Remembering World War One: the stories behind the names

Hope for the future at the World Meeting of Families

In the name of the other: the work of Emmanuel Levinas
No excuses

The Zero Tolerance campaign, which began in Edinburgh in 1992 with a set of striking black and white posters declaring that violence against women is never acceptable, placed the issue of domestic abuse firmly in the public sphere in Scotland. The first poster to appear on buses and billboards around the city carried an image of little girls playing. The text read: ‘By the time they reach 18, one of them will have been subjected to sexual abuse’. The final poster of the series addressed the issue of sexual assault. Beneath a picture of teenage girls were the words: ‘When they say no they mean no’.

The campaign, which originated in Edinburgh District Council’s Women’s Unit, was based on research into the experience of women. Within a year of its launch, 12 more local authorities ran similar campaigns. Further research among young people aged between 14 and 21 revealed that one in two boys, and one in three girls, thought it was acceptable to hit a woman and force her to have sex in certain circumstances. Over a third of boys thought they might follow this behaviour. This led to work with children and young people which focussed on respect.

The Zero Tolerance campaign challenged the public, politicians and the legal profession to confront their own prejudices about men’s violence against women, and take responsibility for eradicating it. There have been many campaigns and a lot of education since then. The extraordinary events surrounding the nomination of US judge Brett Kavanaugh to the nation’s highest court raise questions about how much remains to be done.

The televised testimony of Kavanaugh’s accuser, Dr Christine Blasey Ford, that he had sexually assaulted her as a teenager, had women around the world in tears. It resonated with their experience. The raging, intemperate behaviour displayed by judge Kavanaugh as he fuiously denied the allegations against him carried overtones of the male power and privilege on which Zero Tolerance shone a light. His sponsor for the Supreme Court nomination, President Trump, is notoriously disrespectful of women.

In 1994 Zero Tolerance launched the ‘No Excuses’ campaign targeting the excuses men make for their behaviour. Football clubs gave their support. Policies on domestic abuse were developed. Women began to come forward and report their abuse in greater numbers.

Men like President Trump and the culture they promote hark back to a different time. Today we know there are no excuses.

We are all Semites

What is anti-semitism? Straightforwardly it means discriminating against Jews because they are Jews. It has a long history. It stretches from the expulsion of the Jews from Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD. This created a diaspora by which Jews had to earn their living in whichever society they found themselves. Discrimination followed them. Some places expelled them; others confined them to a ghetto.

Jews learned to keep their heads down. Some assimilated through baptism. Others became secular. Those who remained faithful to their religion observed the rituals in their houses. There is a thesis that, since they were never sure of a homeland, they could specialise in inter-country finance.

The Nazi Holocaust slaughtered those who lacked continental connections. Those who survived supported long efforts to increase the number of those who over time returned to Jerusalem. This fitted in with Christians of an apocalyptic bent. There was room, they thought, for both Jew and Arab in ‘The Holy Land’. The revival of Islam, occurring within a comparable 19th/20th century timeframe, put paid to that.

In the United States and parts of Europe Jews have integrated into the commanding heights of the economy. The current media attack on Jeremy Corbyn for anti-semitism is unlikely to faze many of his followers. They will see it as an effort to defend international capitalism about which they have reservations anyway. The State of Israel is criticised as part of that.

In the current TV comedy series Upstart Crow, Shakespeare is depicted as an innocent among a population of wolves. He is astonished that his family and friends think that there is a place for a grasping Shylock in The Merchant of Venice. The implication is that his 16th/17th century audience isn’t any different from our own.

Shortly after his election, on the eve of the Nazi invasion of Poland, Pius XII said: ‘it is impossible for a Catholic to be anti-Semitic. Spiritually, all of us are Semites. Jesus was a Jew. Christian ritual is significantly Jewish. Our culture is basically Judaico-Christian. Whatever our opinion of the state of Israel and its role among the kingdoms of the Middle East we cannot allow that to compromise our Semitic heritage.

See page 16 for details of an event on anti-Semitism to be held in Glasgow.
The stories behind the names

Standing in the centre of Old Kilpatrick, in the shadow of the Erskine Bridge, is a simple, stylised cairn, topped by a Celtic cross which records the names of the casualties of both world wars. Surname and initials are listed in alphabetical order with no distinction for rank. I like to think that was deliberate, a public acknowledgement that each life was as precious and important as the other.

On Remembrance Sunday locals gather and promise to ‘remember them’. But time has passed, families have moved on and the truth is there are only a few people left who can tell much of the story of any of these lost lives. I know that Patrick McLaughlin remembered there is my grandmother’s cousin, a 25 year old joiner, who died on 6th July 1916 on the Somme. I recognise some other long established village names but beyond that, nothing.

This year, on the centenary of the Armistice, I set out to find out more about the stories behind the names. What I’ve discovered is a story of young men, all with some connection to the village, who served in six different armies and who died in all theatres of the war, on land and sea. The Great War summed up in forty-nine names. They served in the armies of Australia, Britain, Canada, Italy, New Zealand and South Africa and died in places as far away as Dar-es-Salaam, where William McHaffie, serving in the South African Transport Corps, died of cerebral malaria; and as near as Berkshire, where James Hogg died of his wounds in an army hospital. Some received a formal burial, most were buried where they fell. Daniel Hendry, a new husband and father is buried alongside eleven of his comrades in the town cemetery in Annezin, northern France. After he left for war, his wife Kate and infant son, also called Daniel, stayed close to family in Old Kilpatrick. Kate’s brother John Mulgrew had been killed in action a few weeks earlier. On 5th October 1915, three months after he arrived in France, Daniel died of his wounds. Early in the following year infant Daniel died at home of tuberculosis. In less than a year Kate had lost a brother, a husband and a son. She was only twenty two.

There were Australian, Canadian, South African and New Zealanders as well. In the few years preceding the war, industrial unrest and political activism on Clydeside increased significantly. In 1911 Jane Rae led a dozen other women out on strike in Singer’s sewing machine factory in Clydebank.
In the same year seamen went on strike for a national wage. Between 1909 and 1914 union membership doubled and strike action increased. Life on Clydeside was characterised by poverty and political unrest and many left to find something better.

Young men like William McColgan, James Fitzsimons, John Kempton, Dan Sinclair, William Stewart and William McHaffie left. William McColgan made the longest journey. Working as a farm labourer in the Marlborough region of New Zealand, William enlisted in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and left for Europe. On 9th June 1917, he died of his wounds in France. The Military Medal he was awarded was sent to his widowed mother in Old Kilpatrick. One in four New Zealand men between the ages of 20 and 45 was either killed or wounded in WW1.

The Stewart family left to settle in Western Australia. Father Andrew and oldest son Andy went ahead in 1911 to establish a home and earn passage for the rest of the family, who followed in 1913. Twenty-five year old William Stewart signed up and left Freemantle in June 1915. He was killed in action on 6th August 1915 at that most ironic of places for Australians, Gallipoli. His brother Henry, a farmer, was conscripted in 1916 and left for France where he was killed in action at Passchendaele on 12th October 1917. For reasons still unknown, Henry’s name is missing from the memorial. A third Stewart brother returned home safely.

John Kempton left his family and emigrated to Canada where he worked as a bank manager in Quebec. Following enlistment he was sent to France, where his younger brother Thomas, who had stayed at home, was also serving. John was killed on 10th April 1917 and a fortnight later so, too, was Thomas. Their publican father, Thomas, broken by the loss of his sons, drowned in the Forth and Clyde Canal just before Christmas in the same year.

A couple of the forty nine were experienced soldiers. John Dunn, a father in his forties, survived the Boer War and left the army in 1903. He re-enlisted in 1914 and fought through the war until its final summer when he was badly injured at Ypres and transported to a field hospital in Dieppe where he died on 22nd July 1918.

William Grier, another Boer War veteran, worked as a grocer. He re-enlisted at the outbreak of war and died of wounds on 30th October 1914. In recognition of his bravery in saving an officer’s life, he was attached to the prestigious 1st Life Guards. On his death his widow received a note of sympathy from the King and Queen.

Immigrant Torello Lazzerini returned to Italy and enlisted in the Italian Army and was killed in action in 1917. His widow and young son remained in the village and for years they ran the café just across the road from the memorial.

Some of the links to Old Kilpatrick were tenuous. Names on the memorial include a son left behind in Edinburgh, a lodger from Rothesay and young workmates from the local shipyards. The new minister’s son Harry Gordon Smith remained in Edinburgh to continue his studies. Young Harry enlisted as soon as he was 18 and was killed in action on 13th March 1918, nine days short of his 20th birthday.

The forty nine names on the Old Kilpatrick memorial demonstrate the big heartedness of a small community and its willingness to claim as its own anyone with a connection to those among them who were left grieving. This year when we remember them we know something more about who they were.

Florence Boyle is a community activist and member of the Open House executive committee.
Hope for the future

The Bishop of Limerick finds signs of hope for the future of the church in the World Meeting of Families.

The arrival of Pope Francis was bound to transform everything. We were all struck by his inner serenity and peace, even though the issues of the dark aspects of the Church that he would have to face were well known.

The Congress also offered an engaging programme for young people and included faith and fun activities for children. Every afternoon was crowned with a memorable outdoor liturgy. And the miracle was that the sun shone for each of the liturgies with just a few minutes’ rain on the last day to remind us of what it could have been like!

Pope Francis

The arrival of Pope Francis was bound to transform everything. And so it did. The sun shone gloriously to greet him. We were all struck by his inner serenity and peace, even though the issues of the dark aspects of the Church that he would have to face were well known.

He greeted the President and his wife at the President’s Residence, then to Dublin Castle for a solemn meeting with civic representatives. Immediately after lunch he was on the streets of Dublin, being greeted very warmly and enthusiastically. Again an atmosphere of the Church family.

In fatherly fashion the Pope imparted words of wisdom, distilled from his own pastoral life, to newly married and
about to be married couples in Dublin's Pro-Cathedral. For instance, he encouraged them saying, ‘Gamble big, for your entire life! Take a risk! Because marriage is also a risk, but it is a risk worth taking. For your whole life, because that is how love is’.

The Pope’s encounter with the homeless in the Capuchin Day Centre was very moving. And later that same evening Pope Francis met privately with victims of sexual abuse of minors, a meeting that lasted well beyond the allotted time. Instead of half an hour, their conversation lasted 90 minutes during which time the Pope finalised with the victims the penitential ritual that he would use the following day.

**Festival of Families**

The first long day of the Pope’s visit still had an important appointment ahead: the Festival of Families in Croke Park, Ireland’s largest football stadium. The festival involved a cultural concert choreographed as a celebration of family life. One of the highlights was the renowned tenor Andrea Bocelli taking centre stage but the cast of thousands was impressive and included Nathan Carter, Daniel O'Donnell, Celine Byrne, Eimear Quinn, Cuthbert Tura Arutura, the Palestrina Choir and the Choir of Ages.

As well as these artists, the cast included an orchestra of more than 50 musicians, over 700 Irish dancers, a 1,000-strong choir, 100 community groups, and 300 flag bearers.

The stage design for the festival included a ‘Circle of Encounter’ where Pope Francis joined with families from across the world. He heard testimonies from five families from Ireland, Canada, India, Iraq and Burkina Faso. The themes of the family testimonies, mirroring priorities in the ministry of Pope Francis, focused on forgiveness in family; strength in family; hope in family life; the intergenerational nature of families today and the impact of technology on family life.

Pope Francis commented on each of these testimonies. So, for instance, in response to a family from Burkina Faso who shared an experience of forgiveness in the family, Pope Francis got the whole stadium to repeat with him three times the famous three words that he often says are key to good family life: ‘please’, ‘thanks’ and ‘sorry’. He continued, ‘When you quarrel at home, be sure that before going to bed you apologise and say you are sorry… Because if you don’t make peace, the next day you have a “cold war” and that is very dangerous! Watch out for cold wars in the family!’

He thanked a family from India for showing how social media are not necessarily a problem for families, but can also serve to build a ‘web’ of friendships, solidarity and mutual support. He hoped their story would help families review the amount of time they spend with technology. He pointed out that when you use the social media too much, you ‘spin into orbit’. When at table, instead of talking to one another as a family, everyone starts playing with his or her cell phone, they ‘spin into orbit’. This is dangerous. Why? Because it takes you away from the concrete reality of the family and into a life of distraction and unreality. Be careful about this’.

**The concluding Mass**

The Papal Cross in the heart of the Phoenix Park in Dublin was the venue on the afternoon of Sunday 26th August for the concluding Mass of the world meeting. Unfortunately, the weather was awful and many who had enjoyed the superb television coverage the previous day felt daunted at the prospect they might have to walk long distances in very inclement weather. In the end some 150,000 attended, less than the 500,000 who had got tickets! But that didn’t dent the sheer delight of those present to be sharing in a moment of history, being together with the Pope, renewing their commitment to the faith.

The Mass began with a very moving penitential ritual that the Pope had composed with the victims of abuse he had met the day before. In his homily, he encouraged those present to go out and bear witness. He recognised that ‘the task of bearing witness to this Good News is not easy. Yet the challenges that Christians face today are, in their own way, no less difficult than those faced by the earliest Irish missionaries’.

**Conclusion**

We are probably still too close to the World Meeting of Families to make a proper assessment of it. The following Wednesday, at the General Audience in Rome, Pope Francis offered his own reflections on his time in Ireland. He observed how he had found joy and suffering. For many, it was indeed a time of great joy. It was a chance to throw off shackles of recent years that inhibited public witness of the faith. But the shadow side of what has been discovered about the Church in recent decades could not be eclipsed or forgotten. In the exultation of joy, the pilgrims knew and wanted to acknowledge the pain of so many because of wounds inflicted by the Church. And so, when Pope Francis read out the penitential ritual at the beginning of the concluding Mass, there was a very warm, supportive applause from those present.

This is our family Church, dying and rising, darkness and light, but we are that Church together, a family of families. That’s what the World Meeting of Families helped us rediscover in hope. We will certainly have to find ways to disseminate the great materials of talks and presentations that the World Meeting of Families generated. But, more substantially, this great event called us to set out again to connect with wider society in order to hand on the Good News of the Family, joy for the world.

Bishop Leahy will be the keynote speaker at the Open House conference next June. See Notebook on page 16.
In the name of the other

A retired academic offers his reflections on a seminar on the Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas.

In his opening remarks Archbishop Mario Conti highlighted the importance of dialogue between Christians and Jews at the present time. In the UK this has become a highly politicised discussion with accusations of anti-Semitism in party politics. In the Middle East it has been a source of some concern since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, mainly because of the focus on Israel as a Jewish state. This has been made more acute recently since the Knesset passed on the 18th of July 2018 the basic act of the Israeli parliament entitled, “Israel, The Nation-State of the Jewish people,” indicating that Israel is to be a Jewish nation state. This collapses the distinction between a religious or cultural location and a civic state – and has a huge impact on those who fall both within and outside the state religion.

Archbishop Conti also emphasised that Christians had a special place in matters of dialogue with other religions, demonstrating a care for all God’s children, in particular those of other faiths.

Levinas: the man

Levinas (1906 – 1995) was a Lithuanian Jew, born in Kaunas, who migrated to Strasburg in France in 1923. He was much influenced by Russian philosophy in his early years of schooling and at home. He lived in a fairly traditional Jewish family and many of his ideas were developed from the experiences of living within that context. His academic writing and his philosophical thoughts were clearly influenced by the Holocaust. Indeed his entire philosophical stance was created in the context of the horrors of the Holocaust and the implications of this for Jewish culture. Therefore any interpretation of Levinas has to be understood in that historic context.

A central tenet of his work was summed up in the assertion, ‘Love welcomes the Other’. His work was centred on the idea that we develop as human beings in the context of ‘the Other’. This assumes that each of us has a duty to take responsibility for the other.

Three main principles were enunciated:

- What does it mean ‘to welcome the other’?
- Am I my brother’s keeper?
- When we relate to the other we do so with sensibility and with reason.

Sensibility is a very important aspect of social thought and interaction. Ethics come primarily through sensibility.

We should understand ‘substitution’. This implies that we are not primarily self-interested, but rather primarily interested in the other. The realisation of the primacy of the other was a ‘first miracle’ and was a religious moment. So, for example, peace is important principally because it is showing responsibility for and to the other, and not for the self.

Love and Justice

Levinas was deeply concerned with these ideas and saw them being closely related; he recognised over time that they are not static ideas or static principles.

‘Justice is what love looks like in public’. Justice itself comes from love and charity is impossible without justice; just as justice is warped without love. This has important implications in political life and indeed it is a framework for political life.

The thinking of St. Augustine suggested that love and justice are closely related. His interpretation is that love comes from God, and the God Is Love. This suggests that justice is not a private engagement between two people but goes beyond them.

Saint Paul considered that love is the fulfilment of justice.

Levinas suggests that love can be interpreted in a number of ways, from ‘eros’ to ‘charity’. Early in his thinking Levinas considered that love is a privileged condition and not related to society. Indeed in some ways it was detrimental to justice. Thirty years later he suggested that love and justice are social outcomes and dependent on each other. The bridge between the two might be described as ‘maternity’. This implies care for the vulnerable – a responsibility and an exposure of the person to the other.

Levinas considered that justice was the act of mediating responsibility. Is reason the primary motivation of the individual? Levinas considered that justice and love are never static or fixed and need to develop partly through the context in which they find expression.

Gender and aesthetics

Levinas cannot be considered to be ‘gender neutral.’ He writes from the point of view of a white middle class male who has been brought up in a Jewish context. He considers that education can transform the world at least in part by understanding art.

In discussion it was suggested that one of the areas that is not strong in this philosophy is the idea of forgiveness, which is not central to Jewish thinking.

Inter-faith engagement

One of the concepts which Levinas develops is the concept of ‘useless suffering’. His concern for this is a...
direct result of the Holocaust. His claim is that ‘…. the justification of the neighbour’s pain is certainly the source of all immorality.’ How are we to come to terms with suffering? Levinas claims that all evil relates to suffering. Ultimately it is intrinsically useless. The ethical component of human dignity is to walk humbly and have responsibility for the other. This raises a question about what responsibilities we have for a neighbour. Levinas claims that these responsibilities are deeper than what is often discussed as human rights.

This emphasis on suffering might be an important part of interfaith dialogue. In the Christian tradition, pain and suffering is an aspect of the death of Christ. The Christian message is also to recognise the importance of the Resurrection. There is of course suffering continuing across so many cultures and so many countries, and Levinas’ idea of this ‘living earth’ in which we are all participants takes the view that we should take responsibility for our neighbours and do what we can to avoid useless suffering. He claims that ultimately evil has no purpose.

**Relationship with God**

For Levinas, ethics is the optic through which we see God. To know God is to know what must be done. This is also to recognise the importance of the other. Levinas believes that peace is not for the self but for the other, and that we come to a fuller understanding of God not just through personal reflection and study, but an engagement with other human beings. Any understanding of God is diminished if it is separated from the other. This is to believe that the presence of God in our life is to be found primarily in the relationship with others.

**Discussion**

The discussion which followed ranged over a wide number of areas. One was the Middle East. It was suggested that the philosophy of Levinas does give some insights into the ways in which dialogue needs to take place in that area so that there is some responsibility of each group or each person for the other. There was a problem in this regard in that the current political situation does not seem to lend itself to there being any kind of reciprocal responsibility. For Levinas, there is no need for reciprocity, since it is the individual who has to take responsibility for his neighbour. It was difficult to see how this can be played out in the present political situation in the Middle East. Indeed recent events regarding Palestine have only served to strengthen the resolve of each faction in their own cause of ‘right.’

Of course there are a wide range of other implications of this philosophy. It certainly takes us beyond the idea of the development of the self in a world which seems increasingly self-centred. How the philosophy of Levinas finds expression in the marketplace and in other areas of social interaction is sometimes very difficult to see. Nonetheless it was thought that it is a useful perspective on the ways in which we understand other cultures, other religions, other ethnic groups, and other people.

Levinas can be a good starting point for discussions with ‘the other’, but he is not the only philosopher to be considered. We can have our ideas illuminated by other writers, other philosophers, and other people. In that sweep of influences undoubtedly Levinas should be one of the central figures.

Professor Bart McGettrick is retired Dean of Education at Glasgow University and Liverpool Hope University. He is Chairman of the Board of Regents of Bethlehem University in Palestine and is a frequent visitor to the Middle East.

The seminar, which was held at the Conforti Centre in Coatbridge, was organised by Sister Isabel Smyth SND, and led by Dr Steve Imes and Dr Margie Tolstoy, scholars of Levinas. It was a collaboration between the Bishops’ Conference of Scotland’s Committee for Interreligious Dialogue and the Xaverian Missionaries. Archbishop Emeritus Mario Conti, Chairman of the Committee, was in the chair.

See also Sister Isabel Smyth’s blog www.interfaithjourneys.net for another account of the Levinas seminar, along with reports and reflections on many other interfaith events.
As a parish priest in Motherwell for ten years I had the good fortune of encountering in our local Church of Scotland parish a Christian community which could work hand in hand with our Catholic parish. Many friendships were formed, and perhaps we even caught some glimpses of the unity for which Christ prayed.

In our many discussions, we wondered whether the greatest obstacle to ecumenism wasn’t so much hostility or suspicion, rather the fact that we were living parallel lives. Separate offices, staff, social events, community projects and of course worship meant that we rarely overlapped and often duplicated. It was easy to drift on side by side yet apart, with neither malice nor warmth, barely registering the ‘burning desire to join in celebrating the one Eucharist of the Lord’ of which Pope John Paul wrote in Ut Unum Sint. The issue of intercommunion as a community never arose, however a certain pain of exclusion would sometimes be voiced when we gathered for the funeral of a young person or a wedding. The invitation to ‘come and receive a blessing’ was appreciated, but seemed to fall short of the public unity yearned for in the moment.

It is heartening to see that the pain and longing which we (sporadically) felt is recognised in official Catholic Church teaching, and argues that it is more nuanced than is commonly perceived.

That it is more nuanced than public perception might believe. At a recent Mass with a mixed congregation it was announced that ‘only Catholics in the state of grace may worthily receive Holy Communion’. Does modern Church teaching confirm this statement?

Unitatis Redintegratio
Before Vatican II, Catholics were not permitted to attend church services of other denominations. The words of the Council’s Decree on Ecumenism, Unitatis Redintegratio, may seem timid: ‘In certain special circumstances, such as the prescribed prayers “for unity,” and during ecumenical gatherings, it is allowable, indeed desirable that Catholics should join in prayer with their separated brethren’. But they were in fact quite revolutionary. They opened the possibility of a communicatio in sacris, a sharing of the holy.

The Directory (1993) and One Bread, One Body (1998)
The decades since Vatican II have seen Bishops’ Conferences publishing norms for Eucharistic sharing, based largely on the Holy See’s Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism (1993).

The document which applies in our country is One Bread, One Body (1998), which established general norms on sacramental sharing in the context of a teaching document on the Eucharist in the life of the Church. In it, the bishops of England and Wales, Ireland and Scotland express a genuine desire for Christian unity and future Eucharistic sharing, but insist that the Eucharist is a sign of the unity of the Church, and that therefore normally only those in communion with the Catholic Church should receive the sacrament (4). Nonetheless, the document comments on the Directory’s openness to other Christians receiving the Eucharist at Mass: ‘if there is some other grave or pressing need. This may at times include those who ask to receive them on a unique occasion for joy or for sorrow in the life of a family or an individual’ (5). So Jeffrey VanderWilt notes, ‘The bishops determine that these norms permit eucharistic sharing in situations of pressing need (grave illness, danger of death, and so forth). They also apply to occasional, special events in the lives of interchurch couples such as weddings, funerals, and first communions’ (6).
In accord with the Directory, the conditions for reception of communion are named and commented upon: ‘that the person be unable to have recourse for the sacrament desired to a minister of his or her own Church or ecclesial Community, ask for the sacrament of his or her own initiative, manifest Catholic faith in this sacrament and be properly disposed’. With commendable brevity and good sense, the equivalent document from the Archdiocese of Brisbane describes how a priest could discern whether an aspiring communicant fulfils the above conditions: ‘In the Archdiocese of Brisbane it is sufficient for the presiding priest to establish, by means of a few simple questions, whether or not these conditions are met’.

**Pastoral Notes for Sacramental Sharing with other Christians (2008)**

The guidelines from many countries around the world, published in the wake of the Directory in the mid-late 1990s are broadly similar to *One Bread, One Body*. A more recent document on sacramental sharing, from the Diocese of Saskatoon in Canada (2008), list further occasions which may constitute particular cases of grave spiritual need, within interchurch families and communities:

- a) their marriage and subsequent anniversaries celebrated with a Mass
- b) the Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, graduation Mass and wedding or ordination of a child, grandchild or close family member
- c) major Feast days: Easter, Pentecost and Christmas
- d) times of serious illness and/or approaching death
- e) funerals of their partner, child, or grandchild
- f) at retreats, Marriage Encounters, Parish Missions and religious workshops attended with their partner
- g) other special circumstances in consultation with the pastor.

Once again the document stresses that Eucharistic sharing is not meant to become routine practice, but the list of exceptions has broadened. Needless to say, the notes from Saskatoon do not apply in Scotland, but it may indicate a direction of travel within an authoritative Church document.

**Pastoral reflections**

It would seem that an announced blanket ‘ban’ on intercommunion as described above, is somewhat rash. Indeed Gerard Austin argues in forthright manner, ‘whenever Catholic ministers announce, “Only Roman Catholics may come to communion,” their words are blunt, unnuanced, and false’ (13).

It is also interesting to note the insistence in Church documents that the prospective communicant ask for the sacrament of his or her own initiative. How can they if they are not aware that this is a possibility? Indeed they may presume that such a request may cause offence or embarrassment. Is the (albeit limited) possibility of Eucharistic sharing known and voiced in the wider Catholic community? Are priests sufficiently aware of the range of possible serious pastoral exceptions to able to raise it in, for example, sacramental preparation, or pastoral support of the bereaved?

Despite the greater openness to potential Eucharistic sharing expressed in Church documents, normal practice excludes other Christians from the Eucharist in the Catholic Church, and vice versa. The official response of the Church of England to *One Bread, One Body* expresses how Anglicans, are ‘baffled by the rule that an individual who is allowed to receive on a special occasion may not do so thereafter’. It also ruefully notes that the practice of blessings at Mass ‘is normally appropriate for catechumens and penitents, rather than for those who are regarded by their own churches as spiritually prepared to receive Holy Communion’.

Much remains to be done, then, to overcome the pain caused by our Eucharistic separation. One fruitful way forward might revolve around the eschatological nature of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the foretaste of the heavenly banquet, and so it points beyond itself to the full unity which the Church will only achieve in heaven. Do we require full visible unity to receive it now? And could the yearning for that unity be expressed, even if only occasionally, in an irruption of the Kingdom into our midst in a powerful sign of unity, an ‘exceptional, ‘one-off’ celebration of the whole interchurch family in a time of deeply-felt spiritual need, a Jubilee moment of Eucharistic sharing which attests to the limitless hospitality of God?

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**References:**


Bernard Aspinwall Memorial Essay

The Scottish Catholic Historical Association hosts an annual essay competition in honour of Bernard Aspinwall (1938-2013) who contributed considerably to our understanding of the history of Scotland and the part that the Catholic Church played in it.

This year, submissions of around 6,000 words were welcomed on any aspect of Scottish Catholic history and dealing with any period. After a careful selection, it was decided that this year the prize would exceptionally be allocated to two winners, both of whom shone in their respective areas of research. Kieran Taylor’s essay on the Archdiocese of Glasgow and the relief of Belgian refugees during the First World War is summarised below.

His co-winner, Ryan Burns, will be introduced in the next issue of Open House. His essay, ‘Enforcing uniformity: Kirk Sessions and Catholics in early modern Scotland, 1560-1650’, will be published in the November issue of the Innes Review, the peer-reviewed academic journal for Scottish Catholic history, alongside Kieran Taylor’s.

Bernard Aspinwall was born in Lancashire in 1938. He was educated at the University of Manchester and the University of Indiana, where he was a Fulbright Scholar. In 1965, he began teaching at the University of Glasgow and, later, was a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Strathclyde. Over a career spanning more than four decades, Bernard published 130 essays and articles, many of them in the Innes Review.

“A Crusade of Christianity”: The Archdiocese of Glasgow and the relief of Belgian refugees during the First World War.

Kieran Taylor is a first year PhD student at the University of Stirling. He is investigating Glasgow Corporation’s role in the relief on Belgian refugees in Glasgow during the Great War. This is a match-funded project between Glasgow Life and the University of Stirling. Prior to this, Kieran was a history teacher in Scotland and Italy. He currently volunteers with St Aloysius’ refugees and asylum seekers ESOL community class. He is interested particularly in the role that faith and politics played in First World War Scotland.

His winning essay examines the role the Catholic Church played in assisting the relief of 19,000 Belgian refugees who came to Scotland during the Great War. The Catholic Church in Scotland was instrumental in assisting refugees in Scotland, for the duration of the War. It was responsible for housing over 1,000 refugees in Catholic institutions and within the homes of parishioners across West and Central Scotland. This work contributed to the overall relief of Belgian refugees in Scotland which was coordinated by Glasgow Corporation.

The Catholic Church’s network of parishes, schools and institutions designed to cater for the poor and sick were a lifeline to the exiled Catholics of Belgium. The Catholic community of Glasgow reached out to the exiled Belgian community by hosting Belgians in their own homes and educating Belgian children at their schools. As Kieran’s essay indicates, many Catholics who had sons at the front opened their doors to Belgian families. The largely Irish Catholic community of Glasgow also sought to assist refugees with fund raising events held at Parkhead and amongst fraternal organisations like the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Why did the Catholic community of Scotland, itself a largely migrant group, give so willingly to these refugees? The leader of the Catholic Church in Scotland, Archbishop John Maguire, asserted that British defence of Belgium was a ‘crusade of Christianity’ which Scottish Catholics should endeavour to fight. Although Pope Benedict XV maintained a policy of neutrality during the war, research indicates that there were strong links between the Catholic clergy of Scotland and Belgium. Nevertheless, national churches across Europe were divided, with many clergy supporting the officially Catholic Austrian Empire. Despite this, the Catholic media of the time, most notably The Tablet and The Glasgow Observer worked hard to paint the German invasion of Belgium as a secular assault on a Catholic country.

Belgian clergy, it seemed, played an important role in the Archdiocese of Glasgow; the essay notes the important role that two Belgian priests in particular played in assisting their countryfolk. Fathers Octavius Claeys and Alphonsus Ooghe became important representatives of their community. They acted as translators, mediators and at times even propagandists for the Belgian cause. They appeared regularly in newspapers, both Catholic and secular, appealing to give generously to the exiles.

Belgian refugees perceived the Church as a beacon of hope in a time of crisis. Records indicate that Belgians maintained a strong devotion to their faith throughout the war. Some Belgians even put down roots in Scotland as they married their colleagues. St Aloysius Church in Glasgow was often chosen as a venue for these nuptial masses, perhaps as it was modelled on Namur Cathedral and had been designed by a Belgian architect.

Kieran has used multiple archives across Scotland to write his essay. He has drawn on materials deposited at the City Archive, the National Record Office, the Archdiocesan Archive and the Catholic Archives for Scotland to paint a picture of wartime Scotland. In doing so he has argued that Catholic charity for Belgian refugees was motivated by faith based solidarity.

Dr Ida Saarinen is a previous winner of the competition with her essay on ‘Boys to manly men of God: Scottish seminarian manliness in the nineteenth century’. 

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Joe Bloggs, dissatisfied with his life, decided to consult the Bible for guidance. Closing his eyes, he randomly flipped the book open and pointed to a spot on the page. Opening his eyes, he read the verse under his finger. ‘Then Judas went away and hanged himself’ (Matthew 27:5b). Finding these words unhelpful, the man randomly selected another verse. This one read, ‘Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”’ (Luke 10:37b). In desperation, he tried one more time. The text he found was: ‘What you are about to do, do quickly.’” (John 13:27)

This tale opens up to us the problem of selecting a text out of its context. The so-called ‘fair right’ in the USA can annoy us when they quote scripture in support of their policies of maintaining wealth and justifying positions of power, while children and immigrants are denied their human rights. President Trump has said that his favourite quotation from the Bible is, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth’ (Ex 21). ‘If you look at how people are treating our country, taking advantage of us, we have to be very strong. We can learn a lot from the bible, I can tell you!’

Trump’s Old Testament quotation was of course reduplicated by Jesus who asked us to turn the other cheek (Matthew 5).

Sarah Sanders, the White House Press Secretary, went on to quote Romans 13 to justify the separation of children from their families at the US southern border. Some of us will remember Margaret Thatcher justifying her economic policies as she commented: ‘No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he’d only had good intentions; he had money as well!’ She ignored the compassionate care of the Samaritan, forgetting that it was the innkeeper who saw the injured in terms of their financial value.

Proof texting uses certain short passages, many times only a single verse, pulled from the Bible in support of a particular belief or doctrine. The problem with this method is that the person who is proof texting usually gives their selected verses a meaning that may be entirely different from that which the writer intended. And they often take a text out of its fuller biblical context. It took a few centuries for the early church to settle on the official Canon (or ‘rule’) of Scripture, its official list on which to base theology and morality, and it went through a series of struggles. Canon Dr Robert Hill has made a doctoral study of Biblical inspiration in this specialist area. But briefly:

We find the dissenting Marcion, who deplored the God of the Old Testament, setting up what is called the Muratorian Canon in 170. The debate continued with the apostolic and post-apostolic Fathers like Irenaeus, the Eastern and Western authors like Origen and Augustine and Athanasius. The list goes on! Then in 363 the Council of Laodicea, followed by the Council of Hippo (393) and the Council of Carthage in 397 affirmed a wider authoritative list to be read in the church’s liturgy, until we reach Luther, the Council of Trent and Vatican I and II.

And yet, today, many people will still simply select their own favourite passages and construct their own Canon of Scripture.

When I look at the many ‘proof-text’ battles I find those on the political Right meeting the equally vigorous responses of the Left, who are often Justice and Peace workers. So, can I step back from snappy proof texts and take an informed understanding within Scripture.

The phenomenon of fundamentalism is prevalent in today’s world, bringing with it an intransigent intolerance which rules out both listening to other views and the willingness to dialogue. There are significant dangers involved in a fundamentalist approach to the Scriptures.

Fundamentalist reading will often focus on a particular text or texts, and disregard others which express different perspectives, thus making absolute what is a partial and incomplete understanding within Scripture.

‘Such an approach is dangerous, for example, when people of one nation or group see in the Bible a mandate for their own superiority, and even consider themselves permitted by the Bible to use violence against others.

‘The fundamentalist approach disregards the diversity of views and the development of understanding which is found in the Bible and does not allow for the presence of ‘imperfect and time-conditioned elements’ within Scripture (Dei Verbum 15)…

‘Fundamentalism will often take a simplistic view of literary genre, as when narrative texts which are of a more complex nature are treated as historical.

‘In essence, fundamentalist reading disregards the various human dimensions of the Scriptures, and thereby undervalues the gift of Scripture and the ‘divine condescension’ which gives us God’s word in human language. [19]

‘We should also not isolate particular texts and understandings from the rest of Scripture but should be attentive to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture (Dei Verbum 12).
Understanding texts in the context of the whole Bible means that we are able to hear the word of God in its fulness. In particular, we read the Jewish Scriptures with new insight due to the fulfilment brought by Christ, which is displayed in the books of the New Testament.

Just a few years ago, in 2014, the Pontifical Biblical Commission issued a brilliant document, The Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture. [ITSS]. It offers superb insights into modern difficulties regarding the vengeance of God, the extermination of Canaanites, the social status of women, and other challenging issues. But it also offers the following guidance:

Just as we cannot find in every single biblical passage the full revelation of God, so too, we cannot find the perfect revelation of morality. Single passages of Scripture, therefore, must not be isolated or absolutized but must be understood and evaluated in their relationship with the fullness of revelation in the person and work of Jesus and in the framework of a canonical reading of [the whole of] Sacred Scripture’ (para 136).

So we are encouraged to see Jesus’ statements and actions within (a) the whole picture of his mission and (b) the ongoing development of moral responsibility through the Old Testament, culminating in Jesus. As a caveat against those who say the Church uses proof texts in support of its teachings (say on the Sacrament of Marriage, or the dogma of the Assumption of Mary) we need to remember that ‘it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore both sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of loyalty and reverence’. (DV 9)

‘Sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God’ (DV 10).

Texts in support of doctrine arise from the wide context of the whole of canonical Scripture and from the developing understanding of the authoritative community.

Every text has a context. Both the wide biblical context and the context of the church’s teaching community need to be valued… with humility!

Dr Noel Donnelly is a consultant on adult education in the Archdiocese of Glasgow.
I cannot imagine creation without the God who inspires, designs and sustains the living world. What seemed obvious to our ancestors is no longer the case today, when to believe in a creating force is often considered unreasonable and unscientific.

There are serious difficulties in the idea of a caring creator. The world as we know it, although beautiful and amazing, has natural disasters like earthquakes, floods and droughts, and many people suffer from incurable and wasting diseases. For many, the world is a harsh and difficult place.

The role of humanity is key. Most people agree that we have a responsibility to look after the planet. To the Christian this is a God given task. Pope Francis points out in his encyclical *Laudato Si* that in Genesis 2:15, people were told to till and keep the garden. To keep the garden means caring for it and passing it on to future generations. Wise stewards of the soil and hunters and fisherfolk have always known this, but many Christians have lost sight of it and interpreted Genesis to mean that we can control nature as we see fit. Colonists went to America with the idea that there was an inexhaustible supply of natural resources. Native peoples often had a better understanding of living in harmony with nature and understood God as part of the natural world.

The Western world is not alone in having an ambivalent attitude to environmental issues. Communist countries used to be notorious for ignoring the harmful consequences of ill considered development, and in India the Ganges, although sacred to Hindus, is one of the most polluted rivers in the world.

The idea of humanity’s power over creation has grown as scientific and technological advances have given us ever more ways to alter the oceans, the air and even the climate. Pope Francis observes that technological products are not neutral; they condition lifestyles and shape social possibilities along lines dictated by the interests of particular social groups. Despite its growing population, the world has the resources to provide food, water and shelter to all, but only if we work with nature. That means we need to alter our lifestyles and consider what impact our actions have on others.

It is one of the paradoxes of life that human activity can add beauty to a landscape. Completely natural areas hardly exist in Scotland, where human activities have affected the natural landscape from the mountains to the coastline. There is great beauty in an ancient wood with its diversity of life as compared to a plantation with regimented rows of similar trees, or in a wild rocky coast as opposed to a concrete barricade. A landscape of cultivated fields with winding lanes bordered by hedgerows or stone dykes, hills dotted with sheep, cottages built of local materials is very pleasing to the eye. Human activity can enhance the landscape, while producing the food we need. Careful design and technological advances also mean that transport and industry need not be ugly and discordant.

Most of us appreciate old churches and dramatically situated castles, but majestic viaducts, canals and modern buildings like the V&A Museum in Dundee also display skills and artistry. Picturesque landscapes may be home to people living in poverty who would, naturally, prefer to live in more comfortable albeit less visually attractive houses. At its worst, modern, technically advanced societies can mean people living prosperous lives surrounded by ugliness, disconnected from nature and dependent on excessive use of the world’s resources. In the Bible, we are presented with the ideal of the heavenly city, which may symbolise culture and comfort in contrast to the dirt and hardships of rural living. On the other hand, Jesus showed a great appreciation of nature and the lives of ordinary people. We can benefit from being closer to nature, aware of the seasons and immense variety of life.

This is not the sole preserve of the Christian. We can share the

**Photo by Dominic Callen.**

TIM RHED

**Seeing God in creation**

The author of the popular Moments in Time articles, which chronicle his walks around Scotland for *Open House*, reflects on the presence of God in creation.
appreciation which people of other faiths and humanists have for the natural world. This can be an important area for interfaith dialogue. A concern for the wellbeing of the planet and its inhabitants unites us with people of goodwill. We are beginning to understand more of the complexity of the world and how we depend on it. We know that tropical forests may be far distant but have a vital role in protecting the atmosphere. The oceans may seem vast but their pollution endangers fish stocks. Christians should be at the forefront of living in harmony with nature.

Ross Greer, Scotland’s youngest MSP and a committed Christian, recently said: ‘Our challenge is not just to admire creation but to play a leading role in the increasingly desperate fight to protect and save it from the greed and exploitation of the few, which has brought our planet to this place of crisis’. I see thousands of people setting out from Milngavie on the West Highland Way, and there are millions of people who watch television programmes which highlight the natural world and the dangers it faces. We need to harness their enthusiasm. One of the main features of Celtic Christianity which attracts me is the idea of seeing God in creation, not as a distant being who in a mysterious way set the process off, but as part of revelation, involved with humankind and the whole of the created world. The big division in society is not between those who believe in God and those who do not (who often have more in common than they realise), but between those who want to exploit the world and its resources without regard for the effects on other people, and those who try to care for the world and its inhabitants. Pope Francis promotes the need for a humanity with a more integral and integrating vision. If we believe that there is a God who loves us, then surely we must love God’s creation and all its creatures.

Tim Rhead is a pastoral assistant in the Episcopal Church.

KEEP THE DATE

Bishop Brendan Leahy will be the keynote speaker at next year’s Open House conference on the future of the church, which will be held on Saturday 1st June. There will be more details in the next edition of Open House.

A year after his episcopal ordination in 2013, Bishop Leahy invited people across the diocese of Limerick to take part in a synod to discern the way ahead for the local church. The word synod, he said, means journeying together. Like the Camino which many people make to Santiago de Compostela, he suggested it would provide time to think, meet interesting people and strike up conversations with fellow pilgrims. He noted that people often work out problems on the Camino and return with a new vision.

Everyone was invited to send in observations and suggestions in preparation for the synod – people of ‘strong faith, of diminished faith, and of lost faith’. Everyone has an opinion worth listening to, said the bishop, and we must listen in order to learn. The synod, which took place in 2016, was to be an opportunity for the church to pause and begin again.

Irish theologian Gerry O’Hanlon SJ, who contributed to the preparation for the synod, identified three challenges facing the church: secularisation; the creation of a poor church for the poor; and church reform. He said the Catholic Church could learn a great deal from fellow Christians who had travelled the path of synodality for a long time. We are all learners at this stage of the journey, he said, and were being invited ‘take the risk of letting go of our more traditional, full time cleric/part time lay way of being church in order to travel together’.

To read all the papers relating to the Limerick synod, go to www.synod2016.com


BEYOND THE WALLS

Students from Catholic schools across Scotland gathered at the Xaverian Missionaries’ Conforti Centre in Coatbridge in September for a unique learning experience. ‘Beyond the Walls’ brought together eight of Scotland’s leading lay-apostolate organisations to explore the life and mission of the Church which takes place ‘beyond the walls of chapels and churches’.

The event was organised by members of the Bishops’ Conference of Scotland’s Justice and Peace Commission (Justice and Peace Scotland), who were joined by colleagues from the Catholic Parliamentary Office, and the Bishops’ Committee for Interreligious Dialogue. There were also representatives from SCIAF, SPRED Glasgow, Apostleship of the Sea, Missio Scotland, and the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul Scotland. The event was hosted by the UK Province of the Xaverian Missionaries.

Students from ten schools took part in workshops which explored the charisms, missions, current work and campaigns of the organisations.

Hugh Foy, Director of Programmes for the Xaverians said: ‘For the UK Xaverian community of priests and laity it was important to host this event.

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‘Connecting our young people with the lay apostolates of the Church and nurturing their active participation in these apostolates is crucial. We were able to see the great value of our Catholic schools in creating bridges into the living out of Catholic Social Teaching in daily life and supporting the ongoing formation of young people.

‘This was a celebration of commitment, service, diversity, inclusion, solidarity and the pursuit of the common good’

Danny Sweeney, Co-ordinator for Justice and Peace Scotland, who led the day, said: ‘The students threw themselves into everything they were asked to do, and are a credit to their staff and schools. We’re going to evaluate what we’ve achieved and get a sense of how this can be delivered again for our schools, and out to the wider church in parishes/ diocese across the country’.

New book
Professor Tom Devine’s latest book, *The Scottish Clearances: A History of the Dispossessed, 1600-1900* was launched in early October. It takes issue with John Prebble’s account of the Highland Clearances, which was published in 1963, and argues that what happened was a much more complex and widespread process that had a devastating impact on the Lowlands as well as the Highlands.

Clarification
In the August/September edition of *Open House* we reported on the development of lay ministry in St Andrew’s deanery in the diocese of Galloway, which covers the Dumfries and Galloway region in the South of the diocese. The diocese also has three other deaneries which cover north, south and east Ayrshire.

Welcome to Glasgow
The appointment of former President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, to the University of Glasgow has been widely welcomed. She will take up her position as a Professor of Children, Law and Religion in the 2018/2019 academic year.

Professor McAleese was President of Ireland from 1997 to 2011, the first president to have come from Northern Ireland. The theme of her presidency was ‘Building Bridges’ and her work for peace and reconciliation culminated in the historic state visit to the Republic of Ireland by the Queen in May 2011.

She trained as a barrister and journalist, and was Reid Professor of Criminal Law, Criminology and Penology at Trinity College Dublin and Pro-Vice Chancellor at Queen’s University of Belfast. She completed a doctorate in Canon Law at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Her area of research is children’s rights in Canon Law.

Professor McAleese was a co-founder of Belfast Women’s Aid, the Campaign for Homosexual Law Reform, the Irish Commission for Prisoners Overseas and Co-Chair of the Working Party on Sectarianism set up by the Irish Council of Churches and the Catholic Church.

Anti-semitism event
The Council of Christians and Jews, West of Scotland Branch, has organised an event which asks why anti-semitism is still a problem and what we can do to eradicate it.

It offers an opportunity to hear from national and local experts and to discuss a key issue facing Jewish people and society as a whole.

The main speaker is Mark Gardner of the Community Security Trust. There will be a panel discussion with Dr Stephen Innes, CCJ scholar in residence and visiting scholar at Strathclyde University; Ephraim Boroeski, Director of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities; Rev Maggie McTernan, assistant priest, St Margaret’s Newlands and Labour Councillor, Glasgow City Council; and Mirella Yandoli, Interfaith Programme officer for the Church of Scotland.

The event, which is free, will take place on Thursday 25th October in Pollokshields Burgh Hall, 70 Glencairn Drive, Glasgow G41 4LL.

Tea and coffee will be served from 6.30pm for a 7pm start.

To reserve your place at the event please register via Eventbrite: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/antisemitism-why-is-it-still-an-issue-tickets-50477564755 or via email to Stephen Innes: scholar@ccj.org.uk

Resources
Pax Christi, the international Catholic movement for peace, has been collecting suggestions about how to make sure peace is central to Remembrance and First World War centenary events. Its website page on *First World War Peace Plans* offers information on events, articles and talks, general resources including films and visual materials, as well as suggestions for services and vigils. http://paxchristi.org.uk/news-and-events/first-world-war-peace-plans/.

Pax Christi also offers online resources and updates on its work for peace in Israel and Palestine.
Appreciation

I am writing to express my appreciation for the last edition of Open House. I enjoyed reading the final article in Stephen McKinney’s series on the Education (Scotland) Act of 1918. I was aware of the story of the passing of the Act, and the resistance of some of the Scottish Bishops at the time. I was not aware, though, of the legal cases that took place in later years, and which were important as the Act was implemented. I believe that the Scottish Catholic community has many reasons to be grateful for the far-sighted priests and civil servants who were involved in preparing and supporting this legislation. At the same time, I also look forward to reading about Professor Tom Devine’s reflections on the Act after his talk in Glasgow on 21st November, which I will not be able to attend.

I also enjoyed the articles about developments in lay ministry in Galloway, and was saddened to read about the experiences of the group in Edinburgh. Having said that, I was encouraged by the decision to hold a conference about lay ministry in Edinburgh. Fr. Jim Lawlor’s reflections on cultic priesthood provided a useful counterpoint to the articles on the development of lay ministry, since the future of lay ministry will be intrinsically related to the theologies of priesthood that are promoted by those in leadership in the Scottish Church.

As a Scot, I am indebted to the editorial team for providing a forum for the sharing of ideas and experiences, as well as reports of significant talks and conferences to the Catholic community. On a personal note, I always appreciate the articles of historical interest, and appreciate the efforts of those who undertake research and share this with the readers of Open House.

Brendan Geary, F.M.S.

Fascinating country

With reference to your editorial on the recent World Cup and Russian relationships generally, could I mention that it was Peter the Great who built St. Petersburg pretty well from scratch? Taking a mosquito infested swamp and by sheer will power and at the cost of many, many thousands of lives, he transformed it into a viable city and port, giving access to the Baltic and the more advanced European civilisations.

His daughter Elisabeth, with her taste for luxury, influenced the Italian architect Rastrelli who designed the Winter Palace (later the Hermitage) and the Catherine Palace (Catherine 1st) at Tsarkoye Selo amongst others and in time developed what became known as Russian Baroque.

Catherine the Great (2nd) had a far more restrained taste and, by the way, was German and not related by blood to any of the Russian Royal family. She had her own coterie of architects. Particularly important was a Scot called Charles Cameron with whom she may or may not have had an affair. His buildings are more classical in the style of his fellow Scot Adams; they are not on the obvious tourist trail, and his name has, on the whole, been forgotten, in his native country at least.

Russia – fascinating country – fascinating history.

Maeve McGlynn
Glasgow

Letters and contributions

If you have any comment on articles which appear in this edition of Open House, please consider writing a letter for publication in the next edition. Send it to the editor by Friday 30th November. We’d love to hear from you.

If you would like to contribute an article or a review, send it before 30th November by email to editor@openhousescotland.co.uk, or post it to the address on the back page.
Postsecular Catholicism: Relevance and Renewal
Michele Dillon.
New York: Oxford University Press, 2018

‘Postsecularity’ has become the new buzzword that has, partly, taken over from ‘postmodernity’. It refers to the shift from a dogmatic and anti-religious modernity that prematurely predicted religion’s demise to a modernity that is beginning to acknowledge that religion may after all have a part to play in society, rather than just being relegated to the private sphere. Secularity has now discovered it doesn’t have the social capital of the faith communities, which a healthy society needs.

The context of Dillon’s book fits neatly into the emerging conversation that is taking place between what she calls a ‘contrite modernity’ and a ‘contrite Catholicism’. Catholicism’s attitude to modernity need no longer be one of confrontation, as in the culture wars currently raging between conservative Catholics and contemporary society, in particular in the United States and to a lesser extent in Britain. The book explores an alternative to the slanging match between dogmatic Catholicism and dogmatic secularism.

A key historical moment in this new conversation is mentioned by Dillon. In January 2004, Jürgen Habermas, Europe’s foremost secular philosopher, met Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, shortly before he became pope, in Munich. This now celebrated dialogue, published in English as the Dialectics of Secularization, was a fruitful meeting between a modernity that is now acknowledging religion’s positive contribution to the public square in terms of its moral compass and social capital and a religion that is open to the challenges of secularity. It was a remarkable event. Each partner acknowledged the new, and hopeful, ‘postsecular’ opportunity that was emerging: faith and reason had begun to talk to each other.

In many ways this conversation forms the backdrop to Dillon’s thoroughly researched examination of how the Catholic Church is reacting to this postsecular moment. She looks at the three contentious areas of sex and gender, religious freedom, and the family, to see in what ways both the hierarchy and the lay faithful have been responding.

Her general observation is that the faithful have on the whole been embracing the postsecular moment more enthusiastically than the US hierarchy (the book confines itself mostly to the American context). But she does notice a positive hierarchical shift in such areas as immigration, religious freedom, and climate change, notwithstanding the conservative lay backlash. Sexual morality, however, especially in the areas of abortion, same sex marriage and the rights of the LGBT community, still remains contentious for many bishops, even if many of the laity have already moved on. Dillon’s close analysis of church documents, both from the Vatican and the US hierarchy, as well as statistical surveys, is impressive.

The question at the back of Dillon’s mind is the relevance of the Catholic Church in the contemporary world and its capacity for renewal in the face of postsecularity. John Paul II’s papacy does not come out of it too well. She finds him too confrontational in the face of modernity, pitting a ‘culture of life’ (the Church) against a ‘culture of death’ (secularity). Benedict XVI’s papacy, on the other hand, she finds more nuanced and more open to dialogue with the secular, up to a point.

It is with Pope Francis’s papacy, however, that Dillon begins to see a more radical shift in official Church thinking towards an open dialogue with secularity. Being a Jesuit, she feels he has an innate understanding of the presence of God in all things, including the secular. She bases her argument on a close analysis of the Synod on the Family in 2014-15, in particular its preparatory documents and the groundbreaking request for input from the laity as well as the bishops. Her one gripe, though, is that the lay and female voice was greatly under-represented among the participants at the Synod, and that the Church still has long way to go in that regard.

But she does find that the direction of Pope Francis’s papacy towards a greater openness to the world and the signs of God’s presence in it is more hopeful. Hopeful, that is, in terms of the Church being able to locate itself in a renewed and relevant way in what is now a society that has moved on from the classic confrontation between a dogmatically secular modernity and an equally dogmatic Church, as was the case up to the Second Vatican Council and, some would say, during the reactionary post-Vatican II period that followed it up to recently.

Unlike some commentators, Ross Douthat for instance, Dillon does not fear a schism in the US Church, but sees, rather, a hopeful ‘reflexive
encounter with diverse, increasingly secularized realities’ and a ‘good-enough communal unity in and amid such diversity’ (p.166). If the book has a fault, its tone is a bit too academic, unsurprisingly as the author is a professor of sociology, but editorial help may have rendered it more readable.

Yet Dillon has courageously opened up an interesting area of discussion for the Church, away from a ‘culture wars’ approach to a more nuanced reading of modernity and its current postsecular moment. It should be compulsory reading for those bishops and conservative Catholics who think that the only attitude of Catholicism towards modernity should be a confrontational and counter-cultural one. Pope Francis is leading the way.

Paul Graham OSA

City of Light: the Reinvention of Paris

Rupert Christiansen
Head of Zeus, 2018.

In the early fifties I spent almost two years as a student in Paris. There were some echoes of fairly recent events. Our buildings had been occupied and Nazi graffiti still adorned the stone walls of the basement showers. Emerging for a first experience of the city in those days, however, was breathtaking, and marked the beginning of a lifelong love affair with Paris.

One soon saw the ease of travel over the whole city by the Metro, the churches, monuments and towers, the banks and bridges of the Seine as well as the packed pavement cafes with apron clad waiters serving coffee and cognac. After the dark tenements or suburban bungalows of Glasgow, however, what was most striking were the long, straight tree lined boulevards with their elegant apartments which make Paris uniquely recognisable. The author Rupert Christiansen narrates in interesting detail, richly illustrated with maps, paintings and photographs, how this came about and Paris became La Ville Lumière – the City of Light.

When Napoleon Bonaparte’s nephew Louis Napoleon became Emperor in the 1850s, Paris was crowded and septic. Many people lived in shanty towns with little or no water supply or drainage. Even the Île de la Cité was a slum full of beggars and thieves. The whole city was ‘pitted with noxious warrens of tortuous backstreets, cramped decrepit tenement housing and swarms of wretched humanity’.

The one singular achievement for which the French remember the Emperor was to authorise the city planner Baron George Haussmann to renovate and transform the city and make it the Paris we know today of boulevards, parks and beautiful buildings.

Haussmann demanded and was granted wide powers of design and construction between 1854 and 1879. The double page map at the beginning of the book perfectly outlines the location of the streets and avenues and their dates of construction by Haussmann, whose favourite subject of conversation was himself. Hence, close to the Arc de Triomphe lies the Boulevard Haussmann.

It was not just apartments; there evolved squares, new massive rail terminals and fashionable department stores. Hills were levelled and streets extended. After Notre Dame, tourists tend to head for the Champs Élysées and find one of Haussmann’s masterpieces – the Étoile - with twelve avenues radiating from the Arc de Triomphe in different directions.

Haussmann also had a deep passion for road building and an ambitious determination to facilitate the passage of traffic. There was accordingly a steamrolling progress which produced the long, wide and straight boulevards. This was not copied anywhere until Hitler’s Autobahn programme in the 1930s.

The author’s day job is surprisingly an opera critic, and books about Paris could almost fill the shelves of a public library. He has, however, bravely taken this work on and produced an original, absorbing and illustrated account of a rare aspect of Paris’ history for all city lovers.

He concludes that more recent grands projects, such as the Musée d’Orsay and Opéra Bastille, echo the Second Empire’s ambition to provide the population with a series of marvels, and would have thrilled Haussmann’s ‘stony heart’.

Lewis Cameron

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Director: Wim Wenders
Writer: Wim Wenders (screenplay), David Rosier
Features: Pope Francis, Joe Biden, Daniele De Angelis.

I saw this film in London over the August bank holiday where it was showing in the Curzon Victoria. Perhaps the perfect setting: a small cinema where we were close to the screen and able to take the full impact of the cinematic spread drawing us right into Brazil’s landfill and the poverty of the pickers. We also felt really close to Pope Francis, his sincerity and the personal contact he had with every single person in the crowd.

I am writing this review in Rome. I recall his address to a huge crowd in Venezuela, speaking plainly about the problems of unemployment and how the effects ripple through society. The camera roved over the crowd and I still have clear pictures of the people, many women standing, holding children, watching, hanging on every word. This Pope is speaking the truth, beyond the grim expressions, we saw studies in hope. The film was made before Pope Francis’ visit to Ireland. It follows him around the world and he was awaited with extraordinary levels of anticipation and excitement. At every step along the way you could sense and witness the delights of the crowds and the individuals who had the privilege to get close.

I will never forget his return to Argentina where he meets an old friend, a nun. They had worked together. She says ‘He saw me coming and called, ‘Sr. Maria don’t come through I will come to you’. Then the scene fades and you see them meeting; what joy, delight and love. Was this a modern reliving of one of the times Francis met Clare when he returned to Assisi?

The film opens in Assisi with Francis and the Brothers walking along to San Damiano. Gradually you realise that on March 13th 2013 when the white smoke rose over the Vatican and Jorge Mario Bergoglio SJ appeared on the Balcony to greet the people with ‘Buona Sera,’ this was the mysterious return of Francis of Assisi to Rome. A Jesuit who lives the spirituality of Francis of Assisi. Franciscan simplicity, poverty, deep love of creation, the madness of Francis mingling with the brilliance and directness of Ignatius. In film you hear him say very clearly from Brazil that ‘everyone of us is to blame for the global warming’.

The September 1st Issue of The Tablet pictures a sad, serious Pope Francis: ‘A penitent in Ireland’. The demonstrations in Dublin and Tuam and the constant reminders of painful memories, horrors relived, grievances still raw after all these years. These speak of dark truths where more than ever the power of Pope Francis’ word is needed. Another day, another image: Pope Francis celebrating Mass in Phoenix Park. As the penitential right begins, the camera closes in on his hands, and he pulls out handwritten notes, unfolds them and prays in his own native Spanish. A heartfelt plea for forgiveness for abuse, including the church-run mother and baby homes, and how it was all covered up.

On Tuesday I braved the queue and visited St. Peter’s. There was not too much of a crush round the ‘Pieta’ so I could just stand and gaze at Mary holding her crucified Son thinking of how Pope Francis finishes his Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium, the Joy of the Gospel.

‘Virgin of listening and contemplation, Mother of Love, Bride of the eternal wedding feasts. Pray for the Church, whose pure icon you are, that she may never be closed in on herself or lose her passion for establishing God’s kingdom’.

Marie Chambers fmm
MUSIC

Delyth & Angharad
Llinyn Arian

Sienco Records, SIENCO001
www.dna-folk.co.uk

The second album of Welsh traditional music and original compositions by the mother-daughter duo of Delyth Jenkins (Celtic harp) and Angharad Jenkins (fiddle, octave violin) once again sees delightful interplay between fiddle and harp as they alternate melody and harmony. The addition of guest Jordan Price Williams’ cello adds sonic and emotional depth to the arrangements, and enhances the folk-baroque feel of compositions such as Delyth’s beautiful tone-poem Cofio (Rememhering).

This album gives us an insight into the DNA of Welsh traditional music: its medieval roots, its European courtly and baroque influences, and the inflow of English and Irish musical forms.

Rhisiart Armenia is an up-tempo tune set with satisfying contrast between the bright notes of the harp and the darker, gristier notes of the richly-textured fiddle and cello. Viva Cariad (Long Live Love) is a sweet, lilting tune composed by Angharad to celebrate her friends’ wedding: the fiddle melody aches with love and longing. Sourced from a 1752 music-book, Y Grimion Felfed (Crimson Velvet) is a graceful, elegant tune that dates back to the 16th century: you can easily imagine the Tudor Court dancing to it.

Caessg (‘Sleep’) is a lullaby set: Delyth’s opening tune has soothing harp arpeggios underpinning an undulating, gently-rocking melody on fiddle. This segues into the beautiful traditional lullaby Suo Gan in which the crystalline harp gently drops the melody into a rushing stream of fiddle arpeggios, note by splashing note, evoking the river of sleep carrying a dreaming child into a magical land.

Rachel Newton
West

Shadowside Records, SHADOW03, www.rachelnewtonmusic.com

Singer and harpist Rachel Newton specialises in interpreting traditional folk songs in both English and Gaelic as well as composing her own music. Rachel was awarded Instrumentalist of the Year 2016 at the Scottish Traditional Music Awards and Musician of the Year in the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards 2017.

Her fourth solo album is a completely solo work featuring simply her voice and acoustic/electro harp accompaniment. It was recorded in her late grandparents’ old croft house on the north-western coast of the Scottish Highlands. The recording was done on a sunny week in July, and the spectacular views of the surrounding mountains have permeated the music, crystallising as short sonic haikus, vivid instrumental sound paintings that alternate between the songs, each interlude named after a nearby mountain.

As with Rachel’s previous work, the album’s songs are ingenious reinterpretations and thought-provoking arrangements of songs we thought we knew. It is an album of transformations and homecomings.

The Gaelic traditional Gura Muladach Sgith Mi (‘I am weary and desolate, alone in a strange land’) presents the female narrator of the song pining for her handsome lover, who has left her to go seafaring. The lady comforts herself with recalling his physical attractiveness, darkly lyrical harp strophes perhaps I shouldn’t be. Country music is a Walter Scott classic in Scottish musical soil. And it could easily be taken for an Irish traditional ballad:

Take this ring from off my finger where he placed it long ago.

Tell him it’s a token of forgiveness and of peace.

An even more remarkable transformation and ‘repatriation’ is Rachel’s Scottish traditional makeover of Dolly Parton’s Country & Western hit Jolene. Darkly lyrical harp strophes and Scottish traditional vocal ornamentation relocate this Nashville classic in Scottish musical soil. And it totally works. I’m astonished, but perhaps I shouldn’t be. Country music came from Scotland and Ireland, so maybe it’s no wonder that Jolene feels like she’s right at home dressed in Scottish musical clothes.

Paul Matheson

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Cyrano
Citizens Theatre/National Theatre of Scotland

Directed by Dominic Hill
Designed by Tom Piper
Music by Nikola Kodjabashia

Cyrano is the Citizen’s first production in the Tramway since it temporarily decanted from the Gorbals. First impressions of the Tramway are that the audience seems a bit different from the usual Citizen’s crowd and that the theatre going experience is a more sociable thanks to the increased ‘milling around space’. Tramway audiences are reported to have more of an appetite for the avant garde and experimental than the usual Citizen’s crowd, so it will be interesting to see how the relationship develops over the next couple of years.

First produced in 1992, Edwin Morgan’s translation, in the Scots tongue, of the story of Cyrano de Bergerac is lively, colourful and has opened to rave reviews. For those like me whose only knowledge of the Cyrano story was gleaned from the Steve Martin comedy film version, the good news is that the film helps understand the gist of the story but it is far more than a story about a man with a big nose. There is far larger element of tragedy and in the second half, in particular, laughs are rare.

Most of my theatre companions admitted to being a bit apprehensive about how much of the script we would be able to follow. As it turns out we were all more fluent in Scots than we might have thought. For the most part it wasn’t the language that caused an issue, certainly some actors were easier to understand than others, special mentions for Brian Ferguson (Cyrano) and Keith Fleming (De Guiche) but others struggled with Scots and a few more struggled to make themselves heard and that made the action sometimes difficult to follow.

It’s the overwhelming theatricality of the production that remains the lasting impression. The technical arts are as much the stars as the actors. Wonderful costumes by Pam Hogg, creative use of music and movement and punk rock stage setting all add to the feeling of a real theatre experience. Half an hour shorter and clearer articulation by the actors would have improved the experience for me. Look out for Cyrano at the Lyceum, Edinburgh and Eden Court, Inverness.

The swashbuckling and flamboyant Cyrano is played by Glaswegian born actor, Brian Ferguson.

Dominic Hill, who was appointed Artistic Director of the Citizens Theatre in 2011.

Florence Boyle
**Reviewers**

Florence Boyle is a Catholic laywoman and treasurer of *Open House*.

Lewis Cameron is a retired sheriff.

Dr Marie Chambers is a Franciscan Sister of Mary and a medical doctor who has worked in India, Pakistan and Africa.

Paul Graham OSA is parish priest of St Joseph’s, Sighthill, Edinburgh and author of *Making Room for others: Augustine and the Contemporary World* (St Paul’s UK, 2013).

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

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Thank you to all our contributors who share their time and talents to make *Open House* possible.
Moments in time

We leave the bus at the small village of Balmore and walk down the old road past an amazingly small stone building which for many years was the Balmore Coach-house. This was one of Scotland’s first Fairtrade shops and has now moved to Gavin’s Mill in Milngavie where there is much more space. After passing some modern houses and a few cottages we turn right down a straight track which crosses the Kelvin floodplain, known as Balmore Haughs.

In the distance, beyond a cornfield, we notice Cawder House, a small mansion dating from the seventeenth century, now used as a golf club-house. The path is lined by tall hawthorn hedges and takes us onto an embankment bordering the river Kelvin, which flows slowly beneath tall overhanging trees. A substantial footbridge crosses the river and here there is a seat where we take a rest. In the distance to the north, across the farmland, there is a line of low hills, beyond which lies Lennoxtown. The river flows peacefully round a sharp bend. Although we are only five miles from the centre of Glasgow, it feels like deep countryside.

Suddenly there is a turquoise flash as a kingfisher flies up the river; not an uncommon sight hereabouts but always thrilling to see. This a junction of paths and several walkers and joggers pass by. The path to the south leads to Cadder Kirk and the Forth-Clyde canal but we turn left along the river bank. Across the fields, a farmer is calling some bullocks who appear to head obediently towards him. Then we notice that the cattle are responding to a sheepdog, which is nipping at their heels. The path passes a group of closely intertwined willow trees, then reveals a large pool in a grassy meadow on the other side of the river. This not marked on the map and may be the result of mining subsidence. It is a good place for birds and today we see about 200 mallard ducks and five grey lag geese. A flock of lapwings fly in and land on the mud next to the pool. Sometimes there are other types of duck such as teal, wigeon and shoveler.

We now leave the golf-course, and the land on both sides has recently been harvested with barley and oats; woodpigeons are taking advantage of any leftover grain. A bird of prey appears, it is a kestrel which hovers over a marshy area looking for mice or voles. Ahead we see the town of Kirkintilloch, looking almost medieval as it is dominated by church towers. We come to a busy road, where there is a very welcome pedestrian crossing, and make our way into the large village of Torrance. Beside the bus-stop, a red admiral butterfly is sunning itself on the wall; a colourful culmination to one of my favourite walks.

Tim Rhead
Tim Rhead is a pastoral assistant in the Episcopal Church.

Contributions for the next edition
Thank you to all our subscribers and contributors to this edition of Open House.

The next edition (December/January) will be published in the second week of December and the deadline for letters and articles is Friday, 30th November.

Open House exists to promote comment and debate on a wide range of issues from a faith perspective in Scotland and we would encourage our readers to let us know what they think about the views, opinions and reviews we carry. Letters and contributions are always welcome and we would be interested in your suggestions for topics or events we might cover in the future.

Submissions, letters, ideas for features and notice of upcoming events should be sent to the editor at editor@openhousescotland.co.uk, or by post at the address above. We look forward to hearing from you.