false sense of security and do not constitute the basis for coexistence between members of the human family. He cited the witness of survivors of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Pope Francis also noted a 'light of hope' in a recent vote at the UN which determined that nuclear weapons were to be considered an illegal means of warfare, as chemical and biological weapons are. Even more important he said was the fact that the UN vote was mainly the result of a

humanitarian initiative sponsored by an alliance between civil society, states, international organisations, churches, academies and groups of experts.

The Scottish bishops' 1982 statement was made at a time when a strong consensus had developed in Scotland between the churches, civil society and local authorities over proposals to replace Britain's ageing fleet of Polaris submarines. Bishops addressed peace rallies and joined marches to Faslane. That consensus is still reflected in the country today. The Church of Scotland has repeatedly stressed its opposition to Trident.

Perhaps Scots, who live closer to the nuclear base than the rest of the UK, are more aware of the vast amounts of money it consumes and question its impact on other priorities. As Pope Francis pointed out, the price of modernising and developing weaponry represents a considerable expense. As a result, he said, the real priorities facing the human family – addressing poverty, promoting peace, investing in education, ecology and healthcare and human rights – are relegated to second place.

The Christmas message of peace on earth continues to challenge. In his address, Pope Francis recalled the teaching of John XXIII in *Pacem in Terris*: that unless the process of disarmament reaches our very souls it will be impossible to abolish nuclear weapons entirely.

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Thank you to all those who contributed to this edition of *Open House*.

Open House, which was founded in Dundee in 1990, is an independent journal of comment and debate on faith issues in Scotland. It is rooted in the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) and committed to the dialogue which began at the Council - within the Catholic Church, in other churches, and with all those committed to issues of justice and peace.

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Cover by Dominic Cullen

CHARLOTTE METHUEN

Reformation quincentenary 2017

A church historian asks what it means to remember the Reformation 500 years after Luther's revolt against indulgences.

On 31st October 1517, just over 500 years ago, Martin Luther sent to the Archbishop of Mainz ninety-five theses – propositions – that he had written against the practice of indulgences.

Luther was disturbed and angry that people were being led to believe that if they paid for an indulgence, their forgiveness was assured. 'As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul out of purgatory springs...' as the popular ditty had it. Luther disagreed. 'Those who believe themselves certain of their own salvation by means of letters of indulgence, will be eternally damned, together with their teachers,' he warned (thesis 32). Rather, 'Christians should be taught that one who gives to the poor, or lends to the needy, does a better action than if he purchases indulgences. Because, by works of love, love grows and a man becomes a better man; whereas, by indulgences, he does not become a better man, but only escapes certain penalties' (theses 43, 44). Luther's 95 theses sparked a storm, and that storm became the Reformation. 2017 has seen a wide range of events to mark this quincentenary, in Germany, as we might expect, but also across Europe. Why? What does it mean to remember the Reformation? Is it really still relevant today?

As a church historian, this seems to me an entirely plausible question. It is not at all evident that 2017 is such an important anniversary, in large part

because it is not at all evident that Luther's sending of the ninety-five theses to his archbishop on 31st October 1517 was such an important event. What are we actually remembering?

2017 has been marked both as a Reformation anniversary and as a Luther anniversary. Historically the Reformation anniversary is the more important. It was not Luther as an individual, but the complex series of events that we refer to as the Reformation that led to the formation of a whole new complex of multiple churches in Western Europe, and which also reshaped the political face of Europe.

The Reformation, through the subsequent wars of the 17th century, brought into being the Netherlands, which was first recognised as an independent sovereign state in the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. Even when the Reformation did not create states, it shaped national identities. Many of the small territories which made up the Holy Roman (i.e. German) Empire found in the Reformation a means of defining their identity over and against the emperor and the German prince bishops. The Reformation reshaped ideas of what it meant to be Swedish, or Danish, or English or Scottish. And of course the Reformation inaugurated an age of confessional difference amongst the European churches, fragmenting Latin, Western Christianity into Lutheran and

Reformed, Anglican and Presbyterian, Anabaptist, Moravian and Brethren, and a newly defined Roman Catholic. But in 1517, all of that was still to come. None of it would happen for several years after 1517, and in some places not for several decades. The quincentenaries of the Reformation as a movement still lie before us.

When did the Reformation actually begin? Perhaps in spring 1521, when Luther stood before the Emperor at the Diet of Worms and declined to retract his writings? Or in the winter of 1522, when his friend (but soon to become enemy) Andreas Karlstadt sought to put Luther's teachings into practice in the churches in Wittenberg? Or in 1525, when the new Elector of Saxony agreed to implement the Reformation in Saxony?

Perhaps we see the true beginning of the Reformation in the reforming of church practices in Nuremberg in 1522 and 1523, with the appointment of new preachers, the introduction of vernacular bible reading in the liturgy, the distribution of communion in both kinds (bread and wine), and the decision by some of the city's priests to marry. Reformation beliefs and practices were introduced into Hesse, after the young prince, Philipp, became convinced by Luther's teaching in 1524. A decade later, in 1534, the ruler of the south German territory of Württemberg found the Reformation key to the reassertion of his authority on his return to his lands from exile. He called on Reformers from the city of Basel to help him introduce the new ideas. The Reformation was not accomplished by one person on one day, but was a protracted process of complex change.

In England, too, 1534 was a key year. Under Henry VIII's direction the English parliament passed the Act of Supremacy, declaring the king to be the Supreme Head of the Church of England. However, Henry did not do much else – apart from dissolving the monasteries – that looked to his contemporaries like an introduction of the Reformation. In Scotland the Reformation would not be introduced until 1560.

Was a break with the pope a

Reformation? Catholic observers of England thought it was, but Protestants were less convinced. Henry VIII did sponsor an English Bible translation, to be bought for every parish, but from 1543, he sought to control who was allowed to read it (women, and uneducated men should not). Vernacular liturgy was not introduced in England until 1549, after Henry VIII's death; nor, except for a brief period in the mid-1530s, were communion in both kinds, or married priests. In around 1540, Margarete Cranmer, the wife of Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, fled back to Germany with their children.

Unlike the church that emerged from the English Reformation, the Scottish church rejected bishops, held that the monarch should have no say in the organisation of the church, and rejected the kind of liturgy that was laid out in the Book of Common Prayer.

When the Reformation was introduced into England under Henry's son Edward VI, it proved a short-lived affair. Edward's half-sister Mary I returned the country to Catholicism, albeit a humanist influenced Catholicism, which had learned much from the experiences of Mary's Archbishop of Canterbury, Reginald Pole and his experience of the *spirituali*, a humanist reforming movement in Italy. It was not until 1558, and the ascension of Elizabeth, that the Reformation entered into a more settled phase in England. Elizabeth's wish to keep England together, her assertion of her own authority in and over the church, her appreciation for music and liturgy, and her dislike of the theology that was emerging from Geneva gave the English Reformation a very particular

form, although to Catholics the Elizabethan Church of England looked unequivocally protestant.

The Scottish Reformation, thanks largely to John Knox, was strongly influenced by the teachings and attitudes of John Calvin in Geneva. Unlike the church that emerged from the English Reformation, the Scottish church rejected bishops, held that the monarch should have no say in the organisation of the church, and rejected the kind of liturgy that was laid out in the Book of Common Prayer. In 1618, James VI of Scotland, who since 1603 had been also James I of England, tried to reintroduce into Scotland a number of practices which were still current in the England's protestant church: kneeling to receive communion, the possibility of private baptisms and sick communion, episcopal confirmation, and the keeping of Holy Days (e.g. Christmas and Easter). In protestant (Reformed) Scotland, these practices, largely accepted in protestant (Reformed) England, were firmly rejected as papist. The Reformation was by no means monolithic, and the Reformation took very different forms in different territories. Remembering the Reformation is partly about recognising and trying to understand the reasons for these differences.

Ecumenically, the Reformation has often been seen as a disaster: the breakdown of a unified Latin church into a confessional jigsaw. The 1920 Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops issued an 'Appeal to All Christian People' calling for Christian unity. They recognised the sin of fractured unity, holding that 'self-will, ambition, and lack of charity ... together with blindness to the sin of disunion, are still mainly responsible for the breaches of Christendom.' Moreover, they thought that 'The faith cannot be adequately apprehended and the battle of the Kingdom cannot be worthily fought while the body is divided, and is thus unable to grow up into the fullness of the life of Christ.'

Overcoming differences so that Christians can stand and speak together is still important – perhaps even more important – today, nearly a

century after the Anglican Bishops issued their Appeal. But the Anglican Bishops also recognised a positive aspect in the heritage of the Reformation: the Protestant traditions, they thought, had preserved a multiplicity of gifts, 'standing for rich elements of truth, liberty and life which might otherwise have been obscured or neglected...' The emphasis on actual repentance and conversion, which Luther emphasised in his ninety-five theses, led him to a new understanding of the importance of personal faith. Luther and the Protestant churches insisted that faith should be preached and prayed in a language that the people could understand. They emphasised the importance of community and mutual responsibility for one another, and particularly for the poor and disadvantaged in society. Some of these aspects had become obscured in the late medieval church. Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and other reformers helped to rediscover them.

It has taken nearly five hundred years, but one of the gifts of the ecumenical movement has been the recognition that important aspects of the truth are preserved in the different traditions that emerged from the Reformation. There is a vision of the united church which expresses this: 'When the church is one, it will have the hymns of the Methodists, the liturgical sense of the Anglicans, the depth of prayer of Roman Catholics, the local rootedness of the Baptists, the spirit of the charismatics, the education of the Reformed, the preaching of the Lutherans...' Remembering the Reformation is important precisely because it helps us to recognise – and to celebrate – what we have to learn from each other.

Charlotte Methuen is Professor of Church History at the University of Glasgow and is an Anglican priest.

MAURICE TAYLOR

Beyond the distractions

The problem with Advent is its proximity to Christmas. The latter brings an irresistible flood that swamps a defenceless Advent season.

'Preparing for Christmas'? Writing Christmas cards, choosing Christmas gifts, Christmas shopping, cleaning, cooking, baking... then our custom of 'jumping the Christmas gun' with Christmas songs and carols and decorations, Christmas parties and concerts and dinners throughout December... and, yes of course, trying to observe Advent as it is meant to be observed. No wonder that, after Christmas day, all is anti-climax and exhaustion.

So, trying to get underneath or beyond all the distractions, we seek the religious or Christian meaning of Advent. 'Advent' means 'coming' and therefore, for us, it involves a time of 'waiting'. This should involve an atmosphere of 'desire' and 'expectancy' for *the coming of Christ*.

However, contrary to expectations, the Advent liturgy does not begin with our preparing for Christmas. There are several events which are truly 'comings' of Jesus, moments on which he makes an entry into the world, into the story of salvation.

In the Scripture readings for this Year B of the liturgical cycle, the gospel for the first Sunday of Advent directs our thoughts to what is called Christ's Second Coming. The promised appearance of the Son of Man at the end of the world occupies several chapters of the gospels and of St Paul's epistles also; and they are read to us as the liturgical year nears its end in November as well as at the start of Advent. It seems that the first generations of Christians were expecting an imminent return of our Lord and, when that did not occur, the insistence on being ready continued so as to deter any lessening of vigilance.

Two thousand years later we may use the Scriptures' repeated warnings as still very relevant, but more probably in the sense of our death coming unexpectedly

and the need therefore to live always ready to meet our Saviour.

The gospel for the second Sunday of Advent this year has John the Baptist baptising at the Jordan and preparing the people for the arrival of Jesus the Messiah, soon to begin his public life and mission. Still nothing about Bethlehem, but an emphasis on the importance of the 'advent' of the adult Jesus. His herald is an austere figure preaching repentance and attracting great crowds for a baptism of forgiveness of sin. From this gospel we can learn of the importance of Christ for us and consequently of the need to prepare ourselves appropriately by repentance and forgiveness.

Since Mark's gospel is silent about our Lord's infancy, the final two Sundays of Advent this year are from the gospels of John and Luke (the fourth Sunday). The third Sunday's extract, from John's first chapter, the so-called Prologue, has similarities to the previous Sunday's passage. John the Baptist is the central character of the scene. He is preaching and baptising when challenged by some religious leaders from Jerusalem. This provides the opportunity to declare himself to be a witness preparing the people for the Messiah 'who stands among you, unknown to you'. Would these words also be true of people today? Of Christians today? Of me?

At last, on the final Sunday of Advent, the gospel takes us to that first coming of Jesus Christ, conceived and born of Mary. Luke describes the Incarnation. We are on very familiar ground – Mary, Gabriel, the astonishing proposal, the Holy Spirit, the humble acceptance. So much for us to ponder. So much for which to be grateful!

Have a happy Christmas!

Maurice Taylor is Bishop Emeritus of Galloway Diocese. His latest book, Thoughts on the Sunday Gospels, is available from www.bishopmauricetaylor.org.uk price £10 including post and packing.

TIM DUFFY

A birthday tribute to Ian Fraser

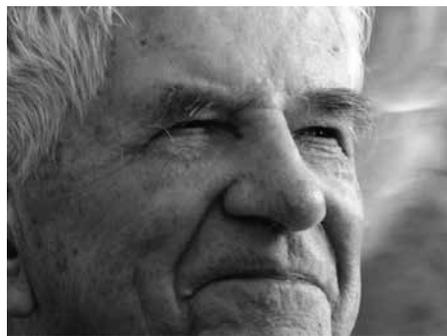
Church of Scotland minister, writer and theologian Dr Ian Fraser, who served on the board of *Open House* for many years, will be 100 years old this month. An old friend pays tribute to the man he calls Scotland's liberation theologian.

The year 1917 saw the 400th anniversary of Martin Luther's legendary nailing of the ninety-five theses to the door of Wittenberg Cathedral. Celebrations were comparatively muted, given the continuing horror of war (Passchendaele alone from July to November 1917 produced a quarter of a million casualties on each side).

In the second half of the year, the Marian apparitions of Fatima were followed by the Bolshevik triumph in Russia. And, on a lesser scale, the year that had already seen the birth of Vera Lynn and Denis Winston Healey, on 19th December saw the arrival of Ian Masson Fraser in Forres.

The legacy of the Reformation in Scotland had followed a Calvinist rather than Lutheran path. The influx of Catholic Irish and their culture in the 19th century reinforced an existing anti-Catholic mindset. This animus was reflected even in academic considerations such as David Hay Fleming's *The Scottish Reformation* (1903) long considered a definitive text. Enthusiasts pointed to the prophetic fact that this book contained 666 pages – those were the days.

The following century saw a sea change in the relations among the churches, gradual at first but increasingly warm and amicable. The improvement was arguably more down to the work of gifted individuals than of the institutions, which often still felt the need to act tribally. A bishop once said to me of a fine and active friend: 'Oh, she's a lovely person, but terribly ecumenical'. The worst thing about the



status quo is that for many folk it is their comfort zone.

Apparently, cosmologists now think that at the heart of virtually every large galaxy lurks a supermassive black hole. Anyone who has dealt with institutions (including the churches) might recognise a certain similarity. And as a friend said to me long ago: so many of the most interesting ideas and interchanges inevitably tend to happen at the margins of an institution. Ian has always relished working across boundaries.

I have often felt that Ian is a kind of reverse missionary. Instead of taking unchanging certainties to benighted souls at the ends of the earth, Ian went where he felt called to, whether it was Rosyth in 1941 or the 150 plus countries that he ended up going to. Wherever he was, he listened to and lived with the faith of the local people; which in turn informed and even reformed his own faith – *semper reformanda*. Thus missioned and commissioned, he brought back these perspectives on the life of faith and shared them with us.

We are the beneficiaries of his journeys. The writings and the

recordings made by Ian - and Margaret, his wife, companion and living muse – across three quarters of a century are a testimony to his faithfulness to the injunction to go and teach all nations. For him, however, teaching was never about filling a pail. Rather it was about kindling a flame; and deriving fuel for the flame of the spirit from those among whom he has worked and worshipped.

One of the most interesting aspects of Ian's writings is his style. Of course, it is unique, not to say inimitable; but I have always felt it fell within the classic genre of satire. In particular, the Menippean satire which deals less with people as such than with mental attitudes. The literary critic Northrop Frye classifies it as cognate with the genres of autobiography and confession. Ian is equally at home with the autobiographical encounters which were of fundamental significance; or the faith motivation that drew him often (like the apostle) whither he would rather not go; or the expression (in Scots or *koine* English) through prayers, poems and hymns of the workings of the Spirit; or else the prophetic denunciation of the time serving functionaries, clowns, dullards and downright villains of church and state who confuse power with authority. And, of course, he could claim a precedent. As he says in one of his most pungent observations 'the only time that Jesus was even-handed was when both hands were nailed to the cross'.

Of course, denunciation rarely goes down well, even when it is received with the rictus of a smile. Jeremiah was thrown down a muddy cistern for his pains (Jer 38:6) and the satirist Jonathan Swift's epitaph records that only death ended the 'ferocious indignation which lacerated his heart'. The solitary prophet or satirist is bound to feel persecuted. Yet Ian has rarely been solitary. His beloved Margaret died in 1987, yet remains for him a presence and inspiration. I remember too, a year later in December 1988, when Ian's campaign of civil disobedience in the greater cause of confronting the immorality of the poll tax came to Stirling Sheriff Court. It was a Gandhian moment. The details are in chapter nine of Ian's quirky autobiographical reflections with Ian Cranston, *I've Seen Worse*. My own recollection is of the throng of Kingdom loonies (certainly not all religious) who had assembled to offer their support. Solitary – hardly!

Now arguably any respectable theologian would produce a synthesis of his thought, festooned with reference and footnotes, in a big heavy doorstop of a book destined for a quiet life on library shelves. Although he is an indefatigable writer, Ian prefers a different structure. Instead of living stones (1Pet 2:5), one might see his work as the living leaves in the

testimony of a *Book of Life*; with all the people he has recorded as the references (but never footnotes), speaking of their lives and sustaining faith. They have become the theologians of their own situations, mediators of the gospel in poverty and oppression as well as what passes for normality in this world.

But still, Ian a liberation theologian? Well, how about as a worker priest *avant la lettre* in Rosyth, using scripture to work through local problems with his congregation. Or how about going to see and participate with basic Christian communities throughout the world and bringing back their wisdom, free of the cloak of mutual suspicion and defensive dogma. Or the work in establishing Scottish Churches House in Dunblane: without which the ecumenical movement in Scotland would never have flourished in the way it did; and whose absence is one of the reasons it now languishes. Or how about celebrating the gospel among ordinary folk in terms 'byordinar'. Or fighting with and alongside people subject to institutional oppression, whether of governments or of churches. Or his conviction that God's unconditional love for us, made manifest in God's Son, continues through the work of the Spirit (with a distinctly feminine dynamic). And although we might like

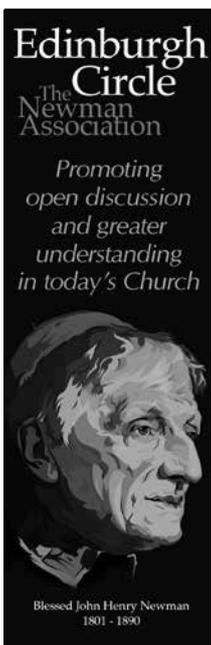
to think ourselves excused or exempt from this love, Ian is the Spirit's persistent advocate.

For me, Ian's work when I first encountered it, was an invitation and a challenge to someone, neither ordained nor an academic, to explore the gospel way in the companionship of others. One way of celebrating Ian's centenary would be to compile an anthology of favourite and influential passages – and sayings of course – from the many sources of his writings and to make them available electronically, thus carrying on the tradition.

In the meantime, I can't think of a better celebratory remark for Ian's centenary and indeed his life, than Robert Burns' greeting to his publisher William Creech:

May never wicked Fortune touzle him!
 May never wicked men bamboozle him!
 Until a pow as auld's Methusalem
 He canty claw!
 Then to the blessed New Jerusalem,
 Fleet wing awa!

Tim Duffy is a former research worker with the Scottish Catholic Justice and Peace Commission.



Tuesday 16 January 2018
Read the Bible but – “What is truth?” (Jn 18:38)
 Jeff Bagnall, Former lecturer in Religious Education

Tuesday 20 February 2018
“Thou shalt not...!”
Negative pedagogy, pastoral ministry and ‘yes’ to life
 Fr. Jim Lawlor, Parish Priest, Glasgow

Meetings are in Mayfield Salisbury Parish Church, 18 West Mayfield, Edinburgh DH9 1RQ - 7.30pm - 9.30pm

All are warmly invited to attend. We ask for a small donation to cover our expenses.
For further information please contact lyncronin@btinternet.com

GERARD CARRUTHERS

The religious times of Robert Burns

A distinguished Burns scholar shares new research into the poet's involvement in the religious and political issues of his day.

Broadly, we might say, Robert Burns was received during the 20th century essentially as a secular, even irreligious poet, 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' (the poet's sincere tribute to his Presbyterian cradle-culture) being gradually supplanted in its 19th century mass popularity by the iconoclastic kirk satire, 'Holy Willie's Prayer'.

Previously in this magazine I have written to suggest that the clear evidence shows Burns to be a believer in Christianity. We might, for instance, see his religious sensibility in his textual additions to the 'Geddes Burns', Burns's poems of 1787 owned by Bishop John Geddes (1735-99), Catholic Coadjutor Vicar Apostolic of the Lowland District of Scotland. The poet borrowed the book from the Bishop and over a period of nearly two years (before eventually returning it to his favourite clergyman) he added a series of soulful, God-searching new works including 'Written In Friar's Carse Hermitage' and 'On the Death of Sir J. Hunter Blair'.

On returning the volume, Burns was also anxious to know Geddes's views on the new work. The pair had met in Edinburgh at some point during the winter of 1786-7, quickly became mutual admirers, and Geddes arranged for copies of Burns's 1787 *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* (the 'Edinburgh' second edition) to be taken up by Scottish Catholic seminaries and religious houses abroad. This Scoto-European audience made Burns proud, and he was tickled by it too due to its historic doubling as a Jacobite network; Burns, as his songwriting output shows, was seriously attracted to the rebellious romance of the Jacobites. As a song-writer, as an antiquarian, Burns makes a serious contribution to the international

iconography not only of Charles Edward Stuart but also of Mary, Queen of Scots.

Burns was very sympathetic to Scottish Catholics, contemporary as well as historic. Other than Geddes, one of his closest friends and his physician in the Dumfries years was the Jesuit-educated William Maxwell (1760-1834), wrongly blamed for Burns's decision to curatively bathe in the Solway in the final months of the poet's life. Earlier, in 1785, Burns' 'Address to Beelzebub', never published in his lifetime, was a scathing attack on the Earl of Breadalbane and a defence of the Catholic tenants, including the Macdonells of Glengarry, whom the landowning autocrat was attempting to evict. However, the most important part of the story of Burns and religion has to do with the Presbyterian politics in which he was continuously mired from 1785-89.



The ruins of Alloway Kirk, the setting for 'Tam O'Shanter', stand on the site of an older Catholic place of worship.

My own research of recent years has begun to show how important the Moderate Presbyterian party in Ayrshire was to Burns's early success.ⁱ 'Holy Willie's Prayer' was a kind of poetic revenge against the Popular Party Calvinists of Ayrshire who had locked horns with Moderate Presbyterian lawyers, Gavin Hamilton and Robert Aitken. The circulation of this text in manuscript allowed people to laugh at the opponents of Hamilton and Aitken, and Burns's reward was his first book, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* published in Kilmarnock at the printing press of John Wilson in 1786 by subscription. Over two thirds of these subscriptions were taken up by Hamilton and Aitken and the volume's showpiece, 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' was dedicated to the latter.

A recent discovery by Professor Patrick Scott shows that the ornament used in the 'chapbook' version of 'Holy Willie's Prayer' of 1789 is an upside down version of the one used in the 'Kilmarnock'.ⁱⁱ This proof that Wilson published the chapbook makes it more than likely that Burns was directing its appearance, contrary to previous opinion that this chapbook was a typically unauthorised, 'pirated' work. And the reason this is important is that it shows Burns in 1789 directing his wrath yet again towards the Popular Party.

Why, this long vendetta? Most generally, because Burns's favourite Moderate clergyman, the Reverend William McGill (1732-1807) of Ayr had been pursued for years through the ecclesiastical courts on the charge of heresy after publishing his work of liberal theology, *A Practical Essay on the Death of Jesus Christ* (1786). Proceedings rumbled on until late

1789, when eventually thrown out. McGill was part of a circle of Moderate Presbyterians particularly associated with the University of Glasgow and the charges of heresy against him represent one of a number of cases associated with the university that continued through the 18th century between Moderate and popular party adherents. John Anderson (1726-96), the Glasgow professor who left money in his will for the foundation of the University of Strathclyde, envisaged this as a more orthodox (ie Calvinist) seat of learning than Glasgow.

The Reverend William Peebles (1753-1826), who detested McGill, was at the centre of the circle intent on prosecuting him and he also coined the term 'Burnomania' in 1811 in a diatribe against the poet's cultural and religious beliefs.

Close to Anderson in his views was Thomas Muir of Huntershill (1765-99), the chief lawyer involved against McGill; often seen as the 'father of democracy' in Scotland, after being sentenced to 14 years transportation to Botany Bay in 1793 as the result of a rigged trial. Muir may have been increasingly radical in his politics, but he was conservative in his Protestantism.ⁱⁱⁱ An intriguing echo of the prosecution of McGill is to be found in perhaps the greatest of all Scottish religious novels, James Hogg's *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824) in which the childhood opponent of demented Calvinist Robert Wringham is called McGill.

i See Gerard Carruthers, *Robert Burns* (Tavistock, 2006).

ii Patrick Scott, 'The First Publication of "Holy Willie's Prayer"' in *Scottish Literary Review* 7:1 (2015).

iii See new research in Gerard Carruthers and Don Martin (eds), *Thomas Muir of Huntershill: Essays for the Twenty First Century* (Edinburgh, 2016).

Gerard Carruthers is Francis Hutcheson Professor of Literature at the University of Glasgow and General Editor of the Oxford University Press edition of the collected works of Robert Burns. Literature and Union: Scottish Texts, British Contexts co-edited with Colin Kidd will be published by Oxford University Press in January 2018.

JOE FITZPATRICK

Lessons from the early church

This is an extract from a talk given to the Glasgow Newman Circle in October by a writer on theological issues.

One lesson we can take from the early church is that Jesus wished his church to be a church of equals. As he said in Mt 23, 8-9: 'You are all brothers and sisters alike.' In contradiction of Jesus's wishes, however, a hierarchical church began to emerge towards the end of the third century and the church was divided between the clergy, on one hand, and the people, on the other, between the ordained and the non-ordained.

All power and authority were claimed by the ordained who governed the church while the non-ordained were expected simply to listen and obey. This division was reinforced in the following two centuries. To this day, the faithful baptised are disempowered and, indeed, infantilised, and there is now much discussion about going back to the model of the very early church and recreating a church of equals.

A church of equals

This desire for a church of equals has also been proposed as the best and surest way of making amends for the clerical sexual abuse scandal that has rocked the Catholic church in recent decades. The wish is to prevent such a scandal ever occurring again and, even more, to prevent the kind of clerical culture that had developed and made the scandal and its cover up possible. It was made possible by the power imbalance between the ordained and the non-ordained; furthermore, clericalism breeds the mentality that,

at all costs, the institution has to be protected. A church of equals would make the church much more transparent and accountable.

In a church of equals ministries would not result in a hierarchy or some kind of ranking system; ministries would not differ from each other in terms of rank but only in terms of function – something that Pope Francis has referred to more than once.

Ministry

In the early church it was accepted that authority lay in the whole church acting as one; and the offices created in order to fulfil certain functions, such as preaching and teaching or presiding at the eucharist, were offices commissioned by the church. As we read in Didache 15. 1 – a highly authoritative source of information about the thinking and practices of the early church – 'Select for yourselves bishops and deacons'. Herbert Haag, a prominent German scripture scholar says that all ministries, including that of bishop, were established by the church. This understanding brings great freedom of action since, if the church has established the various ministries, including the ministry of bishop, the church can maintain them, change them or abolish them as it deems fit.

These seem to me to be the most radical lessons we can learn from a study of the early church. The other great lesson is that bishops and priests are there to preach and teach

the gospels and to maintain unity of belief in the church. Over time there developed the idea that bishops and priests were somehow sacred people. This grew out of the association of bishops and priests with the celebration of the eucharist –only they had the authority to preside at the eucharist. But as Schillebeeckx says, ‘Throughout the development of ministry in the New Testament one striking fact is that ministry did not develop from and around the eucharist... Nowhere in the NT is the explicit connection made between ministry of the church and presiding at the eucharist.’

Women and men who owned houses with a room that was big enough probably presided at the eucharist. Raymond Brown confesses ignorance about who presided at the eucharist in the early church but insists that whoever did so had the consent of the local community –the local community decided these matters. This is, I think, a liberating fact. It helps to desacralise bishops and priests, to strip them of titles such as being ‘another Christ’, language that some Popes have used in the past.

The use of such language is blasphemous. The word for priest in most European languages derives from the word used for elders in the NT – *presbyteroi*. We call the home of the priest a presbytery. There is no sacred role attached to the word *presbyteroi*. The Greek word for priest, understood as someone who mediates between God and man, is *hiereus* (from which we get the word hierarchy). The Letter to the Hebrews uses the term *hiereus* and *archiereus* many times, meaning such a priest. But it uses it only and strictly when talking about Jesus and the ministry of Jesus.

In the NT there is only one priest or high priest and that is Jesus. The term is never applied to any other minister in the church. The French theologian Yves Congar sees this exclusivity as revealing a deliberate intention – no one but Jesus is a priest strictly speaking, someone with a sacred role. The only other time this word is used is in 1 Peter where reference is made

to the baptised faithful; here the word used is *hierateuma*, the collective form of *hiereus*, meaning ‘priesthood’, when Peter says to the faithful at large that they are a ‘holy priesthood’ and ‘a spiritual temple’; a ‘royal priesthood’, a consecrated nation. (1 Ptr 2,5; 2,9-10)

As Congar puts it:

‘Christ is the first-born among a great multitude, and he communicates to many what he has accomplished for all. He is the temple but the faithful are temples with him. The sole temple of the messianic age is his body, his personal body, which is risen, and his ‘community-body’, the body of Christians. He is priest and sacrifice, but the faithful are priests and sacrifices with him’.

What the NT’s careful use of language indicates is that any identification of a minister of the church with Christ is mistaken; rather, Christ is with the faithful on account of their baptism. The first and most important bond is the indelible bond between Christ and the baptised. There can be no higher or stronger bond than that.

Baptism

The role of *presbyteroi* and *episkopoi*, priests and bishops, is to nurture and protect this bond of unity between Christ and the faithful, not to usurp it. Pope Francis appears to share this reading of the NT. In a letter to Cardinal Marc Ouellet in April 2016, Pope Francis reminds bishops and all of us that the Holy Spirit ‘is not the property of the ecclesial hierarchy’. He goes on to say: ‘The first and fundamental consecration is rooted in our baptism... No one is baptised a priest or a bishop. They baptised us as lay people and it is the indelible sign that cannot be wiped away...It is good for us to remember that the church is not an elite of priests, of consecrated people, of bishops – but that everyone forms the Holy Faithful People of God.’

Having stressed the pre-eminence of baptism, the Pope goes so far as to say, ‘It is illogical, and even impossible, to think that we as pastors should have the monopoly of

solutions for the many challenges that modern life presents to us. On the contrary, we must remain on the side of the people, accompanying them in their work.’

In this letter he denounces clericalism, describing it as ‘a sin’ that helps ‘diminish and undervalue’ the contributions lay people make or could make. Here Pope Francis was expanding on a theme he had introduced in his first encyclical, where in para 102 he writes, ‘a clear awareness of this responsibility of the laity, grounded in their baptism and confirmation, does not appear in the same way in all places. In some cases it is because lay persons have not been given the formation needed to take on important responsibilities. In others, it is because in their respective churches room has not been made for them to speak and to act, due to an excessive clericalism which keeps them away from decision-making’. Pope Francis has described clericalism as ‘the cancer at the heart of the church’.

Pope Francis sees the church as an inverted pyramid, with the Pope and the bishops at the bottom and the people at the top. And, as theologians such as Werner Jeanrond have pointed out, this is a new model of church, one in contrast with the notion of church as ‘a perfect society’, a society with a strict hierarchical order, ruled over by the ordained. This model of church, Jeanrond and others are saying, is obsolete and does not meet the needs of people in the 21st century. Instead they advocate the model of church suggested by Pope Francis when he compares the church to a field hospital, a centre of mercy and compassion, devoted to making people whole again. This will be a church of equals as was the early Christian church.

Joe Fitzpatrick is the author of The Fall and the Ascent of Man: How Genesis Supports Darwin, published by the University Press of America.

MARY CULLEN

Towards a new partnership between ordained and lay in the Catholic Church in Scotland

The editor of *Open House* traces the development of the ecclesial relationship between ordained and lay over the last hundred years and suggests how it might yet come to reflect the vision of Vatican II.

In a letter to French Catholics in 1906 Pope Pius X summed up the relationship between ordained and lay: 'The church is essentially an unequal society, that is a society comprising of two categories of persons, the pastors and the flock... the one duty of the multitude is to allow themselves to be led and, like a docile flock, to follow their pastors...' (*Vehementer Nos* n 8)

Vatican II took a different view. From 1962-1965 bishops from all over the world laboured to give shape to John XXIII's extraordinary vision of a church which replaced the static, deeply hierarchical, self-contained model of the 19th century, and, in Joe Holland's words, pointed instead towards 'global ecumenism, interfaith co-operation, cross-ideological dialogue and a prophetic path of justice and peace, all in the service of a new humanistic civilisation on a planetary scale'. Part of this transformation was an attempt to integrate clergy, religious and laity in the common framework of the one people of God.

The people of God

The People of God, the title of the second chapter of the Council's Constitution on the Church, signals that the building up of the church and the fulfilment of its mission is the work of the whole community of believers. Joseph Komonchak says this is one of the main contributions

of Vatican II to ecclesiology. But as Edward Schillebeeckx observed on the eve of the Council, the way ahead was unclear:

'By reason of the still brief history of Christian self-awareness of the lay person in the church, the laity do not know exactly where the limits of their active function in the Church lie... they do not know this because the theologians themselves do not properly know it and because this whole experience has not yet been fully thought out on the theological level... We must give the laity time and room so they may feel their way...'

Despite its lack of a theology of the laity, Vatican II provided the basis for a new ecclesial relationship between ordained and lay. Paul Lakeland writes:

'When we understand Vatican II in the light of all its documents say and imply, the understanding of the lay role in the church is completely revolutionised. From passive recipients of the benefits accorded by a clergy called to the exercise of sacred powers and divinely bestowed jurisdiction, the laity become active ministers of the Gospel... The laity and clergy together ... come to be understood as a missionary body in history, called into dialogue with the world that is not the church; at the same time, this world, in virtue of its being loved by God, exists in relation to the Church, the People of God'.

20 years on

How did the new relationship fare? In 1985 Pope John Paul II convened an Extraordinary Synod of Bishops to mark the 20th anniversary of the Council. The mood had shifted from the heady days of the 1960s. The liberation theologian Leonardo Boff was silenced by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in February and, in the summer, in advance of the synod, Cardinal Ratzinger, Head of the CDF, gave a long interview which was widely publicised. In it he suggests that the Council had gone too far in its openness to the world and there was a need for 'restoration'. He also refers to an overly 'sociological' reading of the concept of the people of God.

How was this reflected in Scotland? A fascinating glimpse emerges from research carried out in two Scottish dioceses between 1998 and 2000, when over 80 conversations were recorded with parishioners, priests and bishops as part of a UK wide project on church governance and authority.

Scotland 1998-2000

Both bishops stated their commitment to collaborative working between ordained and lay, but struggled to put it into practice. One priest said that increased lay involvement in the wake of Vatican II had not fundamentally altered the clerical culture of the

church. Another said that many priests felt the people had ‘nothing to tell them’. There was anger about the fact that clergy could come into a parish and disband parish councils set up in the wake of Vatican II, and frustration that lay people who had undertaken training found their skills were not being utilised. The church’s response to declining vocations and membership was framed in terms of the number of priests available to maintain traditional structures.

Yet there were also signs of a changing relationship: of lay people sharing responsibility for parishes, priests developing a role as facilitators and leaders, and a focus on mission to the wider community.

Peter Hünemann finds similar signs of decline and growth across Europe. He speaks of a new type of Catholic who, he says, ‘knows how to make judgements on the implications of the Gospel in society’. He argues that the European Catholic church as an institution is in the process of dissolution: its structures operate from a concept of society which most Europeans find obsolete. He warns that signs of new life do not balance out the huge losses the church has experienced and suggests that bishops are divided between the traditionalist option, with its emphasis on restoring the institution, and openness to new signs of life.

Receptive Ecumenism and Catholic Learning

How can we nurture the signs of new life in Scotland? The insights of Receptive Ecumenism and Catholic Learning, a strategy for ecumenical engagement developed under the leadership of Paul Murray at the University of Durham, are helpful here. It stresses the dynamic character of Christian truth and the church’s need for continual conversion; it challenges the church to create structures which would facilitate the discerning of truth together; and it takes seriously the plurality and diversity of the church catholic which suggest that Christian traditions have much to learn from one another. As Pope Francis said in relation to learning about collegiality from the

Orthodox, ‘In ecumenical relations it is important not only to know one another better, but to recognise what the spirit has sown in the other as a gift for us’.

Receptive Ecumenism also focuses on the practical. The way the church lives either shows forth or contradicts the message it is called to witness. Truth is not just something we say, but something we do. Tensions between teaching and practice are understood as wounds in the body of the church which require healing.

If we draw together these insights with the experience of communities in Scotland where a new partnership between ordained and lay is developing, a programme for change begins to emerge.

Nurturing the new relationship

The first step might be to establish how widely the partnership has already developed in Scotland’s 449 parishes. This could be followed by dialogue about the possibilities of further development and support. A key part of this process would be to ask what the Catholic Church can receive from other traditions about the way in which they are responding to the impact of institutional decline.

A second step might be the drafting of a statement on the theological basis for such a partnership. Nearly 40 years after Schillebeeckx’s observation about the lack of theological reflection on the role of lay people, a priest in the Scottish research observed that there was still a lack of clarity about why lay people should be more involved in the church.

A third step might be the development of a shared approach to adult education and training across Scotland’s eight dioceses. The development of lay ministry in the Diocese of Galloway, reported in the May edition of *Open House*, for example, might provide a helpful model for others. It would also be appropriate to ask what could be learned from other traditions, particularly where they have experienced a reduction in the number of ordained ministers.

A fourth step could be the creation of structures to facilitate greater

involvement of lay people in shaping the church’s priorities. This would help develop the skills of discerning and negotiating possibilities for change which, as Richard Lennan points out, the Roman Catholic Church, with its descending models of authority, currently lacks. Many of the directives of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, which reflect the teachings of Vatican II, were not mandatory. We might also ask what can be received with integrity from other traditions about the involvement of lay people in governance. The Church of Scotland’s General Assembly and the Scottish Episcopal Church’s synodal system might offer insights on the way in which lay and ordained can work together.

The fifth step could be the development of a greater focus on the church’s mission. Churches have a lot to learn from one another as they seek to renew their sense of mission within a rapidly changing world.

Pope Francis makes the connection between structure and mission.

I dream of a missionary option... capable of transforming everything, so that the church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures, can suitably be channelled for the evangelisation of today’s world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures ... can only be understood in this light ... to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with himself.

(*The Joy of the Gospel* n 27).

Mary Cullen’s PhD thesis is on the development of a new partnership between ordained and lay in the Catholic Church in Scotland.

MICHAEL MCMASTER

The children of St Ninian's

In August 2016 a former headmaster and teacher at a residential school in Scotland were sent to prison for abusing children in their care. A former pupil offers his reflection.

In 1951 The Irish Christian Brothers opened Falkland House as a residential school for young boys who were placed there by the local authorities of Scotland.

In years gone by it was customary for local authorities to place vulnerable children in need of 'care' in large residential facilities far from their home location. Many of these facilities were run by private organisations, usually associated with one of the established churches.

Under the 1968 Social Work (Scotland) Act, local authority social work departments replaced children, welfare, health and probation committees and local authorities also took over responsibility for investigating child abuse.

St Ninian's School was located in the village of Falkland, Fife and provided child care services to local authorities in Scotland.

For many a child the drive up to this fine two-storey Jacobean style country house built between 1838 and 1844 by William Burn was something of a Godsend and regarded as an escape from the squalor and poverty of the inner city slums of Scotland. Many of the boys were persistent truants who lived on the periphery of the criminal sub-culture and at the time the response was to remove the child from that environment. When children arrived at St Ninian's they were greeted with a warm smile by the headmaster and the accompanying social workers no doubt returned home believing they had provided the child with some level of hope for the future in this

safe and secure environment.

The aims of the school, according to a report written by Frank A. Zwolinski for *The Innes Review* (vol. 49 no.1 (Spring 1998) 11-40) were to provide boys with a secure, orderly and happy environment, and to enable them to cope with a period of personal or family stress or difficulty. This support would be necessary for part, or perhaps even for all of their secondary school years. Each child was regarded as

On the 12th August 2016, former headmaster John Farrell was sentenced at the High Court in Glasgow to five years, and Paul Kelly, a former teacher at the school, received ten years. Both were found guilty of physical and sexual abuse.

an individual, whose needs would be met, and whose potential, it was hoped, would be realised in this context. It was anticipated that a boy's self-confidence and self-respect would be developed and used to his advantage and for the service of others.

Accommodation at St Ninian's was on the second floor on three sides of a quadrangle; the fourth side of the quadrangle contained the chapel.

Around 45 boys were placed in small rooms of four or five beds and communal showers were located in the middle. Two of the Brothers were boarded in single rooms on either side of the quadrangle.

On the 12th August 2016, former headmaster John Farrell was sentenced at the High Court in Glasgow to five years, and Paul Kelly, a former teacher at the school, received ten years. Both were found guilty of physical and sexual abuse. It should be noted that when the investigation was undertaken, five individuals were initially arrested with an indictment that ran to 23 pages covering 127 separate charges. Charges against three of the accused were withdrawn by the Procurator Fiscal and at the end of the trial Farrell was found guilty on four charges and Kelly on seven, with 116 charges either not proven or not pursued. Many more charges might have been brought if former headmaster, Br Gerry Ryan, had been alive at the time of the investigation.

A total of 807 boys would come through the doors of St Ninian's over the 33 years of its history. It would be wrong to suggest that every child was subjected to some form of abuse. The majority of the Brothers were kind and considerate and their primary aim was to improve the lives of the boys in their care.

Reports suggest that the Brother as teacher relationship and Brother as parent relationship could be problematic, as was the geographical location of St Ninian's, which was unsuitable for family visits.

An Education Inspectorate Report suggested the need for a greater feminine influence.

The Irish Christian Brothers usually had five Brothers serving St Ninian's with further teaching and ancillary staff recruited locally. There were no care assistants, and beyond the hours of 9-5, staffing was covered by the Brothers. A female matron was employed alongside a seamstress and a couple of domestic assistants but their workload did not allow for any real interaction with the boys.

The man who launched the campaign to bring Kelly and Farrell to justice said outside the court: 'I started it for me, but it turned into a group thing. We have never got closure, but we have got justice. Back then nobody would have believed us if we had said what was going on. We were told: "You are here because you're bad. No one will listen to you. We are men of God and they'll believe us before you."'

Lord Matthews, the presiding Judge, told Farrell and Kelly: 'St Ninian's was meant to be, not only an educational establishment, but a haven for children in need of care and protection and a place of guidance for them. You were entrusted by the community and the Church with those duties of education, care, protection and guidance. You fulfilled these duties as far as a number of children were concerned and you were each acquitted of the vast majority of the charges which you faced. Nevertheless the jury found you guilty of a number of gross abuses of the trust placed in you in relation to some of the most vulnerable members of our society, children from difficult backgrounds with no effective voice'.

No remedy

Many of the pupils who were placed in St Ninian's are no longer around to witness the justice that was served. Alcoholism and drug addiction became for many a remedy to alleviate pain and suffering. Lives were tarnished and robbed of their

innocence, and children set forth into life carrying an unspoken truth that for many would never be shared: horrific experiences that would be carried to the grave. Many would end up in a life of crime, and in most court appearances their abuse was not mentioned or raised in mitigation.

When St Ninian's closed Brother John Farrell applied to become a Catholic priest in the Diocese of Motherwell and to this day remains a retired priest of the Diocese. Brother Paul Kelly left the Irish Christian Brothers at some point after the school closed and took up a teaching post in Plymouth, a position he was to hold for over 25 years.

I could name many of the children of St Ninian's who have long since died and whose lives were completely broken by their experiences at St Ninian's. Their voices remain silent, their individual experiences lost along with the shame and guilt they carried.

From the evidence so far produced, St Ninian's was nothing like the Daingean Reformatory School in Co Offaly, Ireland as depicted in the film *Song For a Raggy Boy*, the 2003 Irish film directed by Aisling Walsh and based on the book of the same name by Patrick Galvin. The regime there was harsh and brutal and the brothers literally got away with murder. This however did not make St Ninian's any easier for some of the boys that were sent there: there was no escape from the sordid reality. As the great parliamentarian Edmund Burke said, the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. In Galvin's film lay teacher William Franklin (Aidan Quinn) fights to liberate the boys from their oppressors and fortunately for the boys of the Daingean his intervention eventually makes a difference, if only there were a few more Franklins there would have been less Farrell's and Kelly's.

Michael McAndrews works for the Castle Craig rehab clinic for drug and alcohol addiction.

NOTEBOOK

Windows on the past

Mgr Charles Burns, a priest of the Diocese of Paisley, spoke at a symposium on 4th November organised by the Scottish Catholic Historical Association (SCHA). It was held in the Centre for Special Collections in Edinburgh University library.

His subject was the visit to Scotland in 1543 of papal legate Marco Grimani, Patriarch of Aquileia, who was a layman. Grimani spent six months in Scotland and was able to travel around the country. A lengthy account of the visit was written in verse by someone in Grimani's party, which has remained unpublished in the Vatican Library, probably because Grimani died soon after his return to Rome. Mgr Burns has now translated it, and it provides a lively account of the state of the Church in Scotland in the years leading up to the imposition of Knox's English reforms in 1560.

Grimani's main task was to ensure that Scotland remained faithful to the 'Auld Alliance' with France and was not coerced by Henry VIII's 'Rough Wooing'. Having at last produced a male heir through his third wife Jane Seymour, the old tyrant wanted to arrange a marriage between the six year old Prince Edward and the infant Mary Queen of Scots.

The account will appear early next year as the second in a new series of publications by the SCHA, the first of which, also by Mgr Burns, is *Archivium Arcis: Sources of British and Irish History in the*

Vatican Archives 855-1789, which was launched at the symposium. Mgr Burns has an unrivalled knowledge of the British material in the Vatican Library and secret archives, having worked in the archives for 35 years, most of them as Vice Prefect. He is now a Canon of St Peter's.

After his talk, Joseph Marshall and staff from the University Special Collections displayed manuscripts and printed material of Catholic interest from around the time of the Reformation. These included Latin choral music from Dunblane Cathedral, Archbishop John Hamilton's Catholic Catechism (1558) and a strongly worded pamphlet by the Catholic apologist Ninian Winzet published in 1562. On the fifth centenary of Luther's protest the key words have been 'continuity through Reform'. Much work is being done in this respect by the scholars of the SCHA.

St Mungo Festival

The past will also be brought to life in the dark days of January when the St Mungo Festival is celebrated in Glasgow.



The festival celebrates the city's patron saint and his connection with the people of Glasgow, and will run from 10th-18th January in venues around the city. Young and old are invited to explore Mungo's life and times through Glasgow's medieval heritage.

The Mediaeval Glasgow Trust, which was established to promote interest in the history and heritage of Glasgow from its foundations in the 6th century AD, works with the

festival's promoters to create a programme of events each year which includes exhibitions, music, walking tours and lectures.

The Trust brings together people who study the mediaeval period through academic links and talks, to discover how Glasgow developed as a thriving centre of urban growth, a bishop's burgh, a university city, and a hub of commercial activity.

It encourages interest in the sites and remains of the mediaeval city, especially those of St Mungo's Cathedral, Provand's Lordship, Glasgow University and the city's streets and bridges.

It also promotes the Molendinar Awards as a means of stimulating among young people an interest in their mediaeval heritage.

The date of St Mungo's Feast, 13th January, was designated the Winterfair and celebrated in the City of Glasgow from the 12th century. Bishop Jocelyn restored the feast to prominence when he promoted visits to the tomb of St Mungo in the early Middle Ages. It was a way of helping to build the economy of the City.

The Glasgow Fair in July was also established by Jocelyn as an annual event. It was a trading promotion which may have been held between the Cathedral in ground near the Bell of the Brae at High Street.

See the programme for the 2018 St Mungo Festival on page 17. All events are free.

Radioalba four years on

Scottish Christian internet radio, Radioalba.org Christian, is celebrating its fourth birthday.

It is sponsored by Glasgow Churches Together, the music committee of the Archdiocese of Glasgow, and Action of Churches Together in Scotland.



Mgr Gerry Fitzpatrick of radioalba writes:

Looking back to November 2013 it seems no time at all since our internet-based radio station was launched. Since then we have maintained a regular diet of Morning, Evening and Night Prayers, and continue to work at short services and prayers for peace, for the sick and for people in other situations where they need the encouragement and support of prayer.

We have a particular interest in promoting prayer for the young and are grateful to the many parents, teachers and young people who have given us scripts and recordings. There is a lot of fun in visiting a school and recording children with prayers and readings and music – it feels rather like 'putting prayer back into the market place.' And it is very gratifying when parents phone up to know when their child will be on the radio.

The media does what it is supposed to do in providing news and information, but sometimes it presents a steady diet of discouraging and bad news, because that is so often the reality of what is seen to be going on. It is good that political, social, economic and commercial matters, and the violence of war and oppression be revealed, but it is not the whole story. One of the most satisfying aspects of providing our weekly 'magazine' has been that we learn that there are so many people who do good things, who seek justice, reconciliation and mercy, love and peace. We need to see and hear of the good so that we may not be jaundiced by the inept and bad, and be able to encourage each other in building up the kingdom of God.

We provide a steady flow of news from such as the *Scottish Catholic Observer*, *Life and Work*, SCIAF, *Open House* and many others... We want more contributions – articles or recordings – so that we can expand

our magazine.

We provide a 30 minute morning programme which is repeated every 30 minutes until noon. We plan to make that into a 60 minute programme soon, to match the evening hour which gives Evening Prayer, magazine and Night Prayer.

We are grateful to the staff at the *Scottish Catholic Observer* for their unfailing weekly contribution which goes out at 12.00, and to those involved in Justice and Peace for their dedicated and recorded flow of information and ideas. We are able to sustain this pioneering radio service only because of the many volunteers who record articles and prayers, psalms and songs for us, and the producers and audio engineers who prepare the programs and put them online.

People of faith know how the Gospel can heal people, support them in their difficulties, and give them hope in their need. It is important that we affirm it in the public area, and radio is a tool which is both available and inexpensive.

If you want to be part of it, or to be involved, please get in touch through the radioalba.org website, facebook or through stmungomusic.org.uk.

Homeless Jesus

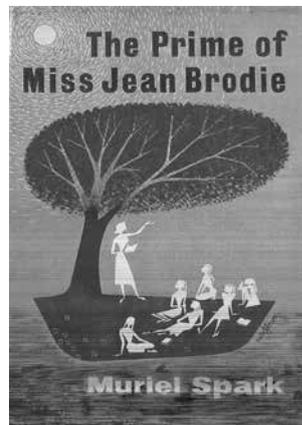


The sculpture of Homeless Jesus, which was made by Timothy Schmalz in Canada, was installed behind St George's Tron Church in Glasgow City Centre in time for Christmas.

There are many Homeless Jesus statues throughout the world, and Glasgow's is the first in the UK.

Muriel Spark 100

The Scottish author Muriel Spark, best known for *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, was born on 1st February 1918. To celebrate the centenary of her birth, a three day



symposium is being held at the University of Glasgow, in conjunction with the National Library of Scotland, from 31st Jan – 2nd February.

The celebration begins on Wednesday 31st January with a drinks reception followed by screening of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* at The Kelvin Hall.

On Thursday 1st February, there will be a range of academic speakers and an optional creative writing workshop.

On Friday 2nd February there will be a further range of academic talks and conversation regarding new memoir on Muriel Spark.

For full details of speakers, locations and timings see murielspark2018.wordpress.com.

The symposium has been organised by Helen Stoddart, Professor Gerry Carruthers and members of staff of the National Library of Scotland,

whose Spark Exhibition opens on 7th December.

Due to limited places being available, and for differing capacities of venues, registration is per day, and there is also separate registration for special events.

If anyone has any special requirements or queries, please contact the organisers at arts-murielspark100@glasgow.ac.uk

The event is now open for registration: see www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/muriel-spark-centenary-symposium-tickets

Adventures in Faith

The Episcopal Diocese of Edinburgh offers an extensive range of adult learning and development opportunities through its Adventures in Faith programme and flags up events of interest in and around the city.

Among them is an exhibition to mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation, opened by New College Library and the Edinburgh University Main Library on 10th November. It will run to 8th March 2018.

For more information about Adventures in Faith see www.anglican.org/adventures-in-faith.



The church and the marketplace

At the time of going to press, The Glasgow Newman Association had not confirmed the talk for its January meeting, but promises an interesting insight into the church and the marketplace at its meeting in February.

Professor Christopher Moore, Assistant Vice Principal at Glasgow Caledonian University and Director

of the British School of Fashion will address the issue on Thursday 23rd at the Ogilvie Centre in Rose St at 7.30pm.

Semper Reformanda

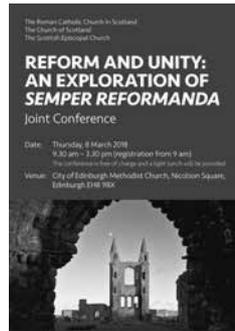
On 8th March, a joint conference on Reform and Unity: An Exploration of *Semper Reformanda* will take place in Edinburgh. It has been organised by the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church and will be held in the City of Edinburgh Methodist Church in Nicolson Square.

It will focus on the theme of reform and unity as experienced historically and in the contemporary life of the churches in Scotland. It will begin with a historical

perspective on the impact of the Lutheran Reformation in Scotland and consider how the theme of *Semper Reformanda* informs the life of the Church today.

Contributors to a dialogue in response to contributions from speakers will include Glasgow parish priest and regular contributor to *Open House*, Rev Jim Lawlor, and *Open House* editor, Mary Cullen.

To register, go to <https://reform-and-unity.eventbrite.org.uk>



Website

Have a look at the *Open House* website on www.openhousescotland.co.uk. There you will find back copies and extracts from the current edition.

Topics for *Open House*

What topics would you like to see in the pages of *Open House*? If there is an issue you think we should be covering, let us know.

Don't forget to use the letters page to add your comment on any of the issues raised.

Or send us an article on something that you care about.

St Mungo Festival

10th - 18th JANUARY 2018



**STMUNGO
FESTIVAL**

Celebrate Glasgow's Patron Saint, St Mungo, with a programme honouring his life and connection with the people of Glasgow.

Walk the Molendinar Burn, explore rarely seen parts of Glasgow Cathedral, and eat some of the food St Mungo would have enjoyed in some of Glasgow's best restaurants.

- 10/01** Glasgow City Heritage Trust & Glasgow Life Opening Lectures @ St Mungo Museum
- 10/01** Legend of Glasgow's Saint @ St Mungo Museum of Religious Life & Art
- 12/01** Vigil of St Mungo @ Glasgow Cathedral
- 12/01** Mungo's Bairns @ Wellington Church
- 13/01** Feast of St Mungo @ Glasgow Cathedral
- 13/01** View the Vita Kentigerni @ The Mitchell Library
- 13/01** St Mungo's Movable Feast - walking tour of Mediaeval Glasgow food
- 14/01** Feastday Mass @ St Andrews Cathedral
- 14/01** Festival Service, a special preview of AGAP's Lentfest exhibition "Mungo in our Midst" @ Glasgow Cathedral
- 15/01** Tours at Cathedral (HES) @ Glasgow Cathedral
- 16/01** Conservation of GC Stonework (HES) @ Glasgow Cathedral
- 17/01** Molendinar Lecture @ Glasgow City Chambers
- 18/01** Walking Tour - Following the Molendinar

www.mediaevalglasgow.org

LETTERS

The Editor of *Open House* email: editor@openhousescotland.co.uk

All correspondence, including email, must give full postal address and telephone number.

Liturgy and language

If I had been in Bishop Taylor's congregation when he took his informal poll on the 'new' liturgy (Open House, October/November) I would be with the majority who voted to go back to where we were, with all the disruption that may cause. I was never an enthusiast of the revised translation which is clumsy, uses archaic language but most of all it is the retreat on inclusive language that, for me jars the most.

It has been some time since 'man' was an accepted interchangeable word for 'human; and yet that's the choice made by the authors of the revised translation. Inclusive language matters – when professing my faith each Sunday I am required to acknowledge that 'for us men and for our salvation', Christ came to save me. I don't use that language, modifying it for myself, but it would be so much better if this was the accepted norm.

Hopefully we'll bite the bullet and return to language which is familiar, more in the vernacular and above all more inclusive.

Florence Boyle, Old Kilpatrick

Pope Francis is tackling the way liturgy develops. His instruction on *Magnum Principium* is a start. Restating the balance between local subsidiarity and universal accountability in the efforts of episcopal conferences to do liturgical translation is necessary – but it will not be enough to resolve the enduring tensions over how to pray together.

One day I hope there will be a 'Mass of Pope Francis I', celebrated in hundreds of languages; and alongside it also a 'Mass of Pope Benedict XVI' as the *extraordinary form* in Latin. Both missals will replace their predecessors, and both will be different expressions of the one Roman rite, equally authentic in the eyes of the Pope and curial Cardinal who sign them off.

But what will make both of them authentic developments from their originals, and faithful but different reflections of each other?

One sign will be the process of their development in tandem, and the mutual influence on each other of all the 200+ linguistic communities who celebrate the eucharist in their mother tongue, and the community who celebrate in Latin as an adopted tongue. The experience of praying in Swedish will influence the experience of prayer both in English and also at a Latin-language Mass. That's part of what mutual influence means in a church that is truly universal, and which values both local and international decision-making.

For that to be so, the *typical edition* that publishes, in Latin, the text of this authentically-renewed *Novus Ordo pro omnibus* needs to be recognised as a tool with a very specific purpose: that of unity. It is a means of ensuring that each of the linguistic communities who go on to translate from it act in a certain spirit. They are creating, with approval from the papal commission, the text they will use in their own culture – but in a particular spirit. That spirit is one of learning from, and unity with, all those they regard as 'other', yet who are in communion with the Bishop of Rome.

The extraordinary form for use in a Latin-speaking local church will be as much a 'translation' of the published typical edition in Latin as the Swedish or English version will be.

The moment that individual reading of the script of the typical edition becomes an act of communal worship, the Latin script on the page has become something else – an actual celebration of eucharist – in the extraordinary form. The difference would be obvious were a future Pope to decree that from now on the *Novus Ordo* should be written in first century Aramaic, to put us closer to its founding author. Even without that decree, the difference between reading and using remains. It's part of how liturgy develops. It's implied by St John's affirming that 'in the beginning was the utterance'.

The difference matters. Within that ecclesial community of Latin-users, it will be fine to translate a future *Novus Ordo* that writes of a cup given for all

('pro omnibus') by the translation dear to Pope Benedict XVI ('pro multis'), precisely because those who are taught to use that language are schooled that it means 'pro omnibus'.

Likewise for the inclusive use of 'Orate, sorores et fratres'/'Pray, my sisters and brothers'. Here too the papal *confirmatio* granted one day to a community using the extraordinary form will no doubt continue to render this as 'Orate, fratres', because its users understand and use it to mean the same.

Who should serve on that Curial committee drafting the next *Novus Ordo pro omnibus* that will re-affirm the unity of all people in communion with Rome?

I suggest two markers: those who pray the eucharist deeply in their mother tongue, and can interpret to others (rather than simply translate in their heads) that experience in Latin. And people who know that the primordial experience of Christian liturgy chosen by Jesus was a wordless one, beyond the mother tongue of anyone, at least until the future bishop of Rome interrupted the shared silence to put his Aramaic protest 'what's going on?' in this footwashing.

Anthony Kramers, Edinburgh

The price of peace

Your articles on the Balfour declaration and the peace ministry of Alec Reid (*Open House* October/November) were timely reminders of the price paid by those who work for justice and peace where there is a legacy of division.

Many would argue that Ireland's Good Friday agreement needs at least another two generations before it is securely bedded in: we can only hope that the British government factors this in to their Brexit negotiations.

As for Palestine, Christmas is a particularly apt time for prayer and awareness raising about Balfour's legacy and the tragedy that continues to unfold in the Holy Land.

Edward Gallagher, Glasgow

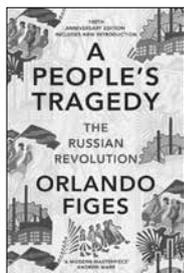
BOOKS

A People's Tragedy: Centenary Edition with New Introduction

Oliver Figes

Vintage Publishing 960pp. £20

Figes brings this classic account of the Russian Revolution up to date by asserting that Putin is the new Stalin. Stalin was the survivor of the original troika,



having let Lenin die following a stroke and arranging the expulsion from the party and the assassination of Trotsky. With or without regrets for the violence and consequent dictatorship, the Russia we know today is the result of the events in St Petersburg in 1917.

Recently Figes paid damages for libel when he had to admit that he wrote on Amazon, anonymously, negative reviews of rival historians' work. So he can't be all that sure of his opinions. He starts by saying the Russian Revolution is the most important event in world history. Whatever Luther, in the quincentennial year of his revolt might think of this, a more radical event was the French Revolution, if not in 1789 then in 1792 when 'terror', as it was called at the time, was introduced as a 'democratic' route to liberty, equality and fraternity. Its symbol was a red flag.

Serfdom was abolished in Russia in 1861, four years before the emancipation of the slaves in the United States. Abolition in itself did not help the peasants any more than emancipation helped the slaves. However there were two important differences. Firstly in Russia the peasants constituted the vast majority, perhaps 80%. Secondly as Russian citizens they were entitled to education. Enough took advantage of this to become, within two

generations, urban workers – and 'comrades'. They harboured a sense of revenge.

Figes dates the beginning of insurrection from the famine of 1891. The poor starved while the rich dined. The new young Tsar, Nicolas II, who ascended the throne after the premature death of his authoritarian father, Alexander III, was not a natural leader. He married a German princess, the granddaughter of Queen Victoria. They communicated in English although the language of the court was French. St Petersburg was the European edge of Russia, only 20 miles from Helsinki. Its inhabitants regarded other Russians as the Asiatic horde. Russian history only makes sense if it is remembered that most of the vast land mass lies beyond the Ural Mountains, much of it Siberian grassland.

In 1905 two events shook Tsarist authority. The first was 'Bloody Sunday', 9th January, when thousands of peasants followed their priest, Fr Gapon, to the Tsar's Winter Palace where they were massacred by Cossacks from the South. They had been trying to establish a co-operative movement. The second was the unexpected defeat in the East of the Russian Army by the Japanese. In Odessa on the Black Sea the sailors of the Battleship Potemkin mutinied. The Tsar responded reluctantly by signing the October Manifesto which established a State Duma (National Assembly) whose members were to be elected. At the same time soviets (local councils) were created.

However, as Figes puts it, 'the history of the revolutionary movement is the history of the intelligentsia' (a Russian word). Marxism was their philosophy. At the Second Congress of the Communist Party (held in Brussels) Lenin's proposal for a centralised leadership was debated. It was accepted by the majority (Russian bolshevik) as distinct from the minority (menshevik) who argued for a democratic approach. The Bolshevik newspaper was called Pravda.

In 1914 the peasants, Slavs who hated Teutons, went to war against Germany much as British workers went to kill the Huns. St Petersburg

was renamed Petrograd. The Russians were badly rolled over by the Kaiser's military machine. Gradually peasants and workers found themselves back home in the same bread queues. Rasputin, the power behind the throne, was murdered. In the last week of February 1917 discontent erupted in the streets. Amidst anarchy the Duma appointed the liberal Prince Lvov as Prime Minister. and Kerensky as Minister of Justice in a Provisional Government. The Tsar was persuaded to abdicate.

Historians continue to argue as to how the proletariat (from the Latin meaning those who can produce only proles/children) succeeded in turning the Russian Empire into the United Soviet Socialist Republics. Figes' answer is Lenin. With German connivance Lenin travelled with 23 supporters from exile in Zurich to Petrograd's Finland Station in April 1917. Lenin persuaded Trotsky (recently returned from New York) and the Bolsheviks to close down the Provisional Government. In the 'ten days that shook the world' on 25th October the Congress of Soviets took over the Empire.

The Provisional Government collapsed because it wanted to continue with the war instead of focusing on land redistribution. In the famous scene of the storming of the Winter Palace, Eisenstein created in *Octybar* an image of the workers taking over. This was repeated in Warren Beatty's *Reds*. The truth was more prosaic. Until he got his hands on government Lenin had to abide by the rules. Every vote was counted. It was Lenin who made sure, once they got power, that the Bolsheviks remained the majority in the Soviet Congress.

The immediate need was to get out of the First World War. At the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (on the Poland-Belarus border) the Bolsheviks signed away Finland, Ukraine and the three Baltic Republics, moved the capital inland to Moscow and called themselves Communists. The Bolsheviks were suspected of being in the pay of the Germans. This provoked a civil war. Three 'White' armies, from Vladivostok in the east, from the Cossack south (as in *And*

Quiet Flows the Don) and from the north west faced the Red Army commanded by Trotsky. Some ordnance was provided to the Whites by the victorious Western Powers. Basically the Whites promised a return to the past. Figes compares the fierce bloodletting of the Civil War to the slaughters of the First World War.

The eventual victory of the Red Army allowed the Communist Party to instigate a reign of terror powered by the Cheka, predecessor of the KGB. The gulags became the backstop until the death of Stalin. The intelligentsia introduced atheism as a state religion to counter the Orthodoxy of the peasants. Scientific Materialism was justified by Darwinian texts. Not many Jews became communists but many of the Bolsheviks were Jews. This did not save them from Stalin's anti-semitism. Soviet Man became the saving myth.

Figes is a great one for 'what if', e.g. what if Lenin had been arrested in 1917 after a warrant had been issued. But his conclusion is that he is writing history, not theology (!). Lenin believed in international socialism and thought it would start among German workers after the abdication of the Kaiser. Instead another god arose there. Russians became the pioneers of 'socialism in one country'. After their victory in World War Two they exported it to Eastern Europe before Churchill brought down the Iron Curtain.

There remains in the West a certain Russophobia. As long as the intelligentsia provides enough health, education and welfare for the workers it is thought the land should remain in the hands of the few. There was no celebration of 25th October in the former Leningrad, now renamed St Petersburg, in 2017. One of the first things Lenin did was to change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar, losing 13 days. November 7th is observed as the day Soviet Russia began to send its millions against Nazi Germany. On the occasion Putin distanced himself from Stalin by declaring evolution would have been better than revolution.

Willy Slavin

Anthony Burgess centenary

Many of the world's most prominent novelists of the 20th century were Catholic – the Irish James Joyce, the French François Mauriac, the American Scott Fitzgerald (and while he was with his second wife – Ernest Hemingway!), the Scottish Muriel Spark and the English Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh and Anthony Burgess.

Although Waugh favoured the life of an English country squire, most of the others lived abroad – Joyce in Zurich, Greene and Fitzgerald at different times in Antibes, Spark in Tuscany and Burgess chiefly in Monaco.

It is also pretty true to say that Greene, Waugh and Spark, who were all converts, tended to write a number of 'Catholic novels' whereas that was usually not the case with 'cradle' Catholics such as Joyce and Fitzgerald. Mauriac once announced impatiently that he was not a Catholic novelist but a novelist who just happened to be a Catholic.

Anthony Burgess tended to break the rules as he was born a Catholic of Irish –Lancastrian stock and became a 'Catholic novelist'. He was born in 1917 and died in 1993 at the age of 76, so this is the year of his centenary.

Although he wrote over 60 books, including 33 novels, he was always disappointed that he was best known to the public as the author of *A Clockwork Orange* which was turned into a violent and controversial film by Stanley Kubrick. He was also a composer, as proud of his music as he was of his writing, a prolific essayist, biographer, translator and literary critic.

Burgess was deeply interested in other Catholic writers and once met up with James Joyce and wrote a book about Joyce's use of language. This fascinated him because it was said that those with an Irish Catholic background, like Joyce and Burgess, were not much distance away from having spoken another language.

Burgess recognised what the converts brought to their work and in an essay on Greene, whom he admired, he wrote:

'I come of an old Catholic Lancastrian family that held to the

faith through the Reformation and had its quota of martyrs. There are several such families in England and they have made less mark in modern Catholic literature than the converts, of which Greene is the most interesting'.

Unlike Waugh and Greene (public schools and Oxford) Burgess attended two local Catholic schools and Manchester University and had two clerical cousins, one of whom became the Bishop of Birmingham. He later wrote that he had become an unbeliever from the age of 16 but went on to write a trilogy about Moses, the life of Christ and the *Kingdom of the Wicked* as well as setting some of the work of Catholic poets to music.

Catholicism is the central preoccupation of his other famous novels *Tremor of Intent* (1966) and *Earthly Powers* (1980).

Despite his periods of doubt, his often restless and chaotic life and his overwhelming output, he invariably returned to the Church. He had begun writing when teaching in Malaya in the 1940s and, because he was diagnosed with a brain tumour and given a year to live, he swiftly produced five novels – and survived his death sentence by 40-odd years.

He was a busy and compulsive reviewer of other writer's work and was even involved in an accusation that, under a pseudonym, he had favourably reviewed one of his own novels. He was described by one biographer as Protean, loquacious and self-contradictory.

There is an International Anthony Burgess Foundation which held a centenary conference in Manchester this year, where his prodigious work as well as his unusual life were addressed. It is generally felt that neither has been yet fully explored. There are a few other interesting and popular Catholic novelists who were for a time his contemporaries, such as Brian Moore (*Judith Hearne*), David Lodge (*Small World*) and Bernard MacLaverly (*Cal*) but with the volume and variety of his output, Burgess is still generally regarded as the last of the great 20th century Catholic novelists whose 2017 centenary deserved its special celebration.

Lewis Cameron

CHRISTMAS BOOKS

Open House readers and contributors recommend some of their favourite books of the year: great for giving and reading over Christmas.

Could Catalonia become Europe's next State?

Edited by Tony Strubell

*Catalonia Press 2011
[Kindle Edition, Amazon £2.49]*

Emerging from a Catholic education in the 1950s, I accepted that General Franco – who, according to Hilaire Belloc, ‘saved us all’ – had in 1936 led a Catholic crusade to rescue Spain from a Soviet-backed coup and from the massive slaughter of the clergy. That view, since debunked by historians like Paul Preston and Frances Lannon, changed when I first went to Catalonia and met people afraid of the police and whose language was banned in public.

In this collection, writers from various backgrounds explore Catalonia's grievances and argue for its independence from a Spain which – shown by Madrid's recent use of force to stop a referendum – retains much of the Francoist mindset.

Included is a particularly interesting interview with Hilari Raguera, a historian and Benedictine monk whose book on the Church and the Civil War, *Gunpowder and Incense*, has been described as ‘the most nuanced and sophisticated analysis of the subject anywhere in existence’.

Raguera sees the Civil War as, among other things, ‘a war waged



against Catalan separatism’. He believes the current leadership of the Church in Spain is wrong in defining Spanish unity as a ‘moral asset’ and in insisting on the beatification of Catholic ‘martyrs’ killed in the War. Controversially, he insists that Catalonia is a nation because Catalans ‘have decided we want to be one...’

His is one of the best contributions in an impressive collection, which has an intelligent foreword by Irish novelist Colm Toibin, reflecting on nationalism and identity, subjects important to all of us.

Dan Baird

The Spirituality of Wine

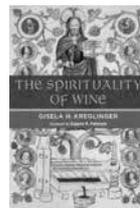
Gisela H. Kreglinger

Wm B Eerdmans, 2016

The title of this book has an instant appeal: I was prepared to be delighted. It has an academic style, is well researched and referenced, but is written in a light and engaging style bridging academic treatise and popular spirituality.

It is not an attempt to sanitise a worldly view of wine with proof texting and a lot of replaying of the Wedding at Cana. This book is a theology of God in all creation and creativity, presenting an impressive historical sweep of culture's relationship with viticulture. It is rooted in biblical views on wine: a blessing from God; and biblical imagery of vines and vineyards: a symbol of faithfulness and God's covenant.

There are many interviews with vintners (distinct from modern mass-producing ‘wine makers’) teasing out their own relationship with faith, vines and traditions. It's not afraid to dive into consumerism and modern marketing, as well as engaging with alcohol addiction. For



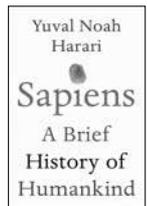
me the whole meaning was summarised by exploration of the film *Babette's Feast*. This story of food and wine transforming a pious, bitter church community into one of joy and forgiveness, is all achieved by ‘gentle intoxication’.

There is so much more, from meeting the Benedictine Dom Perignon, who maybe accidentally invents champagne to a rigorous treatment of American prohibition. I would strongly recommend you try this book for yourself. A foreword by Eugene Petersen and enthusiastic back cover blurb from Jürgen Moltmann are surely good enough pedigree in themselves.

Andrew Swift

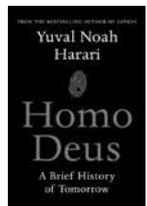
Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind

*Yuval Noah Harari
Harper Collins 2015*



Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow

*Yuval Noah Harari
Harvill Secker 2017*



The two books that have most challenged me this year have been *Sapiens* and *Homo Deus*, both written by Yuval Noah Harari. Harari is an Israeli historian and a professor in the Department of History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

His first book, which has become a best seller, charts the evolution of homo sapiens through four revolutions. He claims the dominance of homo sapiens over other early human species in our genus is due to the use of imagination and language. This has led to the development of myth, ritual, beliefs, laws which have no foundation in reality but which unite

us as a species. The last chapter which deals with the scientific and technological revolution was for me the most challenging. This revolution has put into the hands of homo sapiens unprecedented power and possibilities that will allow us to determine the future of our species in a way that is god like.

The sequel to this book *Homo Deus* deals with this revolution in more detail. While Harari assures the reader that he is only suggesting possibilities for the future, recent developments and interest in artificial intelligence, including robots and cyborgs, shows that some of these possibilities are in fact a reality. Harari claims that at present society today is organised through algorithms and suggests a new religion in the making – dataism.

The books are challenging. They face us with the reality of the world in which we live and suggest a future which could see the gap between rich and poor growing ever wider as many technological developments will only be available to the rich. They also raise the question of what it means to be human and the role of religion in this strange new world of the future.

Isabel Smyth

The Splash of Words - Believing in Poetry

Mark Oakley

Canterbury Press, 2016

‘Attentiveness, said Malebranche, is the natural prayer of the soul. Poetry is a form of attention, a literal coming to our senses...’

This quotation from Mark Oakley’s

introduction is typical of the way he combines his own insights with those of others. His collection of 30 poems opens with an essay exploring the nature of poetry itself



and the experience of faith for which, he maintains, poetry is supremely apt. Each poem has its own commentary offering literary and theological insights.

Oakley comes from but is not limited to a Christian perspective. Not all of the poems have religious references but all have a sense of the sacred.

The range of poets is extraordinary, spanning cultures and time from the 14th century to the present. Favourites such as Herbert and R.S. Thomas feature alongside less familiar poets whom I am delighted now to have encountered.

This is not the book for those looking for cosy religious comfort. It is open-ended, questing and not always conventionally reverent. U.A. Fanthorpe in ‘Getting it Across’ writes about the disciples in the voice of Jesus, ‘I am tattooing God on their makeshift lives.’ Just one of the many gems in this collection. I cannot commend it in better terms than does poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy:

‘This beautiful and wise meditation centred around the ‘soul language’ of poetry opens new windows in the shared house of both poetry and belief.’

Alison Clark

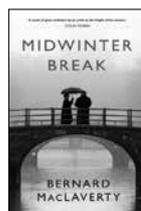
Midwinter Break

Bernard MacLaverty

Jonathan Cape

Midwinter Break is the first novel in 16 years from Bernard MacLaverty. The central retired couple Gerry and Stella are from Northern Ireland but long settled in Glasgow, as is the author.

Like many in late middle age, they are off to Amsterdam for an interesting long weekend. She is a devout Catholic, he a cynic. ‘*There*



were enough bits of the true cross to make another Forth Rail Bridge!’

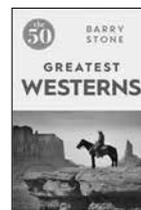
Amid the familiar and closely observed travel minutiae of the claustrophobic hotel room, winter weather and lengthy airport delays, the author movingly explores each of their perspectives and attitudes as well as a shocking memory of the Troubles and the distance which is developing between them. Among the writer’s best work and well worth the wait.

The 50 Greatest Westerns

Barry Stone

Icon Books Ltd

I saw my first western when I was six years old. My six year old grandson told me that cowboys are what old guys watch on TV every afternoon. *The 50*



Greatest Westerns is a detailed critique of the most important works from *The Iron Horse* (1924) to *The Revenant* (2016) including much of the best work of Wayne, Cooper, Stewart and Fonda. Although many consider that they all have the same story, the author illustrates how different the films are, their characters, their background and their settings. An eloquent reminder for the old guys of what they watched long before TV arrived.

Lewis Cameron

Days Without End

Sebastian Barry

Faber and Faber, 2017

This is a marvellous book. It tells the story of two teenagers in troubled, late 19th century United States. They meet under a hedge and form an enduring friendship. Thomas McNulty, who



tells the story, is a relic of famine-stricken Ireland; John Cole is from New England, and perhaps has Indian blood in his veins. It turns into a gay relationship, one which sees them through many travails. The author, Sebastian Barry, tells how he wrote it as a tribute to his son, who had revealed that he was gay.

The story is told with great humanity. While it is clearly focussed on the two boys, and told with great zest and invention, it is really a heart-warming tale of the human condition and of the struggle towards self-realisation.

After a two year stint when they are hired as dancing partners by a small town hotel owner, dressed as girls and answering the rough miners' need for some fantasy in their lives, the boys leave; as Thomas reflects, 'We knew we was just fragments of legend and had never really existed in that town'.

Then it was to soldiering they went, crossing America to contain and possibly confront Indians, often short of food to the point of famine. The scenes of engagements convey the horror of the experience, with no sense of glory.

After a period as civilians, Thomas and John are asked to sign up again on the Union side fighting the Civil War. The same horrors are to be confronted as before, though an early surrender finds them held as prisoners of war in near-starving conditions.

A prisoner exchange releases them and they head south to join an old comrade on his family farm in Tennessee. But just as it looks as if the story is coming to an idyllic conclusion, it produces several stings in the tail which keep the reader wrapped till the end.

Sebastian Barry's language shines. The novel merits a slow read, to appreciate its worth. I wish you joy in it.

Michael Martin

South and West - From a Notebook

Joan Didion

4th estate.co.uk

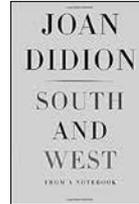
Prompted by childhood memories of a short period living in North Carolina, journalist Joan Didion took a road trip through the South a quarter of a century later. Travelling with her husband in 1970 she meanders through Mississippi, Alabama and Missouri, a world away from her own life in liberal, prosperous California.

The South she describes is shaped by its climate and history, a landscape littered with the detritus of regular hurricanes, floods and typhoons, the ambling slow pace of life a necessity in the oppressive, stifling heat, social attitudes formed by generations of being on the losing side of a War that shaped modern, progressive America.

Didion's impressions are of an over-riding sense of otherness. A society still racially segregated where opposition to the Vietnam War is dismissed as a construct of the Northern press and where white society fears the corruption of their youth, particularly their daughters by godless, pot smoking metropolitan liberals.

The South may have changed in the forty or so years since this journey, although recent reports from Charlottesville and Alabama suggest old attitudes still persist.

This is a view of a place in the world few of us will visit, written in the most beautiful, image creating prose. A slim 120 or pages, it grabs the attention from the first paragraph. A perfect companion for a cold winter day spent indoors.

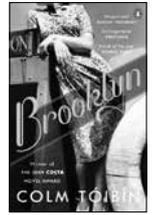


Brooklyn

Colm Toibin

ISBN 9780141041742

I am a Colm Toibin fan, both as a novelist and a social commentator (his *Desert Island Discs* is one to catch on



playback). *Brooklyn*, first published in 2009 is a wonderful introduction to Toibin's work and the perfect length for a holiday read.

This is the engaging story of twenty something Eilis Lacey who leaves her home in rural Ireland in search of work. Prompted and encouraged by her sister, Rose, Eilis lands in Brooklyn and is immediately swept into the bosom of a large established, Irish Catholic community, with all its useful connections. Her encouragement and support principally comes from the parish priest who spots her intelligence, recognises her lack of confidence and ignites her ambition to secure a better life.

This a familiar Irish story, like Edna O'Brien's *The Country Girls*, it talks of the strangeness, the cultural differences and above all the loneliness and sense of separation Eilis feels, torn from what she knows and who she loves.

Toibin wonderfully observes the everyday conversations of young women, fretting over what to wear to the next dance but also makes the space to document the life of those for whom achieving the American Dream never happened. The 2015 film adaption does justice to the book.

Florence Boyle

FILM

The Good Catholic

(2017)

Director/Writer - Paul Shoulberg

Starring: Zachary Spicer, Wrenn Schmidt, Danny Glover, John C. McGinley.

The director and screenwriter, Paul Shoulberg, dedicates this film to his parents who were a priest and a nun when they first met. It takes place mostly in a presbytery where three priests share their ministry. Danny Glover plays Father Victor the older, no-nonsense parish priest, John C McGinley is Ollie who is middle aged

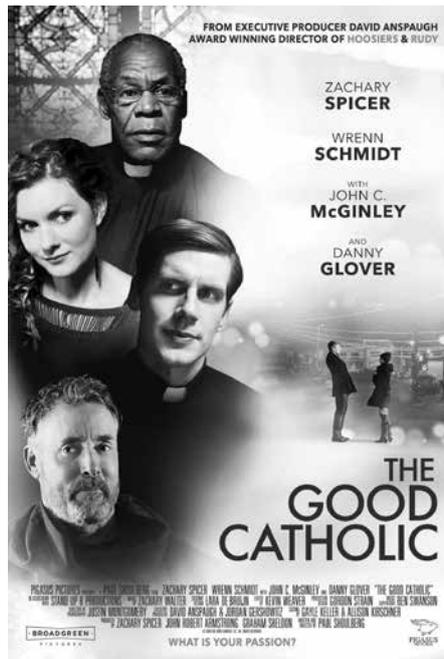


Writer/Director Paul Shoulberg.

and quite the opposite and Zachary Spicer, the main protagonist, who is the young, newly ordained Fr Daniel.

It's hard to know why it's not called The Good Priest since most people would assume 'good catholic' refers to 'ordinary' people. Possibly this is for box office reasons. Perhaps it makes the point that priests have ordinary lives and have to make decisions that the rest of the population regard as ordinary.

The ordinary reality is that a young priest today, expected to sit in the confessional as in the film, will find himself twiddling his thumbs. The only person who comes is Jane (Wrenn Schmidt), a young woman who is not a Catholic and who



confesses only that she is dying and doesn't want the usual kind of church funeral. Finding a sympathetic response she comes back several times to engage in a dialogue about faith in the modern world. Eventually they swop roles and the priest confesses to his absence of faith in an abstract God.

Showing that presbyteries are not what they used to be, at least in the United States, Daniel invites Jane to dinner with the other two priests. The parish priest, while disapproving of Jane, proclaims that the greatest of

the commandments is love. Ollie, who is sports mad, encourages Daniel to find a passion worthy of himself. The young priest, unable to sleep, takes himself to the altar rails in the middle of the night.

The Catholic Church has never recovered from the exodus of young priests after the Second Vatican Council. For better and for worse they sexed up the institution. If older priests had seen their role as religious gurus things might have become calmer. But there still remains a hankering among lay people for young priests. *The Good Catholic* endeavours to show, in an increasingly sexualised environment, how difficult their role might be.

This is an independent film which is unlikely to get a commercial release in the UK. It offers a genuine insight into the inner struggle that accompanies faith in God and suggests the need of human companionship to articulate this. It would have been much more interesting, and truer to the dedication, if Jane had been a young nun. It's serious stuff and it is unrelieved by actual sex. It is available on Amazon and could be recommended for small study groups.

Norman Barry



Father Victor (Danny Glover), left, and Father Ollie (John C. McGinley), right, must try and help young, newly ordained Father Daniel (Zachary Spicer) resolve his dilemma.

MUSIC

Lauren MacColl

The Seer

Fèis Rois Records, FEISROIS005

Fèis Rois is a voluntary organisation in the Scottish Highlands that organises local tuition festivals to teach young people



traditional Gaelic songs and music. Lauren MacColl learnt traditional Highland fiddle from a young age at Fèis Rois. Later, she won BBC Radio 2's Young Folk Award, and performed with top folk-groups like Rant, Salt House and the Rachel Newton Band. MacColl now tutors for Fèis Rois.

To celebrate its 30th anniversary Fèis Rois commissioned MacColl to compose a suite of music inspired by the life of the legendary 17th century Gaelic prophet Coinneach Oidhear. Tradition attributes to Coinneach Oidhear many astonishing predictions of the future. Tradition also says that that Coinneach was cruelly and brutally put to death by aristocratic rulers who feared and resented his prophetic powers.

The Seer was premiered at Glasgow Celtic Connections 2017 and is performed by Lauren MacColl (fiddle), Rachel Newton (vocals, harp, viola), Mairearad Green (accordeon, border pipes), Megan Henderson (fiddle, piano), Anna Massie (guitar, mandolin), James Mackintosh (percussion).

MacColl's composition is richly varied in style, pace, texture and tone. The vividly impressionistic opener *Coinneach Odhar* has bright splashes of harp and warm dashes of liquid accordion leading into a darkly lyrical strathspey: its menacing rhythm, brooding strings and chromatic melody conjuring a Hungarian/Transylvanian quality. *Lady Isabella / An dà-shealladh (Second Sight)* are tunes composed in the Highland tradition but whose sheer speed, sudden

syncopations and fiddle/mandolin combination give this set a slightly klezmer feel.

Loch Ussie is a stirring bagpipe set with fabulously syncopated rhythm and one of those dark, thrilling chord progressions that causes your spine to tingle. *A Mermaid at Fearn* is an exquisitely beautiful slow air that opens with a delicate, tender piano solo, then adds fiddle, viola and accordeon to sweetly draw every drop of emotion from this evocative tune.

There is also a striking song *Tàladh Choimnich Odhar (Coinneach Odhar's Lullaby)*, set in the mouth of the prophet's mother, shortly after his birth. She sings to her supernaturally-gifted son that the second sight may not lead to an easy life. For Gaelic-speaking audiences, this song powerfully evokes traditional Gaelic lullabies, and it particularly evokes the traditional Gaelic Nativity song *Tàladh Chrìosda (Christ's Lullaby)* which is set in the mouth of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She too, on the day of our Saviour's birth, must have feared the terrible price her son would have to pay for his extraordinary gifts.

www.laurenmaccoll.co.uk

Blue Rose Code

The Water Of Leith

Navigator Records,
NAVIGATOR103P

'Blue Rose Code' is the *nom de plume* of singer-songwriter Ross Wilson. Wilson has built a cult following.

His three previous albums earned widespread praise for his songwriting's passionate fusion of folk, pop, jazz, soul and bluegrass. Wilson's music channels Van Morrison and John Martyn.

And the echoes of John Martyn aren't only musical. *The Water Of Leith* is Wilson's first record in recovery following a personal history of overcoming alcoholism and addiction. The album's title nods to that history.



Wilson comes from Leith, Edinburgh's port. In ancient Greek mythology, the Water of Lethe was the Underworld's river of oblivion. The shades of the dead drank from it to forget their mortal lives.

After years based in England, Wilson recently returned to Scotland, connecting with top-flight Scottish folk and jazz musicians, some of whom appear on this album: Gaelic singers Julie Fowles and Kathleen MacInnes, piper/whistle-player Ross Ainslie, saxophonist Konrad Wiszniewski, trumpeter Colin Steele, drummer John Lowrie, double-bassist James Lindsay, and leading violinist Seonaid Aitken. The result is an album steeped in the emotion of homecoming, expressed in a breathtaking range of musical idioms.

Bluebell is mellow, soulful pop with crystalline electric guitar arpeggios and strong, prominent saxophone. *Ebb & Flow* is a Latin-rhythm ballad with gloriously-uplifting brass section accompaniment. *Nashville Blue* is a Celtic Soul ballad in the John Martyn tradition: 'I don't know how to be in love', Wilson sings, and the wailing trumpet bluesily agrees with him. *On The Hill Remains A Heart* goes from soul-funk to bagpipe jig and back again, awash with sweeping strings. *Child* is a beautiful chamber-jazz piano ballad with trumpet, cello, double-bass, plaintive saxophone and a lyrical, heartfelt melody.

The exquisite *Passing Places* is a duet of poignant fiddle and bluesy slide-guitar, interspersed with an evocative, contralto female Gaelic vocal. *Passing Places* flows straight into the following piece (*Sandaig*) in which Wilson's emotionally-charged vocal is joined by luminous keyboards, delicate tintinnabulatory electric guitar and lilting fiddle, painting a picture of simultaneous beauty and desolation: a land that thirsts for social justice and self-determination. The cathartic vocal opening of *Sandaig* is a musical epiphany "like the sun rising just for us".

www.bluerosecode.com

The Routes Quartet

Windrose

Routes Records, RQCD001

The Glasgow-based *Routes Quartet* is a string quartet made up of classically-influenced folk musicians:



Gràinne Brady and Tricia Mullan (fiddles), Emma Tomlinson (viola) and Rufus Huggan (cello). The quartet performs innovative arrangements of Scottish, Irish and English traditional music along with their own compositions. This, their debut album, was recorded live at St. Columba's Chapel, Drimnin, on the Morven Peninsula of the West Highland coast of Scotland. The album is a charming synthesis of classical and folk music, exploring the textures, tones and musical qualities that are characteristic of a string quartet, but with a folk accent and an occasional jazzy touch with improvised solo spots on individual instruments.

Tricia Mullan's sweet and elegant composition *The Gentleman's Farewell* has a gracefulness that feels like 18th century traditional Scottish baroque in style. Kathryn Tickell's composition *Fenham* is majestic, plaintive, atmospheric and dramatic. Gràinne Brady's *The Quartz Jig* is a dashing folk-baroque jig that could be from the soundtrack of the Stanley Kubrick movie 'The Adventures Of Barry Lyndon'.

Dark Falls The Night/Key to The Cellar (aka. *Cam Ye O'er Frae France*) is a superb, semi-classical arrangement of traditional Scottish tunes by 18th/19th century composers John MacKay and Niel Gow. This arrangement has a Vaughan Williams-esque gravitas and solemnity. It would provide evocative material for a film soundtrack (indeed, it reminded me of Peter Weir's use of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia On A Theme By Thomas Tallis* for the storm scene in his film 'Master & Commander').

www.routesstringquartet.com

Paul Matheson

OBITUARY

Gregory Baum

The eminent Canadian theologian Gregory Baum, who was a theological adviser at Vatican II and played a key role in drafting *Nostra Aetate*, the Council's groundbreaking document on non-Christian religions, died on 18th October 2017. He was 94.

Baum was born in Berlin to a Jewish mother and a Protestant father and left Nazi Germany for Canada at the age of 17. He became a Catholic in 1946 and was ordained an Augustinian priest in 1954. He later left the active ministry and married.

He studied maths before turning to theology at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. His doctoral thesis on ecumenical theology and his writing on Catholic-Jewish relations led to his appointment to the Vatican's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, and his contribution to the drafting of *Nostra Aetate*. He also contributed to the Council's Decree on Ecumenism, which opened up a new chapter in the ecumenical movement.

Baum later studied sociology, and taught theology and sociology in Toronto for over 20 years before taking up a professorship at McGill University in Montreal in the late 1980s. He was a prolific author, who published over 25 books as well as countless articles and opinion columns. He was a great champion of dialogue at all levels within and between the churches. He founded the influential *Ecumenist* magazine and reached a wide audience with his multi-disciplinary approach to teaching.

He became critical of what he saw as the church's failure to take forward the reforms of Vatican II, and the loss of the sense of optimism which characterised the Council. His progressive views on sexual ethics attracted controversy. He supported a number of social movements and joined the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice in Montreal when he retired from teaching.

He came to Scotland in 1974 at the invitation of the Catholic Renewal

Movement, whose secretary, James Armstrong, is a former publisher of *Open House*. Baum was one of many well known theologians and international figures who responded to the Renewal Movement's invitation to give public lectures on the reforms of Vatican II and their implications for the church. Among them were Bernard Haring, Hans Kung, Karl Rahner and Edward Schillebeeckx. They attracted huge audiences at meetings in Glasgow between 1968 and 1974 and went on to speak in cities across the UK.

Baum also contributed to *Open House*. In an article on Newman's teaching on the laity and its influence on Vatican II, which appeared in the August/September edition of 2010, he was critical of what he saw as the Vatican's suppression of meaningful dialogue within the church.

He wrote: 'It is easy to document the shift from the collegiality recommended by the Council to a monarchical understanding of the papacy. While the ideal of the Council was intra-ecclesial dialogue, the Vatican has since tried to suppress it. In 1989 the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, chaired by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, introduced an oath of fidelity to the Roman magisterium to be taken by all persons holding an office in the Church, including bishops, thus excluding dialogue even at the highest ecclesiastical level.

'In 1997, new regulations demanded that if a bishop wants to hold a diocesan synod, he must invite only obedient Catholics, determine himself the agenda, and use the occasion to teach the Church's official teaching.

'Rome, it would appear, does not want to listen to the Spirit speaking in the Church'.

Baum later welcomed Pope Francis' renewed focus on collegiality.

Commenting on the publication of *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) in which Francis quotes the views of bishops from around the world, Baum said that the pope was making an important point. Rather than just talking, he suggested, Pope Francis was showing what collegiality looked like.

Reviewers

Norman Barry is the long time film reviewer of *Open House*.

Paul Matheson is a music reviewer and an equality and diversity officer with the police.

Willy Slavin is a retired priest.

Thank you

Thank you to all our contributors whose generous sharing of their time and talents throughout the year make *Open House* possible.

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Thank you to all those who tell us they value the contribution *Open House* makes to a conversation about faith issues in Scotland and the future of the church. Encourage your friends to join the conversation – give them a gift subscription for Christmas (*see page 28*).

Special edition

This is a special 28 page edition of *Open House* for the Christmas/New Year holiday.

Everyone at *Open House* would like to wish all our readers and contributors a very joyful Christmas.

Next edition:

Letters and articles for the February/March edition should reach the editor by Friday 26th January

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Moments in time



Today is the first real taste of winter with dark, forbidding clouds and showers of sleet. We leave the

built-up area on the edge of Milngavie and take a path, which follows a tree-lined burn on one side with a stretch of farmland on the other. This is known as the Craigdhu Wedge, which separates part of Bearsden from Milngavie. The path is very muddy but dog-walkers are out and we meet a friendly labrador pup called Jura.

After crossing the path from Burnbrae to Balajaffrary, we enter a modern housing estate before reaching the wooded environs of our goal, Loch Kilmardinny. The loch used to be part of the landscaped grounds of Kilmardinny House, which is now owned by East Dunbartonshire Council and used as an Arts Centre. Now the estate is covered by housing but the loch is screened by a belt of trees and it is an attractive place to visit and a haunt of wildfowl. We see the usual mallard ducks, a few teal, Scotland's smallest duck, and a handsome drake goosander with a cream body and green head. This species has a curious arrangement after breeding; while the females remain here with their young, the males migrate to Northern Norway for a mass moult. This

one has probably just returned from its annual male bonding session. A cormorant is sitting on a branch protruding from the water and some black-headed gulls are sitting on a wooded island.

The trees are mostly bare but a maple still has bright green and yellow leaves and there are dark green hollies and young beech trees which retain their brown foliage. We are surprised to see a white patch where the snow for some reason has settled. At the end of the loch, we come across the carved figures of various creatures; a pike, a dragon-fly, a fox and a rabbit. Then we see a wooden owl perched on a tree stump before we come to the most spectacular one; an enormous Gruffalo, some twenty feet tall and surrounded by the main characters of the stories, a mouse, a snake, another owl and a much smaller Gruffalo, the Gruffalo's child. The author of the books, Julia Donaldson, used to live near here and these figures are a much loved feature of Kilmardinny Loch. It is good to see that they are well maintained and appreciated by local people and visitors.

Tim Rhead

Tim Rhead is a pastoral assistant in the Episcopal Church.

OPEN HOUSE

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The opinions and ideas expressed by all our contributors are their own and not accepted as those of Open House.

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