

Religion and Life

Priestly Ministry

A CHAP bespoke me on my way into the foyer of the Royal North Shore Hospital. “Are you the Anglican chaplain?”

I was wearing my black clerical suit with the usual white Roman collar which showed I was in “the God-squad” and said I was the Catholic chaplain.

At that, in an awestruck tone, he asked, “Have you come to give the Last Rites?” His tone matched the prospect of the Great Passover from this world.

I smiled. “Not this time. We priests are in the spiritual import-export business. And between import and export, we do a lot of value-added improvement, you know, between our imports in Baptism and our exports in the Last Rites.”

I went on, “We’re in the improvement industry. You know, Sermons and all that, and Confession for the forgiveness of sins. It’s in John 20:23. But the hardest part of being a priest is improving myself.”

His final comment was, “Sounds a pretty tough sort of religion, but rather noble,” and went off satisfied.

Such is a providential encounter God gives priests.

God and Caesar

SOME THERE ARE who doubt if a catholic layman could ever be trusted with high rank in a democratic government.

Would he force his religion on the unwilling?

Yet our aim is not a secret. It is open for all to know. Our aim is that Jesus Christ rule in all hearts. We don’t force our religion on anyone. We can’t accept conscripts. We can only invite people to join us freely. Freewill and its responsibility to conscience are our basics.

Like all good politicians, a Catholic in parliament works for harmony in society. It’s a plus for everyone if a politician believes in God, and thereby must respect the basic **human rights** which are not conferred by governments.

Acquired Rights conferred by governments are flimsy. They can be changed or withdrawn by those who conferred them, leaving us defenceless. “The Prime Minister gave and the Prime Minister taketh away, as it pleased the Prime Minister so is it done,” quipped Sir Humphrey Appleby in *Yes, Minister*.

We must insist that not even in a democracy can a government do anything it likes. It cannot take away our God-given rights and duties, which God built into us moral creatures — even with a mandate from voters, though governments sometimes try to do this. The fact is, we are accountable to God for upholding our religion, conscience and freedom, and supreme values like life, marriage, property and truth, which forbid murder, adultery, theft and lies. Nor can any government change biological facts, or change unhealthy acts into healthy ones, or wrong into right.

Governments

EDUCATION in state schools is far less moral than it was before the 1960s.

More and more of our bureaucrats, lawyers, judges, politicians and their legislation, are atheist. More and more we find closet Freudian-Marxists, “coming out”, who strive to abolish God, marriage and family by stopping free speech (cf. *Handouts* nn. 133, 137, 142).

Most lack moral discernment and moral will power, i.e. the strength to resist organized pressure from highly organized pressure groups of homosexuals, their kindred unisex promoters in the Safe Schools Coalition and euthanasia and eugenic groups.

Devotion

An old childhood Sunday School hymn prompted us to “light one small candle rather than curse the darkness”:-

JESUS BIDS US shine with a clear, pure light,
Like a little candle burning in the night;
In this world of darkness, we must shine,
You in your small corner, and I in mine.

2. Jesus bids us shine, first of all for Him;
Well He sees and knows it if our light is dim;
He looks down from heaven, sees us shine,
You in your small corner, and I in mine.

3. Jesus bids us shine, then, for all around
Many kinds of darkness in this world abound:
Sin, and want, and sorrow — we must shine,
You in your small corner, and I in mine.

4. Jesus bids us shine, as we work for Him,
Bringing those that wander from the paths of sin;
He will ever help us, if we shine,
You in your small corner, and I in mine.

Edwin Excell, 1884

Forty Years in the Desert

THE DESERT which the Chosen People traversed from Egypt to the Holy Land was not all sand and a rare oasis like the Sahara Desert.

Rather, it was sparsely populated, and not entirely without vegetation and water, perhaps something like outback Australia.

The tribes living were pagan idolaters and so doubly enemies to the Chosen People passing through.

Deuteronomy 29 mentions conscience. See *The Liturgy of the Hours* volume I, page 449:-

If, after hearing these sanctions, such a man should bless himself in his heart and say, “I may follow the dictates of my own heart and still lack nothing; much water drives away thirst,” the Law will not pardon him. The wrath and jealousy of the Lord will blaze against such a man; every curse within this book will fall on him.

The desert which we Catholics are traversing today in this second decade of the 21st century is a situation not unlike that of the first Chosen People, with oppressors within and without.

Educational Bureaucrats

THE administration that runs schools is enormous. Yet the benefit to pupils is not commensurate with size of the bureaucracy — indeed, it may be inversely proportional. “Small is beautiful.”

Compulsion is the watchword of bureaucracy. Government legislation set up State Schools “free, compulsory and secular”. The law allows others such as churches to run *fee-paying* schools, which are permitted be **more or less religious**, with the rest of the curriculum set by the State.

Federal Government and State Governments have Departments of Education. The Catholic Church has diocesan Catholic Education Offices, dozens of them.

Some **bureaucrats** are educational experts. Indeed, some of these have actually been teachers. Others are escapees from the stress of face-to-face teaching.

Bureaucrats, especially educational, revel in **rules, compulsion, surveillance, paper qualifications, reports and inspections**. But such attitudes and procedures are **poor educational psychology**. And they make effective teaching all the more difficult.

It is far better to **recommend “guidelines”** than to **mandate** with an iron fist in a velvet glove. Guidelines can profit pupils, teachers and home schooling parents. Thus educational authorities could:-

- recommend good ideas,
- publicize successful ventures,
- be available to help when asked for it, and
- practise subsidiarity: intervene only as a last resort.

Truth and Beauty in Algebra

$$\text{Simplify } \frac{a+x}{b+y} = \frac{a-x}{b-y}$$

Cross-multiply — shorthand for multiply both sides by the product of the denominators, $(b+y)(b-y)$, and cancel the common factors:

$$(a+x)(b-y) = (a-x)(b+y)$$

$$\therefore ab - ay + bx - xy = ab + ay - bx - xy$$

simplify: subtract like terms from both sides and regroup the like terms on L.H.S., thus:

$$-2ay + 2bx = 0$$

$$\therefore bx = ay$$

$$\therefore \frac{a}{b} = \frac{x}{y} \quad \text{Q.E.D.}$$

Check by experiment: substitute numbers for letters: this is **not a proof**, but, if it doesn't work, it is a proof of its falsehood. Try the test numbers →

a =	6	60	60
b =	3	20	24
x =	4	45	35
y =	2	15	14

Corollary n. 1: if $\frac{a}{b} = \frac{x}{y}$ prove that $\frac{a+x}{b+y} = \frac{x}{y}$.

Substituting, $bx/y = 'a'$ in $\frac{a+x}{b+y}$; $\therefore \frac{bx/y+x}{b+y}$

$$= \frac{bx+xy}{by+y^2} = \frac{x(b+y)}{y(b+y)} = \frac{x}{y} \quad \text{Q.E.D.}$$

Then **Corollary n. 2:** if $\frac{a}{b} = \frac{x}{y}$ we prove $\frac{a-x}{b-y} = \frac{x}{y}$

which shows that all four fractions are equal.

Pope Benedict told an audience of university students that God based creation on mathematics. **Hurrah for algebra!**

Illegal Liturgical Prohibitions

SOME PRIESTS try to abolish genuflections made by the laity receiving Holy Communion.

Further, some have hidden the Blessed Sacrament from the congregation arriving for, or departing from, Mass, and thereby eliminated all genuflecting.

Kneeling for Holy Communion is an authorized alternative to bowing, an exception to the present rule. Kneeling for Communion never required bowing or genuflecting. **In countries like Australia where the bishops' conference has mandated a profound bow, all communicants still have a right to kneel:-**

...individual members of the faithful may choose to receive Communion while kneeling.

General Instruction of Roman Missal n. 160, Australian version 2011

Interestingly, their mandate seems to negate GIRM nn. 274, 275 on when to genuflect and when to bow.

See also *Redemptio Sacramentum* n. 91 (and its n. 93 which says the Communion plate should be retained).

For practical apologetics in a parish it is worth noting that there are a number of other customs from the piety of the past now authorized once more.

RSPCA

THE ROYAL SOCIETY for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has a noble ideal seemingly extending to every single individual animal... But surely excepting mosquitoes and such like?

Then there are evolutionists who rate man as just another animal, without any privilege of “species preference”. Their extremists even group man with rats and mice, vermin on the earth.

Yet in Australia, babies are routinely put to death with great cruelty at the whim of others. The RSPCA does not protest this particular cruelty to “animals”.

Greenies

“Greenies” are a misnomer for the **secular humanist** political group in our society. They are the old “parlour pinks” of the 1930s, Lenin’s “useful idiots”, soft communists who, in fervent ‘denial’, refused to believe that Joseph Stalin was savaging his own people, and that Russia was not a paradise of earth, especially for the poor.

Today’s Greenies became popular by saving some natural beauty and environment from government-alleged necessities, or from the greed of the rich.

Once they were accepted, they promoted their lethal solutions to social problems: abortion and infanticide, suicide even for children, euthanasia, at first voluntary, then compulsory.

They say “Save the baby whales” — not the babies.

Incidentally, they do not aim to save every single member of a threatened species, whereas we, who are true **Godly humanists**, recognize that each man is made in the image of God, endowed with dignity, duty and destiny, so that each and every single human being transcends any animal or its entire species.

Father James Tierney