

OPEN HOUSE

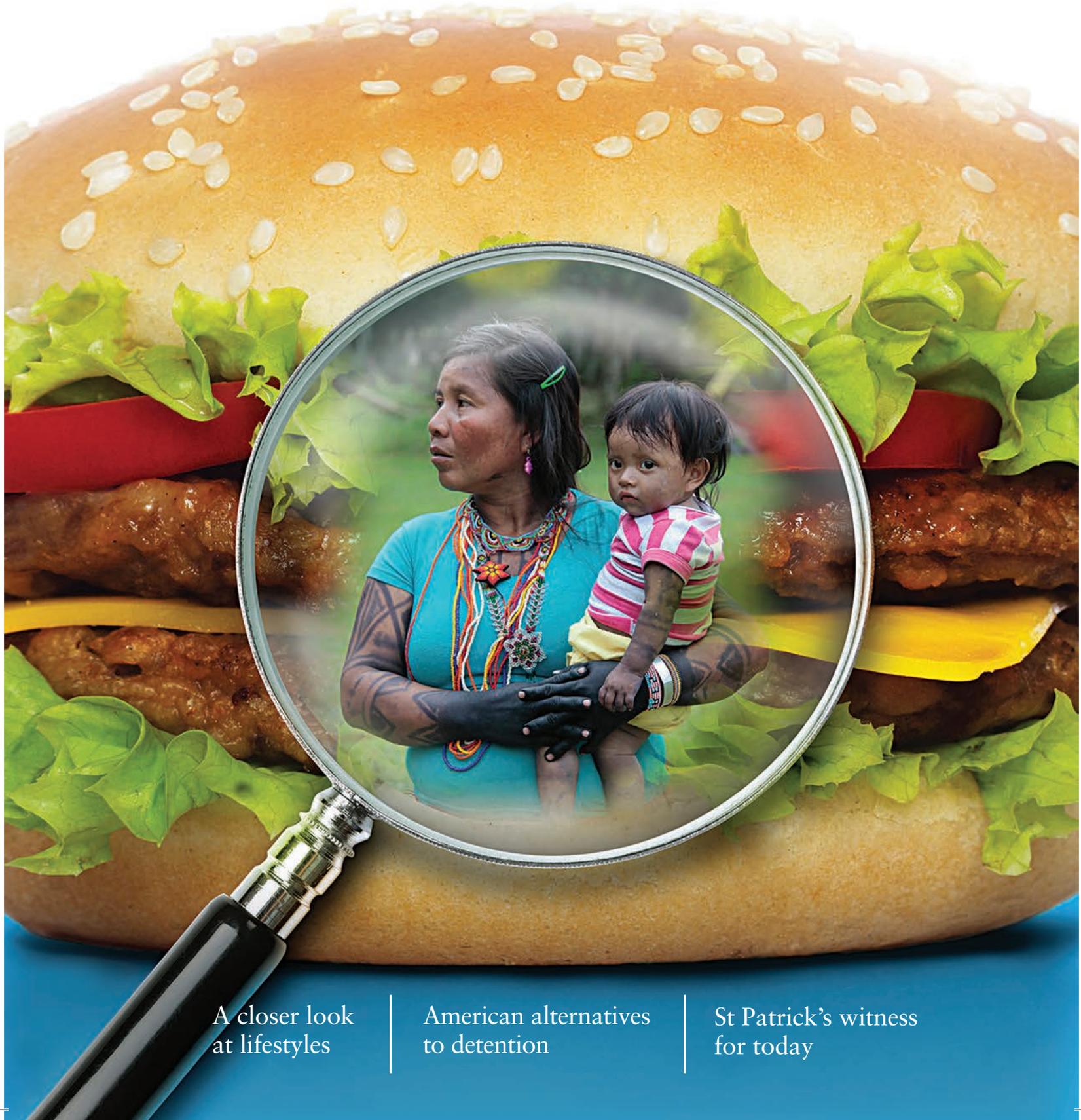
Reflecting faith issues in Scotland

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A closer look
at lifestyles

American alternatives
to detention

St Patrick's witness
for today

Fasting in Lent

As Lent is becoming better known people ask what Catholics do in the 40 days before Easter. They are not impressed when we talk about giving up what most people would describe as luxuries, like sweets and alcohol. Or when the fasts of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday turn out to mean eating a bit less rather than fasting for 24 hours. Self-denial should hurt a bit more.

Pope Francis might agree. In his message for Lent this year he says that Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty. But, he adds: 'Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt'.

The Irish poet Patrick Kavanagh went to the penitential island of Lough Derg to see what happened when people embarked on serious fasting, as they have been doing there for centuries. To-day's pilgrims usually spend three days in prayer and self-denial, consuming only dry bread and black tea, and spending the whole of their first night on the island in prayer. Kavanagh's long poem *Lough Derg* reflects initial scepticism about people who come 'to fast and pray and beg', but is followed by awareness of transformation.

He came to Lough Derg to please the superstition
Which says, 'At least the thing can do no harm'
Yet he alone went out with Jesus fishing.¹

We know that fasting, like dieting, is good for our physical health; Kavanagh came to see that it is also spiritual. Those who prayed and fasted discovered the presence of God in their lives. But how is being poorer a blessing, as Francis insists?

Christ's poverty, he says, is the logic of love, the logic of the incarnation and the cross. It is the greatest treasure of all: Jesus' wealth is his boundless confidence in God the Father, his constant trust, his desire always and only to do the Father's will. Our freedom and happiness lie in the solidarity of this love.

We are called to imitate Christ by confronting the poverty of our brothers and sisters and taking practical steps to alleviate it. Our consciences need to be converted to justice, equality, simplicity and sharing.

¹From Patrick Kavanagh, *The Collected Poems*, collected, arranged and edited by Peter Kavanagh 1972

International Women's Day

An 84-year-old nun spent international women's day in jail this year as she began a three year sentence for breaking into a Tennessee nuclear weapons facility and defacing its walls. During the trial, Sister Megan Rice and her two male co-defendants, members of the group 'Transform Now Plowshares' testified that their actions were nonviolent and symbolic and were designed to call attention to the dangers of US nuclear weapons production.

Sister Megan, a member of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, has already served two prison sentences for peace activism. Her attorney told Catholic News Services that she is in good health and enjoys the people she is with in prison. She feels she has a ministry there.

International women's day, which began in 1911 to highlight the struggle for women's rights, was taken up by the United Nations in 1977 when member states were invited to proclaim March 8th as UN day for women's rights and world peace. Sister Megan's witness recalls the contribution made by religious women.

In Scotland, the Scottish Church's League for Women's Suffrage campaigned for votes for women at the beginning of the 20th century. Eunice Murray of Cardross Parish Church was the first woman in Scotland to stand for parliamentary election in 1918, the year women over 30 who met minimum property conditions won the right to vote and stand for election (*Open House* 220).

Once the vote for all women over 21 was won in 1928, the feminist movement turned its attention to inequality in wider society. As the second wave of feminism highlighted the impact of sexism and patriarchy on all aspects of women's lives, feminist theologians uncovered the extent to which Christian theology was constructed mainly from a male standpoint. Scholars like Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza began the work of reconstruction and drew attention to the deep rooted structures of oppression in which women and men are complicit, which put poor women at the bottom of a pyramid of multiple forms of oppression.

Religious sisters in the US who give their lives to working with poor women and people on the margins of society, and who take a view on issues like the ordination of women, found themselves accused by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith of taking up 'radical feminist themes' (*Open House* 228). The sisters argued that they were simply asking the questions women theologians around the world have been asking: how have the church's interpretation of the way we talk about God, interpret scripture, and organise life in the church been tainted by a culture that minimises the value and place of women?

It is not easy to challenge powerful institutions. Sister Megan is a reminder of how much we owe to the women who have had the courage to do so.

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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 image courtesy of SCIAF: photo by Simon Murphy.

PATRICK GRADY

Looking closer, taking action

SCIAF (The Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund) campaigns for change to the causes of poverty and supports some of the poorest people in the world in their struggle to make a living. SCIAF's advocacy manager explains the focus of this year's Lent campaign.

We know that poverty and hunger don't happen by accident. They are injustices created by people. Across the world millions are kept hungry and locked in poverty by global economic and social systems, rules and behaviour which only benefit the few. But because these systems are made by people, they can be changed by people.

In this year's WEE BOX, BIG CHANGE Lent campaign we are asking people not only to raise money for SCIAF's work overseas, but also take action in our own lives to help create a more just world for all. SCIAF has a strong track record in campaigning to make sure that politicians and businesses make decisions that don't keep people poor. But we also need to look closer at our own lives to see how we contribute to maintaining the current global economic system which keeps so many people in poverty.

Pope Francis' Lenten message advises us that in addition to addressing the needs of the world's poor with practical aid, our efforts should be 'directed to ending violations of human dignity, discrimination and abuse in the world, for they are also the cause of destitution. When power, luxury and

money become idols, they take priority over the need for a fair distribution of wealth'.

We need political change to create a more just world, but it will never happen unless we bring about change in ourselves and how we contribute to the current system.

Traditional campaigning has and will continue to bring about substantial changes to help people living in poverty. Small groups of committed citizens really can change the world. Time and again SCIAF supporters have been part of campaigns that have made great strides in overcoming global poverty.

In the 1990s, Jubilee campaigners helped reduce the massive burden of debt owed by developing countries. In the 2000s, the Trade Justice Movement and Make Poverty History united millions of people around the world in calls for a fairer balance of power between rich and poor nations. More recently, we've campaigned with Stop Climate Chaos to tackle the causes and effects of man-made climate change. And in 2013, we worked with over 150 other groups representing millions of people across the UK as part of the Enough Food For Everyone... IF campaign.

The IF campaign capped a decades-long effort to ensure the UK spends 0.7% of its national income on development aid. It got G8 leaders talking seriously about tax dodging and land-grabbing for the first time, and major commitments were made on efforts to tackle child nutrition and support small-scale farmers. In Scotland, the Government pledged to double the Climate Justice Fund to £6million and invest more in Development Education Centres, which will help to nurture a new generation of global citizens.

For anyone who shares the Gospel vision which inspires SCIAF of a just world where everyone can 'have life, and have it to the full' (John 10:10), campaigning for change is not an optional extra. It is an urgent and necessary part of, in the words of SCIAF's mission statement, 'our common struggle for human dignity'.

SCIAF's WEE BOX, BIG CHANGE campaign this Lent focusses on Colombia, a country characterised by huge inequalities between rich and poor, violence and a long-standing war. Here, the needs of the wealthy and big business are often put ahead of communities. Many poor families are forced from their land to make way for mining and cattle farms.

Criseria Bailarin, who belongs to the native American Emberá community, and is pictured with her family on this year's WEE BOX, told SCIAF staff about the huge impact business is having on her community and the environment upon which they depend.

'I've lived here my whole life. I've seen many changes in that time. Before we had an abundance of food, we had fish, armadillos and iguanas - now they're gone because there's no space for them. Now it's very difficult.'

The encroachment of cattle farms into Emberá territory means that communities go hungry as land is set aside to grow food for animals. 'They don't care about it,' Criseria continued. 'They go into our territories and leave little space to

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grow food. They don't want the territory to grow crops, they want it for cattle and that's a big problem'.

SCIAF will continue to lobby governments and big companies. With their huge economic power and political influence we believe that it is only right for companies to be open and held to account for their activities. Governments must ensure that business is assessing its impact on poor communities and that action is taken to reduce risks and address problems when they occur.

We believe that a major shift is urgently needed - away from vested interests and the market, in favour of the common good of one human family.

But we need to think about our role in the economic system, even though this can be uncomfortable. We might all want companies to behave ethically and responsibly but at the same time there is a growing demand for cheap clothes and new products. We must begin to acknowledge how our own actions, lifestyles choices and consumption contribute to the unequal system we have created.

Pope Francis, in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, challenges us to think about our priorities: 'To sustain a lifestyle which excludes others, or to sustain

enthusiasm for that selfish ideal, a globalisation of indifference has developed... we are thrilled if the market offers us something new to purchase; and in the meantime all those lives stunted for lack of opportunity seem a mere spectacle; they fail to move us'. [EG, n54]

This Lent, SCIAF's campaign challenges us all to *Look Closer* at our lifestyles and consider how we can live more simply, so that, as the saying goes, others can simply live. Eating less meat, using less energy, and cutting down on food waste are three suggested options for personal lifestyle changes that could help make a difference. The campaign looks beyond the 40 days of Lent to a more sustained and sustainable way of living in solidarity with people, and indeed the planet.

Many other members of the global Caritas family of Catholic development charities are adopting similar calls, under the banner of 'One human family: Food for all'. This initiative received the blessing of Pope Francis recently, who described it as 'an invitation to all of us to become more conscious in our food choices, which often lead to waste and a poor use of the resources available to us. It is also a reminder to stop thinking that our daily actions do not have an impact on the lives of those who suffer from hunger first hand'.

It is important to take stock of the substantial progress that has been made due to campaigning in helping many millions of people to overcome poverty and injustice. Now we must consider the next steps on the journey, and the role our own behaviour plays in maintaining the current system which traps millions more in poverty. This Lent and beyond, we can all look for ways, to paraphrase the prophet Mica, of 'acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with your God'.

To find out more visit www.theweebox.org or call SCIAF on 0141 354 5555.

LYNN JOLLY

American alternatives: a study journey

Open House's arts editor recently travelled to Canada and the USA on a Winston Churchill Travelling Research Fellowship to look at diversion courts and alternative community based services.

'What does the name Winston Churchill mean to you?' The question was delivered to me by a peer of the realm in the London office of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust back in February 2013. Encouraged by friends and colleagues I had applied four months previously for one of the Trust's annual Fellowship awards. By February I had made it onto the shortlist for interview and travelled to London to make my pitch.

The Trust offers around 100 travelling research fellowship awards every year across several categories ranging from the arts to health and education. I had applied under the new category of 'Penal Reform'. My work with a national third sector care and support organisation involves the development of services for people with learning support needs in the criminal justice system and I had identified relevant good practice examples in Canada and the USA which I was keen to see first hand.

The question came at the end of a very pleasant interview and, inexcusably, took me by surprise. Given that the face, name, words and cardboard-cut-out form of Winston Churchill were all very much in evidence I should perhaps have anticipated a question about him. Such are the perils of self-absorption.

In response I could only manage something depressingly unimaginative about World War II before my interviewer pointed out to me that Sir Winston had been, in his younger days as Home Secretary, an outspoken advocate of penal reform. I should have known that, but what I

Diversion courts haven't gained much ground yet in the UK but in various parts of the US they are a developing way of keeping people out of prison.

did know and, more importantly, what I wanted to learn and bring home, is what won the award. In these days of targets, statistics and outcomes measures, the fact that the Trust simply rewards a good idea, along with the desire and ability to put it to good use, is utterly commendable, and arguably the result of a certain kind of social confidence.

Two of *Open House's* most forensic

contributors provided me with a way into the experience of diversion courts in the USA which was where I wanted to begin.

Diversion courts haven't gained much ground yet in the UK but in various parts of the US they are a developing way of keeping people out of prison. Mental health and drug and alcohol courts are the most common examples where treatment rather than punishment is identified as the most appropriate response to law breaking. The conditions are usually that the offences are not violent or sexual in nature and that the offender is not too far down the recidivism road. Moves in Scotland to introduce something similar are being mooted and were recently reflected in the press coverage of Lord Carloway's suggested sentencing re-think.

Learning disability (or learning difficulty, or learning support need), though prevalent within any criminal justice system, tends to be subsumed within the category of mental health, an anomaly that disadvantages both. I was interested to see how and where learning impairment (as North America tends to have it) made itself known within this and other presenting social issues such as addiction or homelessness.

As could probably only be the case

in America, it was a creative and charismatic judge who demonstrated how possible and effective taking the diversion route can be and, in an inversion of the norm, provided a new take on *qui bono*. Judge Joe Will of Volusia County, Florida was determined that those who came before him should have at least the chance of an alternative to custody and, if the day I spent in his court was any indication, most people were eager to avail themselves of his demanding alternative.

Delancey Street

Demanding alternatives were something of a hallmark of the whole journey as I left Florida to visit a selection of community based services elsewhere in the USA and Canada. The first of these was the Delancey Street Foundation in upstate New York.

Delancey Street was founded over forty years ago in San Francisco (where I completed their three day course a few weeks later). Its originators were two men liberated from custody for the umpteenth time who decided that a lifetime of professional intervention had had no positive impact at all and that the change they now wanted to bring about could only be achieved through their own insight and efforts. They took a loan from a local shark, rented an apartment, found a couple of jobs in construction and began the slow task of supporting each other along the straight and narrow. Gradually the knocks on the door were those of other liberated prisoners rather than of cops and social workers and forty plus years later Delancey Street has six 'facilities' across the United States supporting almost 1000 men and women.

Of all the community based services I visited Delancey was the most radical in its departure from



Judge Joe Will.

established and received voluntary sector 'wisdom'. The rules are simple: no external funding; no formal referral process; assessment for suitability conducted by existing residents; everyone works; everyone leaves with three marketable skills; no alcohol; no drugs; no sex. Apart from the alcohol I was struck by the slightly 'religious community' feel about it all and there were certainly parallels with bodies such as Emmaus and L'Arche. The strength of autonomy that comes with generating your own income and therefore being non-reliant on government and other external funding was clear. At the same time the absence of external accountability made me nervous and I don't think that is entirely due to my own controlling instincts.

Delancey have effectively drawn from an elite among the marginalised: talented people who, when freed from temptation and malign opportunity, flourish in what is effectively a variety of residential industries. If you're among them it

works very well and as a 'professional' it certainly gave me pause.

Sir Winston was a great believer in using travel to enhance insight and the Trust has continued this principle through the nature of the Fellowships. It's not just what you want to look at which interests them but where and why. In choosing North America I chose the culture and social circumstances both most akin to that of the UK and most likely to ask questions of it. The possibilities that exist, particularly in the expanse of the US, to make a good idea happen without the throttling restrictions of over-regulation, drew for me an enlightening parallel with the experience of those we refer to as the people we support. People who have experienced our criminal justice system with all the restrictions of a learning disability know what it means to be over-regulated and suppressed. If what we call 'support' continues to be strangled by institutional and professional self-protectionism they are the people who will continue on the cycle of dependency and exclusion.

As so often, the dream that is American offers bright as well as terrible alternatives.

Do you have news or views for *Open House*?

Letters or articles for the April edition of *Open House* should be sent to the editor by Friday 28th March: email to editor@openhousescotland.co.uk. Reviews to the arts editor at lwjolly@virginmedia.com.

ANTHONY ALLISON

St Patrick's witness for today

An Irish academic living in Scotland offers a reflection for St Patrick's Day and finds inspiration in the saint's willingness to step outside the comfort of his own community.

It's 17th March, 1999, Belfast, St Patrick's Day. At school, we get a half-day. My friends are walking through the city centre to catch a bus home to another part of Belfast. As they walk towards their bus stop, they see a group of youths ahead, dressed in casual clothes and of approximate age. These youths see my friends, and, unprovoked, immediately start shouting abuse. It's not long before verbal abuse turns more physical - bottles, stones, anything not tied down is soon being thrown. Teenage adrenaline and testosterone reach a peak, and throwing turns into running. The chase is on. Fortunately, my friends flee to safety and live to tell the tale.

What, you may ask, was the catalyst for the abuse? Answer: their school uniform. This identified my friends as coming from what was understood to be a 'Protestant school' even though it was, in fact, 'integrated'. That minor qualification didn't matter. What mattered was that it wasn't 'us'. It was 'other-than-us.' Identifying the 'other' was particularly easy on St Patrick's Day given that Catholic schools tended, on the whole, to get that day off. Eventually, after numerous antagonistic instances over consecutive years, non-Catholic schools started to employ a non-uniform day to ensure the safety of their students.

To understand this incident further, it is necessary to appreciate the predominant *zeitgeist* of Northern Ireland at the time.

A year had not yet elapsed since the signing of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. Following almost 40 years of trouble (one could go considerably further back), peace had come to Northern Ireland. However, that's not quite true. Societies do not change overnight. This agreement represented a starting point indicating the way forward - it represented a process, and not a destination. We still had (and indeed, have) considerably further to travel on this journey.

At that time, nowhere was this more evident than in the annual Drumcree Protests which cast long shadows over the Northern Irish summers for much of the 1990s.

The Drumcree Protests pertain to the Orange Lodge's desire to march their traditional route, on 12th July, to the Drumcree Church which they have marched since 1807. Today however, that route, unlike 1807, is now densely populated with Catholic residents who view the parade as antagonistic and triumphalist. Historically, there have been numerous clashes and conflicts between the two. However, Northern Ireland had been under the microscope of the international media since the republican and loyalist paramilitaries called a ceasefire in 1994. This brought an increased regional, national, and global audience to this particular flashpoint. As a result, communities polarised and battle lines became entrenched.

The standoff between the Drumcree

Protesters and the Garvaghy Road residents almost came to represent the Troubles itself. How this standoff would be negotiated, in a transitional period of a tentative move towards a peace process, would both set a precedent and reveal much about the ability of various parties to negotiate a way forward. One of the worst tragedies of this period came around 4.30am on Sunday 12th July 1998 when three Catholic children aged eight, nine and ten were burnt to death following a loyalist firebomb attack on their Catholic home. This tragic incident also marked a turning point, and the start of declining support for the protests.

Such was the *zeitgeist* in which the opening incident took place. We held St Patrick's Day to be *our* day. *Our* festival. *Our* moment to cause a bit of mayhem. It was reflective of a mindset that held St Patrick's Day to be the Catholic equivalent of the 12th July: 'time for "us" to show "them" a thing or two!'

St Patrick's Day, for this group of youths, had come to represent a day of division. 'Us' versus 'them,' division and discord, the assertion of *our* identity over *their* identity - such attitudes leave little room for the 'other.' It offers the 'other' none of the hospitality that the gospels bear witness to in Christ. It does not cross social taboos to break bread and engage in fellowship with the other. It does not carry the others' burdens, nor reflect anything approaching a love of neighbour. Rather, it is tribal,

partisan, violent, and inhospitable for the ‘other.’

Patrick’s Ireland

Such characteristics are, ironically, very reminiscent of the Ireland that St Patrick found himself in the fifth century. It is not, however, reflective of the values that Patrick himself stood for. Such a mindset is far removed from what we can discern about attitude of St Patrick himself.

The search for the historical Saint Patrick is a murky one with many of the details unclear. Over a dozen places are often associated with his birth ranging from Gaul, Devon, Somerset, Wales, Carlisle, and even Kilpatrick, near Dumbarton. The latter was a site of frequent pilgrimage right up to the Middle Ages.

According to tradition, he was born around 397, captured by Irish raiders at the age of 16, and spent the next six years tending his master’s flocks, in all weathers, in the vicinity of Slemish Mountain, near the contemporary town of Ballymena in Northern Ireland. It was during this time that his real conversion to Christianity gradually took place. In his own words, he states that he ‘prayed frequently each day...So much that I prayed up to a hundred times in the day, and almost as often at night’ (*Confessio* 16). Eventually, one night, he heard a voice informing him that a ship was ready to take him home. On faith, he left his flocks and trekked some 200 miles to a ship that enabled his departure. He eventually returned home to his family who, naturally enough, begged him ‘to go nowhere else, nor ever leave them again’ (*Confessio* 23). However, he experienced three divine calls which convinced him to leave that which was familiar, his home and his family, and to return to the land which had stolen his youth from him. To return to the land which had kept him in captivity.

In starting with what was compatible with the gospel, Patrick sought out the common ground. He met people on their own terms despite the fact, as he informs us, he felt that he was an ‘alien’ in an alien land, speaking an alien language.

Patrick’s mission to Ireland is full of fantastical stories and miraculous events, many of which are considered to be the exaggerated glosses of pious monks of later centuries. That said, there is no doubt that Patrick recognised the role of divine providence within his life. For example, he considered his time in captivity as a form of divine preparation for his subsequent mission. For it was during this time that he learned the Irish language and gained knowledge of Druidic and pagan practices. In relation to the latter, Patrick would have come from a tradition that perceived such religions as part of the ‘law of nature’. That is, they were partially true religions that were not abrogated but perfected by the gospel message. This combination eventually led to the unique form of ‘Celtic spirituality’ that persists to this day.

In starting with what was compatible with the gospel, Patrick sought out the common ground. He met people on their own terms despite the fact, as he informs us, he felt that he was an ‘alien’ in an alien land, speaking an alien language (*Confessio* 1, 9). This land and language held him captive in inhospitable circumstances for six

years. He had every reason to hate. And yet, when he had escaped, he eventually left the comfort of his family and community to go back into the ‘alien.’ However, it was somewhat less ‘alien’ this time round. What was alien, what was unknown, was how the Irish would respond to the gospel message. History bears testimony in answering that question.

This willingness to explore the unknown, to step out of the comfort of our own community - even when we may have every reason to hate - bears testimony to a faith in God the loving Creator of *all* humankind. Such faith in the unknown requires courage and is not without risk, but it is a faith rooted in the example of Christ.

St Patrick’s Day is not about judging people by their external appearance - whether that be a Protestant (integrated!) uniform, a hijab, a turban, kippa, skin colour, or tracksuits tucked into white socks. Rather, it celebrates the unknown outcome of stepping out of the comfort of our own circumstance out of love for the ‘other,’ based on our belief in a God who creates *all*. In doing so, in stepping into the uncomfortably unknown, we may, like Patrick on the harsh inhospitable slopes of Slemish mountain, come to better know God in what was once an ‘alien’ circumstance to us. And, in doing so, one realises that there is, in actual fact, no alien circumstance. For, in the words of St Patrick’s Breastplate, Christ is everywhere: in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, in every eye that sees me, in every ear that hears me.

Dr Anthony Allison is an academic who specialises in Catholic-Muslim relations and is currently lead researcher for Faith and Belief Scotland, a project of the Scottish Government and the University of Edinburgh.

MICHAEL McMAHON

In Scotland's interests?

Scottish Labour MSP for Uddingston and Bellshill, Michael McMahon, offers the second in a series of reflections on *Scotland's Future*, the Scottish Government's White Paper on Independence.

Much of the nationalist language on independence is based on rhetoric that attempts to depict Scotland as a casualty of the historical colonialism of the British state.

A recurring exhortation from supporters of independence is that voting to stay in the UK is simply a vote for the status quo, retention of the British Establishment and Tory government. This alone, apparently, provides grounds for a Yes vote.

It surprises me, therefore, that the nationalists then pledge that having secured independence they will retain the monarchy, establish a currency union with the UK Treasury, keep the pound and continue to share a variety of other British institutions such as the Bank of England, energy networks and the DVLA. They also promise to rid Scotland of nuclear missiles but want to join the first strike NATO alliance which requires each member state to provide admittance of such missiles.

They state that they will apply to become a member state of the EU despite the weight of academic and legal expertise which suggests that applicant states require their own currency and central bank before access.

This attempt to claim that everything will change while everything will stay the same is simply smoke and mirrors to deflect and deceive the way to an independent state.

Overwhelmingly experts tell us that creating a Eurozone style currency union would be risky and costly for both Scotland and the rest of the UK. Former Deputy Governor of the Bank of England Professor Brian Quinn stated that the separatists' plan would bring 'administrative complexity, confused governance and flawed decision making' into Scotland's financial system.

If the nationalists have their way

Scottish influence over the economy would be weaker as it would be a, by then, foreign government in London which would set Scottish economic policy after all Scottish representation has been removed from the UK Parliament. That is a very strange notion of an independent country.

It was the collective strength of people across Britain that brought about the National Health Service and created the welfare state after 1945. When these institutions were being established by Britain the separatist's priority was, as it still is today, to fight for independence.

The simple fact is that Scotland is part of an economic, social, and political relationship that both comprises and enables stability, security and opportunity for individual Scots, Scottish businesses and Scottish institutions which have been solidified over 300 years.

Scottish businesses participate in an internal market ten times our population and our biggest export market is the rest of Britain. Trade with our island neighbours has grown more than it has with either the rest of Europe or the rest of the world.

As part of a larger market Scotland is better protected from economic shocks and uncertainties with the best example of this being the protection provided when the two big Scottish banks, RBS and the Bank of Scotland, collapsed. Scotland has a proportionately larger financial services sector than Iceland and Ireland but the impact of the banking crisis on Scotland's economy was less than in those countries.

That is because Britain pools social and economic risks. Being part of an integrated economy means that public spending in Scotland does not depend entirely on the taxes raised here. At different times Scotland has done better out of this relationship than at others. I

believe that if we are doing relatively well we should not turn our backs on poor people just because they live in England or Wales. When oil revenues begin to decline, as they undoubtedly will, we might have to rely on the wider British tax base to support our current public spending levels.

The independence referendum is not an election where you choose who you want to govern the country. It is not a judgement on whether you like the Tories or not. It is a decision on whether you believe it is in Scotland's interest to separate from our near neighbours and turn our closest economic and social partners into competitor nations.

While breaking up the Establishment or posturing as anti-imperialists may appear attractive, it is based on false or inadequate political theory and economic reasoning. The battle for fairness and democratic accountability is difficult enough without having signed away many of the financial mechanisms and institutions which you need to achieve that goal.

Independence is not of itself a step towards a more equal society as the nationalists claim. All of us may wish for that but if you don't have the means to enforce your rights and the funds to do so then they remain nothing more than aspirations and demands.

I have never considered the subject of Scottish independence as a question of whether Scotland could become an autonomous, self-governing state but more one about whether it would benefit the people of this country to make that choice.

If I thought that Scotland would be better off as a sovereign entity I would argue as loudly for it as any separatist but I want what is best for Scotland. I love Scotland too much to be a Scottish nationalist.

SIMON BRYDEN-BROOK

Our two-tier Church

A layman and retired teacher who has been working for renewal in the Roman Catholic Church for over 40 years challenges the concept of a two tier church.

Joe Fitzpatrick points to a central flaw in the modern Church ('The Age of the Laity?' *Open House*, February 2014.) Why did Jesus create a two-tier Church?

We are told that the day before he died he divided his followers into clergy and laity, creating an essential difference between the two classes and a gulf that cannot ever be surmounted. To start with one class is totally male, while the others is of mixed gender. One is celibate, ritually pure, strict and exclusive, while the other may be sexually active, lax, unclean and all-inclusive. One consists of princes who can stand in the place of Christ while the other consists of sheep. The clergy are powerful: experts, official, professional, teachers, rulers, and authorised, while the laity are powerless: simple, subjects, unofficial, amateurs, expected to be obedient, unquestioning, docile and respectful. The distinction is traditionally referred to as between the *ecclesia docens* - the teaching Church - and the *ecclesia discens* - the listening Church.¹

It has been suggested that the concept of ordained priesthood that lies behind these distinctions must be challenged and was not in fact divinely ordained.² The teaching of the Second Vatican Council is unclear.³ In its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, we are told of the two priesthoods in the Church which are essentially different from each other: that of Jesus, which is shared by all the baptised, and then the ministerial priesthood, which is of a totally different order, a ministry of service.⁴ Yet the idea is publicly promoted that

the clergy are 'ontologically' different from the rest of the baptised, of a different order, superior, capable of being another Christ in a way that is not open to the rest of us.⁵ The concept of the hierarchical Church where the clergy rule and the laity are subjects is certainly also taught in *Lumen Gentium* and seems to contradict its teaching on the two priesthoods.

Pope Francis has spoken harshly of clericalism.⁶ What does he actually mean? We know he dislikes pomp and display among the clergy, preferring a second hand car, well-worn shoes and life in a clergy house rather than the apostolic palace, but he has also spoken of the need for priests to have the 'smell of the sheep'. Where is this leading? When St Paul said that there are no more distinctions between Jew and gentile, slave and free, male and female,⁷ he seems to have forgotten the supposedly divinely ordained 'essential difference' between clergy and laity. We seem on dangerous ground and, as is so often the case, the uncompromising words and example of Jesus are no great help in maintaining clarity.

One small correction is needed to Joe Fitzpatrick's article. He makes the mistake in his first paragraph of listing 'religious' as 'clerical'. This is not the case. According to Canon Law all Catholics fall into TWO of FOUR quite distinct categories. They are either lay or clerical, **and** they are either secular or religious.

One can be a secular cleric (like Archbishop Cushley of St Andrews and Edinburgh) or a religious cleric (like Pope Francis [SJ]). The rest of us are

either secular religious (all women religious, whether sisters or enclosed nuns in solemn vows, and religious brothers, including unordained monks) or lay seculars - the 'least of these my brethren'.⁸

	Lay	Religious
Secular	The simple faithful	Brothers Sisters Nuns
Clerical	Secular bishops Secular priests Secular deacons	Religious order bishops Religious priests Religious deacons

Women religious are ALL lay people, as women cannot under current Canon Law be clerics as they are no longer admitted even as deacons despite centuries of this ancient practice. Similarly the so-called Lay Community that sprang from Worth Abbey is correctly called a Secular Community, as even the unordained monks at Worth are laymen. Lay is not the opposite of religious but of CLERICAL. Being a secular layperson does *not* mean one is worldly; that tends to be the unspoken assumption in all this categorisation. Canon 219 says that the power of governance of the Church belongs to the clergy *by divine institution* - which takes us back to the fateful decision Jesus made apparently on the night before he died.

We need to ask some crucial questions. Into which of our four squares above does Jesus belong? His High Priesthood

was not clerical nor 'priesthood' in the traditional Jewish sense and it is shared by all the baptised. What does this mean for 'mission' or for 'vocation'? How far are these categories in fact man-made (sc. clergy-made) or of divine institution?⁹ How sacrosanct should we consider these categorisations? Are not Presbyterian clergy subject to lay presbyteries? Must a presbyter be a priest? Is it not high time that Canon Law be radically revised?

- 1 Post-Tridentine terms, originated by Fr Thomas Stapleton who died in 1598.
- 2 Eamon Duffy, *Faith of Our Fathers* (London: Continuum, 2004) p 106 and Herbert Haag, *Clergy and Laity* (ET Tunbridge Wells: Burns & Oates, 1998).
- 3 Cardinal Basil Hume in Michael Richards, *A People of Priests* (London: DLT, 1995) p xii.
- 4 Michael Richards, *A People of Priests* (London: DLT, 1995).
- 5 See for example Mark O'Toole, 'Ministerial Priesthood since Vatican II' in *The Pastoral Review*, 2007, Vol 3, 1 & 2.
- 6 Pope Francis to the Leadership of the Episcopal Conferences of Latin America in Rio de Janeiro on 28 July 2013 and see also George B Wilson, *Clericalism - the Death of Priesthood* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2008).
- 7 Gal 3:28.
- 8 Mt 25:40.
- 9 See Michael J Walsh, 'New pontiff, old problems' *Open House*, February 2014

Simon Bryden-Brooke is an officer in Catholics for a Changing Church, The European Network Church on the Move, and The International Federation for a Renewed Catholic Ministry. He did theological studies at the universities of Birmingham, Cambridge and the Catholic University of America, and in 2009 was awarded the degree of Doctor of Ministry by the Global Ministries University. Since being appointed Director of Music at Birmingham University Catholic Chaplaincy in 1969, he has been involved in organising liturgies for parishes and other groups.

IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY CENTRE

'A Welcoming Space in the Heart of the City'

2013 - 2014 Programme

DROP-IN EVENTS:

Taizé Prayer Evenings: 3rd Monday of the month, begins 16th September, 7.30-8.30pm
Tuesday Lunchtimes - Eat, Pray, Breathe: Every Tuesday, begins 3rd September, 1-1.30pm.
Carers Support Group: Last Tuesday of the month, 1.30-4pm
First Friday Retreat Mornings: 1st Friday of the month, 10am-1pm

LENT EVENTS

Lent Retreat in Daily Life - 3rd March-14th April: the retreat runs over 7 Monday evenings (some afternoon slots available) and offers 2 group meetings at the beginning and end with 5 individual meetings with a prayer companion.

'From Death to New Life': led by Geoffrey Wheaton SJ, this day offers contemplation and sharing with images from classical and contemporary art. Sat 8th March 10.30am-4.30pm

'Come Be With Me': led by Magdalen Lawler SND with an invitation to rest a while on the journey towards Easter. Sat 29th March 10.30am-4.30pm

'Bread Broken and Shared': led by Margaret Linforth. Looking forward to Holy Thursday . . . a day to celebrate the Bread of Life by making bread and reflecting together. Sat 12th April 10.30am-4.30pm

OTHER EVENTS

A New Moment For Church: A Vision of Church, afternoon series, inspired by Ignatian & Franciscan Spirituality. With the election of Pope Francis, people across the Christian traditions and from other faiths have enquired about his background as a Jesuit and about the spirituality implied in his chosen name. This series of monthly afternoons will reflect on some of these themes as they touch institutions and our individual sense of the importance of living a more simple and integrated life. 2-4pm.

16th March: *That We May Be One* led by Stephen Smyth FMS

27th April: *Walking Together in Peace with Our Interfaith Friends* led By Isabel Smyth SND

Conversations in Faith: Supporting Interreligious Dialogue: In an attempt to foster understanding and respect among people of faith, as a contribution towards world peace and to creating an international community of faith, Isabel Smyth SND, on behalf of the Bishops' Conference for Interreligious Dialogue and in partnership with the Ignatian Spirituality Centre, will facilitate a series of conversations with people from the major faith traditions:

30th April - Judaism led by Fiona & Howard Brodie

The Literature of Love - Closing Day of ISC Programme Year 2013-14, Saturday, 14th June 10.30am-4.30pm. This day, led by David Lonsdale, will explore Ignatian Spirituality and its echoes in literature of both past and present.

RETREATS

Two Residential Individually Guided Silent Retreats in the Drumalis Retreat Centre, Larne, Co Antrim: The ISC and the Epiphany Group are delighted to join this joint venture with the team of Drumalis, a beautiful Centre in Larne Co Antrim (www.drumalis.co.uk). *Please contact Drumalis for bookings.*

6 Day Retreat - Saturday 28th June to Saturday, 5th July 2014

3 Day Retreat - Saturday 28th June to Wednesday, 2nd July 2014

The Bield at Blackruthven, Tibbermore, Perthshire, 14th-17th October 2014. A silent mid-week individually guided retreat, led by a team from the Ignatian Spirituality Centre, in the beautiful Perthshire autumn time. Retreatants have access to The Bield's excellent facilities which include a chapel, art room, swimming pool, labyrinth and extensive grounds. Accommodation is in single rooms (max 9 retreatants). *Please book via the Ignatian Spirituality Centre for this retreat.*

Please browse our website, www.iscglasgow.co.uk, which has more information on the events, course and retreats. For bookings or a copy of the programme contact:

The Administrative Secretary,

Ignatian Spirituality Centre,

35 Scott Street, Glasgow, G3 6PE

Tel : 0141 354 0077

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ANNE MCKAY

On track or miles oot?

A retired Principal Teacher of Religious Education makes a plea to create space in the parish for those who question belief.

In a school where I once taught there was a group of teenagers who belonged to the elite 'On Track Club'.¹ You might think these were future Olympians. In fact, they were our behaviourally challenging pupils; refusniks and Bolsheviks every one. The purpose of the club was to give them a voice and a space within the wider school where they could thrash out all the 'niks' and knocks in their young lives. The club was very successful and functioned well within the mainstream school. To the cynics however, they would always be known as the 'Miles Oot Club'!

The 'Miles Oot Club' came to mind recently as I read through the report of a fledgling parish council that is setting up in a neighbouring parish.² After consultation, the core group had drawn up an ambitious programme to revitalise the parish. The Spirit had been very busy! There were groups for liturgy, scripture study, music, catechesis, youth outreach, spirituality and so on echoing St Paul's admonition - and no doubt Pope Francis' - to build up the church. Why then, did I have a peculiarly empty feeling as I read through the programme?

Like the dysfunctional adolescents above, it is probably because I'm a refusnik and a Bolshevik at heart. Forever miles out though longing to be on track. There was nothing in the report that sparked anything in me, other than admiration for the good people of the parish. Where was the frisson of the parish prophet? Couldn't there be something for the grumpies and malcontents who, as noted by a previous *Open House* contributor could

'...talk about disagreement rather than dissent'?³

It seems to me that in any parish community there is an unspoken assumption that everyone in the pew believes every doctrine and accepts every moral teaching. That we are ready to share our faith even as some are struggling to keep it. It is from the ranks of the faithful that parish activists are drawn - and thank God for them, shouts Father! To acknowledge and minister to the 'pick n mix Catholics' disliked by the late Cardinal Winning could derail the parish. So the Samaritan hurries by to choir practice and the prodigal does not come home.

I used to be uneasy with the concept of Adult Formation with its connotations of being moulded into a predetermined shape based on the church's interpretation of the life of Christ. Fortunately, there has been a move towards lay Faith Development⁴ which is fluid, autonomous and open to development in the light of experience and conscience.

The problem with the parish council's programme is that, while there is undoubtedly scope for human flourishing through good works, the programme caters for the already committed with no provision for those whose faith is desperately seeking understanding.⁵ Furthermore, these parishioners are searching for answers on their doorsteps rather than in a retreat house or theological college.

Another weary concept is the 'lapsed' Catholic. In today's busy world some Catholics default because of other habits or through sheer laziness. They fall

away. They lapse. But other non-practising Catholics have deliberately chosen to opt out of parish life because they no longer trust, believe or feel in communion with the Body of Christ. Shouldn't a strong parish be able to reach out to these non-lapsed souls? A Questioning Belief Group might go some way to healing the breach.

What could it look like in practice? Pretty scary actually! First off, the group should come with a health warning that the views expressed are definitely not those of the management. Secondly, siege and fortress mentalities should be left at the door. No-one wants to metaphysically beat up Father. But neither do the ersatz heretics and apostates want to be martyred by papal infallibility. Death by Canon Law! Tolerance, respect and active listening are the saving graces along with an awareness of the unique character of the group and its *raison d'être*.

Though innocently titled 'Questioning Belief,' discussion would arise out of statements, rather than questions. This puts the onus squarely on the challenger rather than on the church to provide answers. Hence, 'Gay people should be allowed to marry' is more stimulating and provocative than 'Why does the church disagree with same-sex marriage?' In fairness, there is an obligation to explain the church's teaching but this need not be the dominant position and there is no pressure to agree. Yes, the atmosphere may be taut but hopefully never fraught. There is catharsis in being able to openly express views in a sympathetic group mindful that 'Ten thousand

difficulties do not make one doubt'.⁶

Is there a precedent for such daring do? Two situations come to mind. Back in the 1980s I was privileged to train as a counsellor with the then Scottish Catholic Marriage Advisory Council. Among such people I learned the importance of personal integrity, to be empathic and, most difficult of all, to be non-judgemental. At times, I felt miles out, though within the bosom of the church. Additionally, any Catholic teacher will tell you that in the classroom young people sometimes utter the most outrageous statements with insouciance. The school does not fall down and the teacher feels pleased at having got them to engage!

In a world of food banks, civil wars and where 40 million women are without trained midwives, it might seem like a form of self-indulgence to appeal for a group that Questions Belief. The church already has great social teaching. The doers do really well. But what of the thinkers and, more importantly, the sufferers? As new ways are being sought to present the Christian message in a post-modern world the grand narratives that underpin western culture and religion are being shaken by science and secularism. Parishioners feel the tremors. Parents feel the earthquake.

Whether on track or miles oot, I am sure the rock of the church will endure and pray it can accommodate rather than excommunicate those ready to cast their nets in deeper waters. Then, she will be truly catholic.

1 A South Lanarkshire Council initiative.

2 Central Deanery, Motherwell Diocese.

3 *New pontiff, old problem*. Michael J Walsh. OH Feb.'14

4 Glasgow Archdiocese has a Parish Initiatives and Adult Faith Development Dept. Paisley and Motherwell Dioceses adhere to the term 'Formation'.

5 Cardinal Newman

6 *ibid*

Anne McKay is a grandmother and has a Masters Degree (MLitt) in Women's Studies from Strathclyde University.

Adult Education

The Prayer of the Past and the Prayer of the Present

Wednesday 12th March: St Ignatius and the Tradition of Ignatian Spirituality.

Fr Tom McGuinness SJ is the director of the Ignatian Spirituality Centre in Glasgow and a well-known spiritual director and guide.

Wednesday 19th March: St Francis of Assisi and Franciscan Reformation

Srs Philomena Wright and Maureen O'Reilly, Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, will speak about Francis and the hallmarks of his spirituality. They will help us see how Franciscan insights help us in our lives.

Wednesday 26th March: St Theresa of Jesus and the flower of Carmel.

Later this year begins the celebration of the 5th centenary of the birth of Theresa of Avila. Reflections led by a group of sisters from the Carmelite Monastery in Kirkintilloch.

Wednesday 2nd April: St Benedict and Benedictine Monasticism.

Rt Revd. Hugh Gilbert is Bishop of Aberdeen and a Benedictine Monk, formerly Abbot of Pluscarden. He will introduce us to the major themes in Benedictine life and spirituality.

Wednesday 9th April: SPRED; Special needs & special gifts. Praying without words.

Sr Agnes Nelson SND is the Archdiocesan Director of SPRED, Special Religious development. Sharing insights from her work will help us pray without words.

Poverty Breakfasts

After the 10am Friday morning Mass, the Justice and Peace group will provide a simple breakfast of morning rolls, tea, coffee juice and fruit. Proceeds to SCIAF. Each of the weeks of Lent they will highlight areas of concern and reflection for justice. All welcome.

Friday 14th March - Fairtrade

Friday 21st - SCIAF

Friday 28th - Poverty

Friday 4th April - S.C.A.N.A. - Scottish Christians Against Nuclear Arms.

Friday 11th - Asylum seekers

The Immaculate Conception Hall, 2049 Maryhill Rd, Glasgow G20 0AA. Ample parking; adjacent to Maryhill train station.

Evening sessions 7.30-9pm including refreshments and discussion.

ALL WELCOME

JOSEPH CHALMERS

Do something

What are you doing for Lent? That was a common question when we were children (and maybe still is). What does Lent mean to you? Did it creep up on you unawares or did you plan well in advance? Made sure you got your ashes and then.....? 'Repent and believe the Gospel.' 'Remember that you are dust and unto dust you shall return'. What are you doing for Lent?

The words of the Prophet Isaiah are forever relevant:

*Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?*

*Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin? (Is. 58, 6-7)*

What are you going to do for Lent? Let the ashes be an external sign of a desire to change your heart. Whatever you do, make sure it helps someone else. Perhaps helping others will become a part of your normal daily routine and then what will you do for Lent next year?

The purpose of all religion I don't think is to save our own souls but to help us become who God created us to be. We are community people. We were born needing others and it is only in relation to others that we can grow as human beings. Other people need us too and it is in this interlacing of relationships that our world functions. In his unforgettable story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus challenged his contemporaries and us to move beyond a limited worldview to accept that our neighbour is even our sworn enemy. It is good to send money

to help the desperately poor in other parts of the world but what about our attitudes? How do we treat the neighbour in the same town? What about people who are 'different'? What is our attitude to those who look and sound different to us, who think differently from us or who live differently?

Life was perhaps more simple in the past when we knew that we Catholics were right and everyone else was wrong. We are living in confusing times now when things that were obvious are now not quite so obvious. Sometimes people we were taught to trust absolutely have let us down by their action or inaction.

Who can we believe? Who can we follow? Jesus calls to

his disciples, 'Follow me'. Just like the first disciples, we will not always understand what he is saying or why he acts the way he does. We might be annoyed when he tells us to forgive seventy seven times. Read the Gospels; ponder the Word of God. Do not assume you know all the stories about Jesus. Let the words enchant you, surprise you and challenge you anew.

What are you going to do for Lent? The 16th century Carmelite, John of the Cross, said: *'in the evening of life we will be*

examined in love alone'. Let the ashes be a symbol of your desire to change.

When they want you to buy something they will call you. When they want you to die for profit they will let you know. So, friends, every day do something that won't compute. Love the Lord. Love the world. Work for nothing. Take all that you have and be poor. Love someone who does not deserve it.

Wendell Berry (The Mad Farmer Liberation Front)

Joseph Chalmers is a Carmelite priest with extensive experience of retreats and spiritual direction. He is the author of a number of books on Carmelite spirituality, Centering Prayer and Lectio Divina.

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Advocate and former MSP

KEVIN McKENNA

Journalist

SR ISABEL SMYTH SND

Secretary, Scottish Bishops' Committee for Interreligious Dialogue

THURSDAY 27th MARCH 2014

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St Aloysius' Church, Rose Street

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Admission: Non-Members: three pounds (includes refreshments)
Any enquiries, email to: danbaird98@yahoo.com

STEPHEN J MCKINNEY

Challenges of attendance and attainment

A senior education lecturer outlines the complex and multidimensional relationship between child poverty and school education around the globe.

In a previous article (Young lives stunted by poverty, *Open House*, November 2013) I examined the effects of poverty on children. In this article I aim to discuss the effects of child poverty on school education. There are 2.2 billion children in the world and child poverty affects just under half of this number; in many cases, this has an additional impact on their school education. School education for all children is considered to be a human right and is perceived to offer children and young people opportunities to escape the effects of poverty and enter into a sustainable future. I will focus on the challenges of the relationship between child poverty and school education faced by developing and developed countries, while acknowledging that this division can be artificial at times.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948, article 26) states that 'everyone has the right to education' and that education should be compulsory and free for the elementary stages. Technical, professional and higher education should be also available. *The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child* (1989, article 28) reiterates this call for compulsory, free primary education and encourages the provision of secondary education, and that it be free or subsidised, where possible. The aspiration of the United Nations for education for all was reaffirmed by the *World Declaration on Education for all*

(1990) and further consolidated by the *Dakar Framework for Action* (Education for all: Meeting our Collective Commitments) (2000). The aim to achieve universal primary education is also one of the eight millennium development goals (goals targeting the reduction of the effects of poverty in the world). Education, then, is deemed to be important for all children and young people (especially in developing countries) in the attempts to alleviate and eliminate poverty. Primary schooling in developing countries is mostly free while there are often fees for secondary education.

In 2013, the United Nations reported that significant progress had been achieved in the provision of school education across the world. Enrolment in primary schools in developing countries had increased from 83% to 90% between 2000 and 2011, and literacy rates had been rising. There have been notable rises in literacy rates over the last twenty years for the young in Northern Africa (68% to 89%) and Southern Asia (60% to 80%). These encouraging developments have to be contextualized within worldwide figures (250 million children cannot read and write) and a pattern of early school leaving of children in developing countries. Poverty is a key factor in low success rates in schools and in school absences in developing countries. Children and young people from the poorest backgrounds may have their progress in school affected by serious

barriers such as pre-school malnutrition, and/or malnutrition during their time at school and they are much more likely to be withdrawn from school, often required to work to help support the family.

There has been a reduction in the number of children and young people who are out of school, but this has stalled as international aid for primary education has been reduced. The result is that there are still 57 million children in the world who do not attend primary school and more than half of them are girls. In areas such as South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, girls are less likely to attend primary school and if they do attend, less likely to complete primary schooling. One of the effects of this is that many girls still struggle with the effects of gender inequality later in life: wage gaps between male and female; women continue to have the major share of domestic responsibilities and a greater amount of unpaid work. Girls and young women who have access to a full primary education and at least some of the stages of secondary education have enhanced opportunities for employment, are better informed on health issues and can potentially experience a better quality of life.

In the developed world, especially in the UK, school education is perceived to be one of the main routes out of poverty. The concept of an intergenerational cycle of poverty and deprivation (children born into poor

Statistical evidence suggests that children and young people eligible for free school meals across the UK have lower levels of literacy and numeracy than the national averages.

families remain poor) is contested, but the children and young people from poorer families often lack self-esteem, motivation, and resilience.

There is a widely identified attainment gap that affects children and young people from poor family backgrounds. The most common indicator of child poverty used in relation to school attainment is entitlement to free school meals. Statistical evidence suggests that children and young people eligible for free school meals across the UK have lower levels of literacy and numeracy than the national averages. It is not necessarily the case that the parents in these families have low aspirations for their children. Many of these families exist at subsistence levels and face the pressures of balancing very low financial resources. They find it difficult to provide an effective home learning environment for the children (especially for early years, identified as a crucial stage for learning) and to provide the financial, social and cultural capital to support their children through school education.

Gabrielle Preston (2008) makes a very useful distinction between children in poverty being excluded *from* school and *within* school in the UK. She argues that selection processes in England can often lead to poorer children being excluded *from* high attaining schools to protect the school performance in league tables. In Scotland the ostensibly democratic rights of parental choice of schooling can be limited if the family lives outwith

the postcode of the catchment area of a preferred school and if they lack the necessary financial resource to move to that area or pay transport costs to the school. Preston further argues that children from poorer background are more likely to be excluded *from* school or to be absent from school through truancy or illness (related to home conditions such as poor diet and lack of heating in the house). A pattern of absences from school creates serious challenges for continuity and progression in the education of these young people.

Perhaps exclusion *within* school is more insidious. This can take a number of forms. It can mean there are no spare finances for participation in excursions and school trips or to access extra music /art tuition or even sporting activities. There may be no access to computers and the Internet at home, nor to commercially produced curricular support materials. The family may not be able to provide a nutritious and balanced diet for the children and their concentration in school may suffer.

This short article is an introduction to the serious world wide and national challenges of the complex and multidimensional relationship between child poverty and school education. There are optimistic signs that there are greater opportunities for many children and young people in developing countries to progress in schooling, but there remains disquieting statistical evidence of low retention rates and a higher risk of girls being out of school. In developed countries, there are indications that children and young people from poorer homes can face challenges in attendance and attainment in school education - the school education that is perceived by many to be the route out of poverty.

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IAN M FRASER

Mantras and morality

In my early years, the justification for living was to be found in the opportunity to glorify God and enjoy him for ever. Now the justified are identified by the mantra 'work hard and want to get on'. By definition, a mantra is a saying 'used as an object of concentration, embodying some aspect of spiritual power'. It is certainly an object of concentration because it is relentlessly dinned into our ears. But spiritual power?

Take the first part. Putting a justifying emphasis on hard work demeans those who by mental or physical disability are unable to work hard or work at all. It also demeans those who endlessly seek work without success - and have to spend their time hunting for jobs, debarred thus from using life creatively. It also demeans by the unspoken assumption that people should be content to take any kind of job which enables them to survive - while the privileged pick and choose, seeking work which is interesting and rewarding. Those so demeaned are created in the image and likeness of God, and are meant to be treated as such.

Then 'to get on' puts self-interested individualism at the heart of life in clear contradiction to the gospel. The welfare of a nation should be a first charge of any government - the welfare of all its members, whatever their state in life. Love and justice should result in community where people look after one another, not just themselves, as the parable of the Last Judgement illustrates.

A society is lopsided where some are privileged and others disprivileged. At the Reformation education for all was established. Where privileged parents

load the dice in favour of their children, they do them a human disservice. Association with the offspring of similarly privileged parents deprives them of ability to relate constructively to the life of other members of society, while it opens doors to social advancement built on 'who you know', not merit. This disabling is compounded when the school is a one gender only institution. Yes, there are people who reject the privilege they have experienced. But a government which goes with the tide produces a malformed society.

Employment figures are up. Then how is it that productivity is the lowest in major EU countries, other than that people have the heart taken out of them by low valuation of work and low wages?

Those who sit on cushions of wealth should be targeted. They have benefited disproportionately from the gifts which society has afforded and should disproportionately contribute to the sustaining of society. Instead they have before them the example of top bankers who, saved by the people from bankruptcy (and jail), re-establish a bonus culture - an extraordinary sign of moral depravity where what was instituted as a service to meet human need is treated as a nice little earner a la Wolf of Wall Street.

It is time to look at Ecclesiasticus (which, significantly is included in Wisdom literature). In the first part of chapter 38 the medical profession is given due appreciation, in chapter 39 the work of the scholar gets approbation. In between the question is asked: 'Who provides sustainability for the created world?' The answer is

'basic workers'. They provide the essential services which carry the life of the world forward from one day to another. On them all others depend. As the text notes: 'A town could not be built without them'. The world could collapse without them. Before any of us put a foot on the floor every morning we have been indebted to workers in Egypt for cotton, workers in Australia for wool, workers in Scandinavia for the bedframe, and we have breakfast provided by the work of others in fields and factories. Yet there is no objective form of measurement of work as a contribution to society which would relate essential work to rewards. If that were used it might show that a bus-driver who enables relationships to be strengthened between families and communities contributes more to social wellbeing than a top banker.

A self-rewarding, self-seeking, callous Devil-take-the-hindmost society must not be allowed to develop. Of multinationals given their head, Senator Salonga of the Philippines once spoke to me of 'the evangelical necessity of research (into corporations) lest the world get into a powerful grip which is other than God's'. It could happen. It must not. Room will still be left for the nurse whom A.J. Cronin met. When he questioned her about her work and her salary he blurted out 'God knows you are worth far more than that!' She replied 'If God knows, that'll do me'.

Rev Dr Ian M Fraser is a theologian, author and retired minister of the Church of Scotland. Now in his 97th year, he is still writing and is a member of the board of Open House.

NOTEBOOK

Maintenance at the expense of mission?

The consultation underway in the Archdiocese of Glasgow to rationalise the number of parishes in response to falling numbers of clergy risks becoming an exercise in maintenance rather than mission (see letters, page 19). By stressing the role of the priest and offering a series of options on closures to match the number of priests available, people are effectively being asked to think about the most convenient location for going to Mass.

Fifty years after Vatican II's stress on the mission and role of the laity, the person of the priest is once again becoming more dominant. Peter McGrail, a priest of the Archdiocese of Liverpool, suggests that the scarcity of priests could lead to a new clerical culture, and create a tendency to see the Catholic community as constituted only by the liturgical assembly, as the issue of providing Sunday Mass becomes paramount. There is a danger of becoming a church whose focus is the gathering of like-minded individuals around a priest, instead of making present at local level the church in its universality.¹

There is no room in the consultation for discussing how lay people might contribute to the running of the church and its mission in the local community. Although these questions have been raised at parish and deanery meetings, they are swallowed up by the consultation paper's emphasis on Sunday Mass provision, which asks people to rank options for closure. A different discussion might have produced quite a different set of options.

As the man told the traveller who asked for directions: if I wanted to get to Dublin I wouldn't start from here.

¹ Peter McGrail, 'The Fortress Church under Reconstruction?' in *Receptive Ecumenism and Catholic Learning*, edited by Paul Murray, OUP, 2008.

Book launch

The complex role of religion in peacebuilding and conflict was the focus of a book launch in Glasgow last month. Thaddeus Umaru, a Catholic priest from the Diocese of Minna in Northern Nigeria, was awarded a PhD in Theology and Religious Studies from the University of Glasgow for his work on Christian Muslim relations in Northern Nigeria. Representatives of both faiths gathered in the offices of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

to celebrate the publication of his thesis in book form.

Thaddeus shared the story of his journey from a large family of Christians and Muslims living in a predominantly Muslim part of Nigeria, to study for the priesthood in Nigeria, followed by theology in Rome and peace studies in Bradford. His doctoral studies in Glasgow analysed interreligious conflict in Nigeria, which has claimed many lives, and takes the model of interfaith dialogue set out in Vatican II's *Nostra Aetate*, the Council's Declaration on the Relations of the Church to non-Christian Religions, as a basis for peace building.

Thaddeus' book, *Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Northern Nigeria*, published by Xlibris, will be reviewed in a future edition of *Open House*.

Newman programme change

The Glasgow Newman programme for

March has been changed, as Duncan MacLaren, who was due to speak on 'Religion in an Independent Scotland', will be abroad at the end of the month.

Instead, the Newman Association has organised what promises to be a lively debate. A panel of speakers will discuss 'Catholics, the Referendum and Afterwards'. Advocate and former MSP Brian Fitzpatrick, journalist Kevin McKenna, and Sister Isabel Smyth SND, Secretary to the Scottish Catholic Bishops' Committee for Interreligious Dialogue will lead the discussion.

The event takes place on Thursday 27th March at 7.30pm in the Auditorium of the Ogilvie Centre, beside St Aloysius Church, Rose St, Glasgow. See the advert on page 14.

The Ignatian Spirituality Centre is a small non-residential Centre supported by the British Province of the Jesuits. We have an ecumenical team including representatives from the main Christian faith traditions in Scotland. The Centre offers a programme of courses, events, retreats, reflective space and opportunity for one to one spiritual accompaniment.

We wish to appoint two half-time Team Members.

Experience or knowledge of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises which underpins our work will be essential for both posts.

- **Team Member with responsibility for Ongoing Formation** •
 - **Team Member with responsibility for Outreach** •
- (one full time appointment may be considered)

**These positions will be for a fixed term
from 1st September 2014 until 31st December 2015.**

SALARY: £12,500 pa • HOURS: 17.5 hours per week*

*Agreed flexible working hours will be necessary to facilitate the work of the Centre.

For a description of key tasks and candidate requirements, please see our website: www.iscglasgow.co.uk

or contact the Administrative Secretary by post or e-mail.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS

5pm on Friday 25th April 2014

The Ignatian Spirituality Centre
35 Scott Street, Glasgow G36PE. Tel: 0141 354 0077
admin@iscglasgow.co.uk www.iscglasgow.co.uk
Regd Charity SC040490

For a further description of the Ignatian Spirituality Centre and some examples of its work, please see our website: www.iscglasgow.co.uk

LETTERS

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

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

The church of the future

Your February editorial said there would be no mass closures of churches in Glasgow. There is at least one proposal already circulated to parishioners by their priest that has that as an option.

The archdiocese has a choice. Either it starts at 'the top' = the clergy and reduces the churches to fit the number of clergy available. Or it starts at 'the bottom' = the people and asks what they can do with their church even if they don't have a resident priest.

If the New Evangelisation means anything, the answer is, as they say nowadays, a no-brainer.

Catherine Sweeney, Glasgow

During the *Open House* conference held in Glasgow in November 2013, reference was made to John Henry Newman's insight that in order to remain the same, we have to be prepared to change.

This translates into a modern rule of management, that an organisation cannot stand still, it can only move forward or back.

Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* makes it clear that the church, in order to become a 'missionary church' will have to undergo a radical change from top to bottom. Before attempting this process he advises us to be 'bold and creative' in our thinking (EG 33).

To achieve progress or movement forward and at the same time be radical or bold, major car manufacturers produce from time to time what is called a 'concept car'. Based on a basic or core item, namely a chassis, it allows all disciplines to participate in producing what will, hopefully, satisfy the needs of future customers.

In building the church of the future we have our core item in the parish. The first thing we notice in this concept parish is the absence of a parish priest. He has been replaced by a parish minister who can be male or female, and whose duties and responsibilities will be, more or less, on a par with the present day deacon. The priest will be found living in community with other priests serving a designated area or a specific number of parishes. Released from the stresses and strains of parish responsibilities, they will be able to concentrate on celebrating Mass, the

sacrament of reconciliation, and preaching the good news of the gospel.

The parish minister will be assisted by a parish council, which will include a finance committee, and be responsible for the upkeep, maintenance and development of the parish assets.

Perhaps some *Open House* readers would care to be 'bold and creative' and continue to build a concept parish and church that will bring the joy of the gospel back into the world.

J.V. Isaacs, Inverness

Religious poetry of Burns

The article by Gerrard Carruthers on the religious poetry of Robert Burns did well to go beyond 'Holy Willie's Prayer' and 'The Cotter's Saturday Night' to 'A Winter Night' for insight into the bard's religious sensibility. However the focus on poetry meant neglect of another source. After meeting him in Edinburgh Burns wrote of 'a Popish Bishop, Geddes', adding that 'the first (i.e., foremost) cleric character I ever saw was a Roman Catholic.'

John Geddes came from the Enzie heartland of Scottish Catholic survival near Fochabers. He was a man of wide and cosmopolitan culture familiar with Rome, Madrid and Valladolid, where he restored life to one of the Scots colleges abroad. Burns gave Geddes the Edinburgh edition of his poems with an additional twelve in his own hand. All this has been written up in *The Tablet* for 24 January 1948 by James McGloin, who drew attention to an accompanying letter:

'In it Burns tells Geddes that he has been giving serious thought to the problems of man's existence and ultimate destiny. He makes reference to his 'own besetting sin', saying that he has sought the remedy indicated by 'nature and nature's God'. He says also that, while a struggling poet can hardly expect matrimony to improve his prospects, he feels that in marrying he has done the correct and honourable thing. The internal evidence of the letter indicates the likelihood of some series of serious moral and religious discussions having taken place between Geddes and the poet during some of their meetings.'

Alasdair Roberts, Morar

LIVING SPIRIT



God is most easily, if painfully, found when we lose our securities. And when the really profound securities go you're

left either with despair or with the question: 'Is there anything?', and I think it's there, that glimpse of God, when everything else seems to have gone.

God, of God's very nature, is beyond our thinking or imagining. God goes before his pillar, a pillar of cloud; God is always ahead of us. I love that description: 'God is a beckoning word', calling us out from ourselves. God is the transcendent one; God cannot be domesticated; can't be tamed; can't be enclosed or defined. And that's the exciting thing in God; that's why the Church calls itself the Pilgrim People; it's on a journey, it hasn't arrived yet, it's still wandering. But the heart knows which direction to go.

Gerard Hughes, from *Something Understood*, Hodder and Stoughton, 2001

We remember our foremothers. We remember all women who have recognised that to be a person of faith is to respond in action. We give thanks:

For Miriam, poet of the Exodus, leader through the wilderness;

For Deborah, a mother and a judge in Israel;

For Rachel, traveller with Jacob;

For the woman who bathed Jesus' feet with her tears;

For Mary Magdalene, first apostle of the resurrection.

From *Celebrating Women, Women in Theology and MOW*, 1986

I saw a stranger today.

I put food for him in the eating-place, and drink in the drinking-place,

and music in the listening-place in the Holy Name of the Trinity

He blessed my self and my family.

And the lark said in her warble,

Often, often, often

goes Christ in the stranger's guise

O, oft and oft and oft,

goes Christ in the stranger's guise.

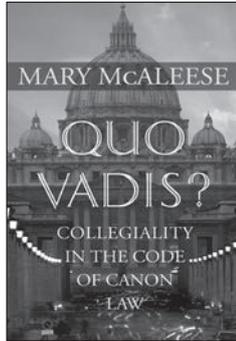
Irish rune

BOOKS

Quo Vadis? Collegiality in the Code of Canon Law

Mary McAleese, *The Columba Press, Dublin 2012*

For *Open House* readers who took part in events to mark the 50th anniversary of Vatican II, or attended our conference on church governance, this little book



will make interesting reading. It charts the journey of the concept of collegiality, one of the most divisive topics of the Council, into the 1983 code of canon law. The code was designed to give voice to the decisions of Vatican II, in which many saw a new spirit of collegiality as over 2,000 bishops gathered in Rome for the first council since 1870. Concepts like equality and inclusion were in the air as people struggled to redefine secular authority.

Mary McAleese, former law professor and Director of the Institute of Legal Studies at Queen's University, Belfast, who served two terms as President of Ireland and went on to study canon law, asks whether collegiality was a promise fulfilled. After weighing the evidence and analysing the arguments, she reaches the conclusion that post conciliar collegiality is chaotic, lacking direction in its development and rigour in its structure. In case we might wonder why this matters, she points out that secrecy and solitary rule, the very things against which collegiality could have provided a bulwark, have contributed to some of the most appalling damage the church has suffered in recent times.

The root of the problem lies in fundamental disagreement about the

meaning of collegiality at the first and second Vatican Councils. This resulted in ambiguous definitions of concepts like 'college' and 'collegiality' in Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. Those charged with drafting the new code were not mandated to resolve the ambiguities.

Collegiality was the word around which participation in church governance was discussed. For some, it was a lost tradition restored by Vatican II, for others, it was part of the new spirit of the Council. For some, it was consistent with the primacy of the Pope; for others, a threat. Some saw it as relating to a democratisation of the church from the bottom up, others as relating only to episcopal collegiality, especially to the role of the newly formed College of Bishops. But there was little conciliar guidance, and considerable disagreement, on how all this should be given practical expression.

In relation to lay people, for example, canon 204 states that those who are incorporated by baptism into the People of God participate, each in his or her own way, in the priestly, prophetic and kingly role of Christ. But canon 129 differentiates between the role of ordained and lay people in relation to participation in church governance. The former are qualified for the power of divinely instituted governance, while the latter can 'co-operate' in the exercise of that power, suggesting that lay involvement in church governance is a function of ecclesiastical law while those in sacred orders govern by divine institution. Other parts of canon law make contradictory provisions: lay people can be appointed, for example, to membership of the college of judges. Cardinal Ratzinger was among those who objected to lay participation in governance, pointing out the contradiction between basing governance on sacred orders and allowing participation by the laity. The contradiction remains.

Canon 212 says the faithful are to

be obedient to the teaching of their pastors, but they also have the right and duty to make their opinions known to them or to the rest of the church. Mary McAleese notes that two areas of widespread non-compliance with church teaching, confession and family planning, have never been formally discussed below episcopal level. She gives examples of an Irish organisation which tried and failed to engage the bishops on the issue of public support for the ordination of women as an indication of constraints on the rights and duties enunciated in the little known canon 212. And she notes that the absence of formal facilitation of discussion in the church means that debates among the faithful are largely conducted in the secular space. This creates its own problems, including the impression that the church is always under attack from without.

Mary McAleese offers a detailed and painstaking analysis of the ambiguities and inconsistencies inherent in the 1983 code relating to collegiality, the different scholarly interpretations, and the problems of definition arising from the church's divine constitution on the one hand and ecclesiastical politics on the other. Her analysis is informed by a sharp appreciation of the challenges facing the church, and by her considerable experience of law and government. She points out that the code's ambiguities might have been unproblematic in a church characterised by an uneducated and deferential laity, but that today is a bad moment for the church to be shrouded in juridical vagueness as it faces unprecedented scrutiny and ground breaking civil investigations.

It's hard to avoid the conclusion that had people like her been involved in the debate and drafting of the code, it would have had a great deal more clarity and purpose.

Mary Cullen

Scottish Schools and School Masters 1560-1633

John Durkan. Edited and Revised by Jamie Reid-Baxter. Boydell Press 2013

This eagerly awaited book, rescued from a 'computer disaster' and superbly edited by Jamie Reid Baxter, has finally been published.



John Durkan.

All who regard John Durkan as master and mentor know what to expect and some have already availed themselves of its results, even pre-publication. The book comes at an opportune time since 2014 is the centenary of Durkan's birth. Hopefully both church and academy will find a suitable way to celebrate.

What one gets here is two books in one: an introduction, rich with the results of decades of research and reflection, followed by a list of

schools and schoolmasters extracted from the Registers of Deeds in the Scottish Records Office.

The introduction puts the schoolmasters into context with an impressive amount of detail. Professor of Scottish History, Gordon Donaldson, once described John Durkan as 'a walking biographical dictionary of medieval Scottish scholars and clerics' and that is evident here.

From the uncatalogued, unindexed manuscript, Registers 'so damaged as to be largely unreadable', Dr Durkan was able to extract an astonishing degree of information. Up to 1633 he has identified over 500 parish schools and a further 300 non parochial schools. In 1959 John wrote that 'there is nothing more difficult to pin down than a climate of thought and nothing more necessary to reckon with'. This book goes a long way towards achieving that aim.

Those who subscribe to the myth of Calvinism's negative effect on culture will be surprised that so many 'song' and instrumental schools survived. 'Music clearly did not die out overnight after the Reformation' (p.165). In the coming decades which would see the Civil War in England, the rise of the Covenanters and the Thirty Years War on the continent, Scots of all social classes would participate. Many had their first formation in the schools here listed, under teachers, also listed, who planted the seeds which bore fruit in their careers as future ministers, politicians, lawyers and soldiers. Dr Durkan has done them all a service and this book will be a lasting testament to an outstanding scholar. It can be described, like an earlier work, as 'putting on a whole lot of lights in a room almost wholly enveloped in darkness'.

Malcolm Sinclair

FILM

The Wolf of Wall St (2014)

Director: Martin Scorsese

Starring: Leonardo DiCaprio, Jonah Hill, Margot Robbie.

In the Wild West the sheriff asked the outlaw: why do you keep robbing banks? He replied: 'cos that's where they keep the money. Nobody robs banks any more. 'Cos it is not money that is there any longer. Well, not enough to make it worth buying a shotgun for. Banks are now places for paper transactions. And as 2008 demonstrated not even the bankers know how these work. Only geeks with computers do. We have no reason to think their morality would be any different from that of the pioneers of the Wild West.

The Wolf of Wall St is about such geeks. It is the true story (available in paperback) of Jordan Belfort who was apprenticed as a trader in 1987

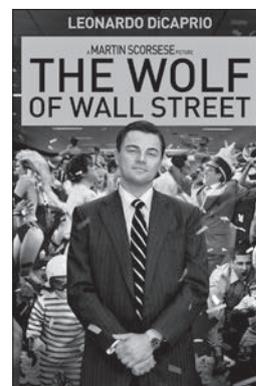
and almost immediately lost his job in the stocks and shares collapse of that year. But he had learned enough about the nature of money transactions to understand how addictive they are. So he set himself up with friends from his neighbourhood. The only qualification he asked for was that they had bought and sold drugs successfully. He reckoned selling money would be even easier. And legal, moreover. He did so well he was soon hobnobbing with what society regards as 'the great and the good'.

The film begins with a lion wandering nonchalantly along the corridors of a blue chip investment firm in New York. This is intended as a parody of the two animals, a bull and a bear, that stand outside the Frankfurt Stock Exchange. Belfort got his millions by making cheap stocks 'bullish', i.e. worth more. He then sold them before they became 'bearish', i.e. worth less. It lasts three

hours which the average movie fan might reasonably regard as excessive. Scorsese presumably wants to batter home the point that

there is also fun to be had. Otherwise people wouldn't sit in front of a screen 24/7 cooking the books. He also gives time to the good cop who, from a similar background to Belford, relentlessly plots his downfall. Unlike comparable figures in the UK Jordan duly goes to prison. It's worth noting that like most Scorsese work it is a film about men behaving badly.

Scorsese's views are well known. Like Belfort, he was brought up in New York - the Catholic Scorsese in Little Italy, the Jewish Belfort in



Queens. Scorsese is big on guilt and punishment. He believes we are all outlaws at heart. *Open House* readers may be put off by the amount of criminal excess shown in the film. Mostly in terms of drugs and sex. Scorsese's point is that these go along with money, *as in milk and honey*. For most of us money is, if not quite sacred, then a thing with unique value. Something we all have equal access to if we play by the same rules.

An example of this is the respect we have for the Swiss. They have developed such a convoluted constitution that their banks are able to stash the ill-gotten gains of every tinpot dictator in the world. Voltaire

understood this 250 years ago. He said: if you see a Swiss jumping out of the window, jump out after him for there is money on the pavement. When Belfort came out of prison he continued to make loadsamoney by reinventing himself as a 'motivational speaker'.

Anyone who thinks *The Wolf of Wall St* is Scorsese exaggeration might have a look at Alex Gibney's *Client 9*. This is the story of Eliot Spitzer who was nicknamed the 'Sheriff of Wall St'. He was so successful at putting in prison shysters like Belfort that he was elected Governor of New York. Shortly afterwards he had to resign. He had also been leading the high

life, paying high class prostitutes \$1,000 per hour. Gibney is another New Yorker. He got awards for *Mea Maxima Culpa* about the sex abuse cover up in Milwaukee Archdiocese (*Open House* 230). He has recently produced *The Armstrong Lie*. Just goes to show: drugs and sex, just different sides of the same coin - money.



Jordan Belfort, on whose book the film is based.

Norman Barry

MUSIC

It do mean a thing ...

Robin Hill muses on his 'Disciples Suite', a musical project which aims to put some swing into a familiar story.



The Heart & Soul Swing Band

Photo: Willie Ewan

Playing jazz is a one of life's great mysteries: the musical equivalent of communal tight-rope walking on a gusty day. Fall off and it is (at the very least) embarrassing. Make it through from start to finish, and there is no feeling quite like it.

As a child, I was exposed to a huge range of music, from my parents' classical LPs to my brother's Captain Beefheart cassettes. But it was my sister, a music student in London, who introduced me to jazz, one cold January evening in 1976.

'Take a theme,' she said, 'then just

play with it. Don't worry about wrong notes, just keep playing.'

From that night on, appreciating jazz became first a challenge and then a joy, whether playing bluegrass mandolin or big band saxophone. And what an inspiration it has always been to hear improvisational giants delivering their art live on stage. Each would bring their own approach to performance, and each would make my heart soar.

And through it all, an astonishing spiritual truth emerged for this young listener in the 1970s and '80s. With jazz, the music is now. The Once. The Only. The Never, Ever to be repeated. Leave the hall and you'll miss it. Stay to listen and you might very well hit a seam of gold to span a single evening, but to ring in the soul for ever.

Fast forward to the summer of 2013 and Duke Ellington's Sacred Concert performed by the Edinburgh Jazz Festival Orchestra and Scottish Chamber Orchestra Chorus in Edinburgh's Queen's Hall. I had always known that Duke took matters of faith very seriously, regarding his religious works as among his most significant. Yet I had never heard these works performed in a concert setting. So off I went, and (unsurprisingly) I found myself transported by the musicians and singers, under the direction of Clark Tracey.

That night in the Queen's Hall, I got to thinking. For some time I had been writing numbers for my own 14-piece group of friends, known as 'The Heart & Soul Swing Band'. These songs were either modern, jazzy arrangements of old Victorian hymns, or else some items of my own. But Ellington's Sacred Concert put the seed of an idea into my head: soon I found myself musing on a number of blues-based songs which I had written or arranged for the band. If I managed to link these tunes together, a particular theme looked like emerging: that of Jesus and his disciples.

The more I considered this, the more confident I became that my songs could be strung together into some kind of narrative form. In this way they could tell the story of the faults and failings of 'The Twelve', set in counterpoint to Christ's teaching and Passion. Thus it was that something called 'The Disciples Suite' began to appear as a possibility.

The weaving of words and music got under way, using the Gospel according to St Mark as a loose basis for my writing, with various other biblical quotations added in too. The writings of John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg also fired my imagination. These two widely published biblical scholars have collaborated on a variety of

excellent books, spanning the Roman Catholic and Reformed traditions. Their insights on the Kingdom of God, and Christ's way of peace and service would feed into the thinking behind my text.

Musically, I found that some of my own songs could be slotted into place without too much modification, but still there were gaps. On two occasions I travelled beyond my own writing to include some elements from other sources. 'Paul's love song' is a beautiful piece from the Scottish folk tradition, penned by my friend Alastair McDonald, who kindly gave permission to include it within the suite. Its inspiration comes not from the gospels at all, but rather from St Paul's famous passage on love from 1 Corinthians.

I also borrowed from J.S. Bach, whose harmonisation of the Passion Chorale, 'O Sacred Head! sore wounded' is perfect for recounting the Crucifixion. Bach could not have foreseen his work being arranged for trumpet, trombone and saxophones, so all I can do is hope that he would not have minded this liberty too much.

Music, of course, is so often a collaborative activity, and this project is no different. I am immensely grateful to Scotland's leading jazz educator, the unique and irrepressible Richard Michael, who has been patient beyond words in guiding me in the ways of jazz arranging, and who brings so many skills to our Heart & Soul Swing Band rehearsals.

Now that 'The Disciples Suite' is nearing completion, the band will soon

be coming to terms with the prospect of touring all those words and notes around our various congregations from Paisley to South Queensferry. Each of us sees our band involvement as an exciting part of our faith, and each of us loves the unique quality of the jazz groove, which has the ability to move player and listener alike.

Jazz in church? Oh yes. I think so.

To find out more about The Heart & Soul Swing Band, visit www.heartandsoulswingband.org.uk



THEATRE

War Horse

Based on a novel by Michael Morpurgo

Adapted by Nick Stafford

National Theatre Production

The horses and other animals are the stars of the show. The huge success of this National Theatre production is almost entirely down to the believability of the animals created by Handspring Puppet Company. Life-size puppets constructed from what looks like bamboo and string are brought to life and we see and

believe the transformation of Joey from tangle footed colt to the war horse of the title.

The play is an adaptation of a children's story by Michael Morpurgo, and it shows. Neither the storyline nor the dialogue are strong enough to sustain audience attention over nearly two hours and so the focus for the audience is the spectacle of the puppetry and the generally excellent stagecraft. The quiet, country mood of pre-war life is conveyed through lighting and costumes and accompanied by musical contributions from folk singer Bob Fox.

There are no great truths revealed about World War 1. This is a child friendly story about a boy (Albert) and his quest to be reunited with his much loved friend Joey. *Black Beauty* meets *Lassie Come Home* with the Somme as a background.

My ticket carried the recommendation that the production was suitable for the over tens.

War Horse's target audience is school parties and horse lovers. The 12-year old boy two seats away from me sat mesmerised from beginning to end. Who can argue with that?

Florence Boyle

Reviewers

Norman Barry is the pen name of well known and long time reviewer for *Open House*.

Florence Boyle worked in the finance sector and is treasurer of *Open House*.

Mary Cullen is editor of *Open House* and a postgraduate theology student.

The Rev Dr Robin Hill is minister of Gladsmuir linked with Longniddry, East Lothian.

Lynn Jolly is arts editor of *Open House* and works with people with special needs in the prison system.

Malcolm Sinclair is an amateur historian and was friend of the late John Durkan for over 40 years.



Moments in time



The boat sails towards Brodick Bay on the Isle of Arran, dominated by snow-capped mountains. On

the lower, wooded slopes of Goat Fell, we see the red sandstone bulk of Brodick Castle. To our left is Holy Island, rising steeply from the sea, and soon disappearing from sight behind Clauchlands Point. As we approach the pier, a black guillemot scurries away, skimming the water in its haste to avoid the oncoming vessel.

After the excitement of landing on this wonderful island, we board the North Island bus; all three buses at the terminal are heading for Blackwaterfoot on the west side of the island, one by the south and the other over the mountain pass known as the String. I like the idea of a String bus! The bus takes us along the main road through Brodick and then skirts the rocky coast with the grounds of Brodick Castle behind a high wall on our left. Colourful shelducks are swimming in the sea as we arrive at Corrie, which is a line of houses and old cottages facing the sea with a steep hill at the rear. I notice that the bus driver deposits his passengers at their

garden gates.

After leaving Corrie, we pass a huge boulder by the roadside, a relic of the last ice age, and come to Sannox with its beautiful but deserted glen, which leads into the highest mountains on Arran, mysterious with clouds swirling around the snowy summits. The people from this glen left in the middle of the nineteenth century and there is a memorial in Lamash to commemorate their final service before embarking on the long voyage to Canada.

The bus climbs slowly up a steep hill and enters a country of open moorland and rushing burns. We spot a large stag feeding nearby, then over the top of the pass called the Boguille, we see dozens more red deer on a distant hillside, grazing with some sheep. The road winds down a narrow glen towards Lochranza, at the north end of the island. Suddenly a large bird of prey appears, circling in the sky; its huge wings are unmistakable, this is a golden eagle, the iconic bird of the Scottish Highlands and recently voted Scotland's favourite wild creature.

Tim Rhead

Tim Rhead is a pastoral assistant in the Episcopal Church.

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