

In the next issue: March/April 2009

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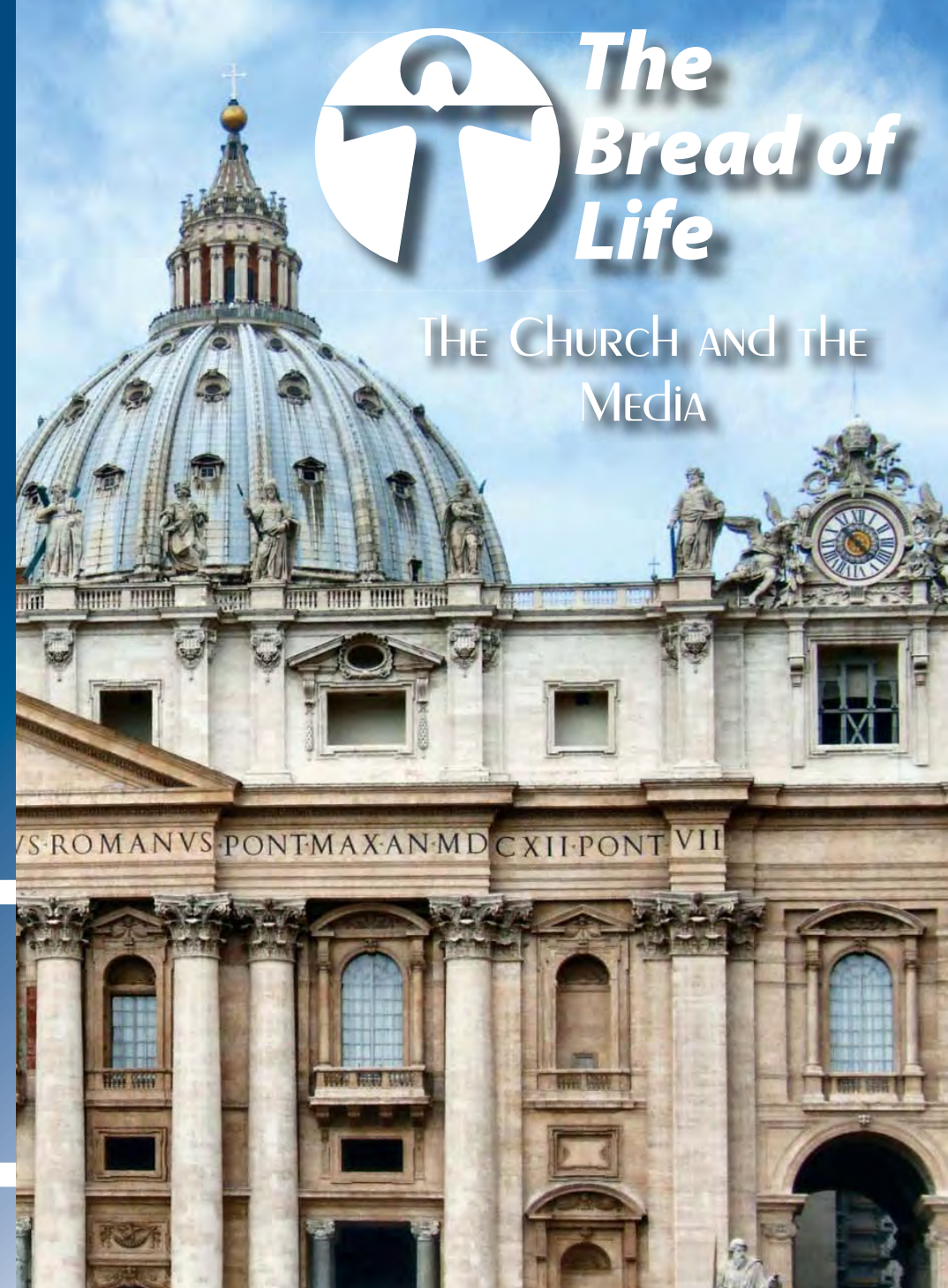
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The Bread of Life

**THE CHURCH AND THE
MEDIA**



January 2009

Our Mission is to promote a deeper understanding of the Holy Spirit and His presence in the lives of God's people.

Rev. Dr. Peter B. Coughlin



Catholic in a Media-Influenced World

Holy people bear witness to the living God who is the truth and wills the truth. The truth is expressed both in word and deed by those who keep covenant with God. The Old Testament reveals that God is the source of all truth. His word is truth; his law is truth; and his *“faithfulness endures to all generations”* (Ps 119:90). God is true and his people are to embrace the truth and live in the truth.

Choosing simplicity of life lived in conformity with the Lord’s example is to abide in God’s truth. *“If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth”* (1 Jn 1:6).

In our modern society the communications media play a major role in information, formation and cultural promotion. The influence of media is increasing daily as a result of technological progress, instant communications of news transmitted and the influence exercised on morals and public opinion. While information provided by the media should be for the common good it needs to be based on truth, freedom, justice and solidarity and be communicated honestly and properly.

“The means of social communication (especially the mass media) can give rise to a certain passivity among users, making them less than vigilant consumers of what is said or shown. Users should practice moderation and discipline in their approach to the mass media. They will want to form enlightened and correct consciences the more easily to resist unwholesome influences” (CCC 2496).

In many homes entertainment reigns supreme through hours of TV watching and/or hours of listening to the beat, music and lyrics of CD’s, tapes or radio. How do we judge what is appropriate to help strengthen our Christian lives? How should we evaluate what is presented to us in our leisure or waking hours? Does passive absorption of entertainment excuse culpability for not

Continued on rear cover

being discerning about what we hear or watch?

For Catholics, it is absolutely essential to know the truth, to know the revealed word of God, the sacred Scriptures. It is by knowing truth, what is true, noble and good, that we are able to discern non-truth or falsehood, that we can make the right choices in our daily life. We are all constantly being tempted, challenged by this world in which we live. Do we choose to serve the Lord or simply coast along through life letting others dictate what we are to think, do or say? We are to make the right choices in daily life, guided by the Spirit of God within us, by listening to the Lord, knowing the Scriptures and what the Church teaches.

Catholics are to be salt and light to a world living in darkness, giving flavour, meaning to life and dispelling the darkness so that the light of Christ can shine ever more brightly. Catholics are witnesses to the truth of salvation, the good news of Jesus Christ, passing on the faith by word and deeds. We cannot live apart from the world. God has placed us in the world to carry out the mission of the Church as passed on by Jesus Christ.

This media-influenced world in which we live offers great opportunities as well as challenges. Pope John Paul II used mass media extensively to proclaim the good news. Catholics are able to shape public opinion even in an age of hostility against anything Catholic by speaking the truth and living in the truth. Pope John Paul II and Mother Teresa captured the hearts of the whole world by being true to their call as disciples of Jesus Christ. Pope Benedict XVI stands as a beacon of truth, standing firmly on the rock of faith, Jesus.

We must go placidly among the noise and the haste, choosing what is good, rejecting what is not, taking time to listen and discern, living in balance and right order, right relationship with God and others.

Rev. Dr. Peter Coughlin, Editor of The Bread of Life magazine, has a Doctor of Ministry degree from the Graduate Theological Foundation. Currently pastor of St. Andrew parish in Oakville, Ontario he continues to serve the renewal of the Church through the Charismatic Renewal and the ministry of healing.

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THE CHURCH AND THE MEDIA



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**YOUR MAGAZINE IS GETTING
A FRESH NEW LOOK!**



The *Bread of Life* is a teaching magazine. Its selection of articles provide a variety of perspectives for a variety of readers. Each article is an instructive lesson that speaks to someone's heart. Together, they are planned to be a powerful testimony of the Holy Spirit's presence and importance in our world.

Whether you are experienced in the Spirit or new... an adult or a child, an intellectual or novice, *The Bread of Life* can reach you. Your magazine encourages and supports individuals and groups as they grow stronger in their faith in the power of the Holy Spirit wherever they are.

We have been listening to your comments and suggestions and in this issue your magazine takes on a handier, brighter and easier to read format. Its new "digest size" will be a better fit in a briefcase, purse or bedside. The new printing and graphics process delivers bolder type and clearer pictures. The magazine will be easier to read, easier to hold and easier to share. It will also come to your door in better shape because each will be in a mailing envelope.

Test copies were immediately impressive. They maintained the traditional values of the magazine but

the articles now seemed to jump off the page. We're excited to hear your response too.

You will also find new regular features to help spread the Word more effectively where it's needed. We're also working to freshen up the writing style to help connect with even more of you. With God's blessing and your support, we will continue to grow.

We ask for your continued prayers and testimony of the power of the Holy Spirit to make him better known in an age when the world so desperately needs it. More hearts need to be touched. More lives need to be changed. More people need to be freed. The ministry has to grow.

We continue to work on your magazine to make it more relevant and valuable to you. We thank all our regular contributors and especially our Editor Christine Labrosse for their dedication. The magazine and the ministry would be much less without all of you.

Thank you for your support and God bless you always.

Jim Ruta

Jim Ruta, is a Member of The Bread of Life Board of Directors.

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The Eye of Truth

“We are led to believe a Lie
When we see not through the Eye.”
(William Blake)

Watching and listening to much of the news throughout the recent national elections has been a very enlightening experience. You did not need to be the most insightful observer in order to detect media coverage laced with a very subtle bias and sophistry. With clever phrases, inflection of voice, and in the crafting of headlines, the media often presented what, on the surface appeared to be straight facts, but what was, in reality, simply their opinion cleverly disguised. Many media outlets reported stories that were specifically engineered to manipulate and mobilize public opinion, and thereby advance a cause.

What was true for election year can also be applied to many other topics covered by the media, which extends its reach beyond simply the reporting of the news, into helping to make news itself.

It is known as “Yellow Journalism”. A famous historical example was when William Randolph Hearst, a famous American newspaper publisher, once said to a photographer, “You furnish the pictures, and I’ll furnish the war!” This ability to manipulate, even cause events on the part of the media, can be found in politics, in morality, in life, and certainly in religion.

The Church has not been immune from the special attention of the media. Most of the national news media takes great delight in portraying the Catholic Church as an intolerant and anachronistic institution, out of touch with our modern times. On such issues as celibacy and the priesthood, or women in the priesthood, or premarital sex, the teachings of the Church are often laughed at and mocked. Movies portray the Church as having been founded on a lie that only the intelligent secular humanist, Leonardo da Vinci, could reveal. It is as if the media seems to think that the teachings of the Church were arrived at through secret codes, lies, bargaining and negotiation

Conducted by Popes, Cardinals and Bishops. The media acts as if the truths of the Church, and morality in general, should be subject to the whim and vote of the masses.

John Paul II noted this concern in an address to the Australian bishops, when he said, “Unfortunately, the teaching of the Magisterium is sometimes met with reservation and questioning, a tendency which is sometimes fuelled by media interest in dissent, or in some cases by the intention to use the media as a kind of stratagem to force the Church into changes she cannot make.”

Some observers, such as Malcolm Muggeridge in his book, *Christ and the Media*, have suggested that the media, by its very nature, cannot restrain itself. They cannot simply and accurately report just the facts. Muggeridge often quoted the lines of William Blake with which we began. For him, they articulated the essential flaw of television: for it did not see through the eye, but through the camera. He felt that the camera could only just skim the surface, and would lack penetrating insight. Further, Muggeridge went on to suggest that, not only does the camera always lie, but it must, by its very nature, distort reality since the “reality of Christ” cannot be “injected into the fantasy of the media”. Muggeridge concluded that unplugging the television set is the best Christian response to television.

This perhaps shocking conclusion may have a certain appeal in light of our experience. We can grow tired of fighting for the truth. It would be easier just to turn off the outside world, by turning off the “tube”, and retreating into our prayer closet! The question

needs to be asked, however, would “turning off” reflect the desire of the Church?

Pope Paul VI in the *Decree on the Media of Social Communications* talks about the evolution of the modern media. The decree states that “men have a right to information” and that we can best get that information through the media. “The most important of these inventions are those media which, such as the press, movies, radio, television and the like, can, of their very nature, reach and influence, not only individuals, but the very masses and the whole of human society.” In other words, the media can be very useful in our task to go out to the “whole world with the news of salvation.” In fact, it is only through the modern media that we can complete Christ’s great commission to the Church.

The decree goes on to state that , “For the proper use of these media it is most necessary that all who employ them be acquainted with the norms of morality and conscientiously put them into practice.” This is the crux of our problem. A large part of the media is neither aware of, nor fully committed to, the established proper norms of morality, but that does not mean that we should “shut down on the media.” Instead, we need to be involved and patronize only those shows, movies and newspapers that support proper norms. If we buy the tickets, they will make more movies like Mel Gibson’s *The Passion*.

It is worth noting that, if we had followed the advice given by Muggeridge, we would never have seen his own television show *Something Beautiful for*

Dr. Donald DeMarco



God, a show that first brought Mother Teresa of Calcutta to the attention of the world! Not all television, not all the media, is uniformly bad. I think Muggeridge knew, in his heart of hearts, that a medium is just that - a means, not an end. It is what we do with television, how we use it, whether it is our master or our servant, that determines whether it is good or evil.

If we want role models for our day, perhaps we should look to examples like Mother Angelica or Bishop Fulton Sheen. They brought the Word of God into households around the world. Another example can be found in, men like St. Maximilian Kolbe, who used magazines, as well as the radio to spread the word of God. They were people of action as well as prayer. The media the world over may continue to spread the darkness and repeat the message that money and sex are the only pursuits in life, violence its only excitement and success its only fulfillment. Only in the bright light of the everlasting truth are we able to see more clearly. If we are not in the media, in the press, what other means will we use to bring that light to the world?

Our attitude towards the media might be best presented by the parable of the weeds among the wheat. *"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while the people slept, his enemy came and sowed darnel also among the wheat, and went away."* We too might ask "Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where did this darnel come from?" In our day, as in Christ's we hear, "An enemy has done this." So what should our response be? Do we fight to pull up the weeds?

Do we not go into the fields? No! Our Lord says, *"Let both grow together until the harvest,"* and then the weeds will be burned. Despite the intentions of the media, they will never make bread from the weeds.

When dealing with the media, as in an election, we need to vote. We can register our choice by selecting carefully what we read, what we watch and how we spend our money. We must raise our voice to demand appropriate programming. As John Paul said to the Australian bishops, "There is a great need to speak the truth clearly and with love, and to do so confidently, since the truth we proclaim belongs to Christ and is in fact the truth for which all people long, no matter how uninterested or resistant they may seem." We also must pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that our words will be both effective and directive.

To return once more to Blake's poem, we should seek the truth "through the eye" and not let the camera shape our vision and our conscience. Our desire should be that all media act as a servant of the good, not an agent of the trivial. With the Holy Spirit, and God's truth to help us, we can seek to bridle the media's excesses and instead, use it to build up whatever is true, beautiful, and praiseworthy!

Charles Barton and his wife Cathy attend St. Leonard's parish in Brampton. They have a son, and a daughter who is studying at the Catholic University of Dallas. Charles has been involved in the Renewal for over 30 years.

The 7 Deadlies



Archbishop Gianfranco Girotti, who occupies the second highest place in the Vatican's "Apostolic Penitentiary," may be wondering what the appropriate penance is that the media should pay for turning his comments about confession into an international burlesque. In a March interview with *L'Osservatore Romano*, the good bishop bemoaned

the fact that, according to a study by Milan's Catholic University, 60% of Italian Catholics have stopped going to confession. He also expressed concern that, according to the study, 30% of the same Catholics do not believe there is a need for a priest to be an intermediary.

When asked what he believed today's "new sins" are, he referred to the violations of human rights that are

going on through stem cell research, genetic manipulation, and abortion. He also made reference to “ecological” offenses, such as pollution. To this somewhat off-hand catalogue of four, he added drug-taking, the accumulation of excessive wealth, and causing poverty.

Vesting Girotti with powers he does not nor pretend to have, the media credited him with the remarkable achievement of replacing the classical Seven Deadly Sins with a new septet. The United Kingdom’s *Daily Telegraph*, for example, ran an article entitled, “Recycle or Go to Hell,” in which it reported that the new list of sins “replaces the list originally drawn up by Pope Gregory the Great in the 6th Century.” The FOX News statement, “Vatican Adds Seven New Deadly Sins,” was echoed in various parts of the world: Boston – “Vatican Lists Pollution as New Sin”; Chicago – “Vatican Modernizes 7 Deadly Sins”; Tampa Bay – “Pope Identifies New Sins”; Associated Press – “Vatican Updates Its Thou-Shalt-Not List”; Australia – “Polluters’ souls in danger”; London – “Avoid Recycling, go to hell;” Turkey – “Seven deadly sins doubled;” India – “Vatican’s New Seven Deadly Sins Include Being Filthy Rich”.

It should be noted that the “Seven Deadly Sins” are not really sins, exactly, but dispositions toward them. Their origin goes back to the First Letter of St. John the Evangelist (15-16) where the Gospel writer refers to the “*lust of the flesh*,” “*lust of the eyes*,” and the “*pride of life*”. According to St. Augustine, lust, gluttony, and sloth exemplify the “lust of the flesh,” while greed is synonymous

with “lust of the eyes,” and pride, envy, and anger are identified with the “pride of life”.

A penitent does not confess “pride” but only the transgressions or the specific sins that flow from it. Conversely, by rooting out the so-called “Deadly” or “Capitol” Sins, one is taking a decisive step in removing the basis for committing specific sins.

Another important point that the media failed to report is that sin, in the primary sense of the term, is an offense against God. “Sin is a rejection of relationality,” writes Cardinal Ratzinger in his 1986 opus, *In the Beginning . . . A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall*. One does not sin, strictly speaking, against the environment. The environment has no capacity to care what we do to it. After all, it was once a whirling ball of fire. Nevertheless, the future Benedict XVI is at some pains to emphasize that God’s directive expressed in Genesis 2:15 “*to till it and keep it*” means that humankind is “supposed to look after the world as God’s creation in accordance with the rhythm and the logic of creation.” In other words, with respect to the environment, God has commanded us to be responsible stewards. Ecological recklessness, then, is a sin against God. It is in no way a “new” sin.

Misunderstanding is one thing. Misrepresentation is another. The second is less excusable than the first. But mockery can be venal, especially when it is levelled against a Church that is trying to offer light for a world plunged in darkness. At the same time, mockery is hardly a new sin. How

much damage control, one may ask, can the Catholic media provide against the tidal wave of mockery that routinely gushes forth from the major media?

This writer was asked to offer his own comments on the Girotti affair by ABC News in New York. I obliged, though I do not know if they were taken with more than a grain of salt. Perhaps we should see each treachery as an opportunity to teach. Educated Catholics, then, should be tireless teachers, as well as indefatigable learners.

Dr. Peter Kreeft, who teaches philosophy at Boston College, in contrast to a deceptive media, is a reliable and ingenious teacher. In his book, *Back to Virtue*, he helps us to deepen our appreciation and understanding of the “Seven Deadly Sins” by relating them to the “Seven Beatitudes”. In Matthew 5:1-11, Christ calls those “blessed” who are: 1) poor in spirit; 2) merciful; 3) in mourning; 4) meek; 5) hungry and thirsting for righteousness; 6) pure of heart; 7) persecuted. Kreeft explains how these beatitudes are antidotes or correctives for 1) pride; 2) avarice; 3) envy; 4) wrath; 5) sloth; 6) lust; 7) gluttony. These seven correlations may not fit perfectly, but they certainly provide a rich and potentially fruitful meditation.

Mahatma Gandhi showed considerable insight and ingenuity when he came up with his “Seven Sins of the Modern World”: 1) Wealth without Work; 2) Pleasure without Conscience; 3) Knowledge without Character; 4) Commerce without Morality; 5) Science without Humility; 6) Worship

without Sacrifice; 7) Politics without Principle.

St. Thomas Aquinas followed Augustine’s teachings on the “Seven Deadly Sins,” but also detailed how they affect the human will either by drawing it to an apparent good or by turning it away from an apparent evil. In the former group we find pride as an inordinate desire for praise, gluttony as an inordinate desire for self-preservation, lust as an inordinate desire for preserving the human race, and avarice as an inordinate desire for external things. In the latter group we find sloth as an attempt to avoid effort, envy as the loss of prestige, and anger as an apparent loss of good.

The Catholic Church is a treasure house of inspirational and edifying material concerning the “Seven Deadly Sins”. The world is as much in love with sinning as the media is in spinning. But the Church is dedicated to the truth and her education is unswervingly directed to truths that make men free.

Dr. Donald DeMarco is Adjunct Professor at Holy Apostles College & Seminary in Cromwell Connecticut and Professor Emeritus at St. Jerome’s University in Waterloo, Ontario. He and his wife Mary are parents to five children.



Fr. Thomas Rosica, C.S.B.



Words Made Flesh and Flesh Made Words



On the evening of October 16, 1978, Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtyła walked out onto the world stage. Following the white smoke from that now familiar Sistine Chapel chimney, the stranger was presented to the waiting crowd as “Pope John Paul II” and he spoke personally to the huge crowd in St. Peter’s Square, going beyond the prescribed Latin words of an *Urbi and Orbi* blessing. He immediately bonded with the audience, describing himself “a man

from a distant country” now called to Rome. From the very beginning of his Pontificate, the youthful, athletic pope took the world by storm. The media knew from the beginning that they had a friend in this Church leader. And Church-media relations were forever changed on that unforgettable night.

For three months during the winter and spring of 2005, the world was inundated with words, stories, and profoundly moving ceremonies coming to us from Rome- images that

helped us recall and evaluate this world charismatic leader’s life and mission. In this age of titillating television reality shows depicting the crudest form of human existence, the world was invited to take part in another kind of reality show of deep pathos and emotion - first in the Papal Apartments at the Vatican, then at Rome’s Gemelli Policlinic and finally back in the Apostolic Palace of the Vatican. Whereas exactly one year earlier the editors and producers were buzzing about another *Passion* from Hollywood, the 2005 reality show invited the entire world into the passion of John Paul II from Rome - the mystery of his suffering and dying, of life and death and new life. Rather than hide his infirmities, as most public figures do, he let the whole world see what he went through.

The Vatican reality show reached its apex in the Octave of Easter and was an extraordinary teaching moment for the Church and for the world. It was brought to us by the media and choreographed by the star himself, John Paul II. It came as no surprise- for the late Pope had remarked on several occasions in private and public discourse: “If it doesn’t happen on television, it doesn’t happen.” The passing of this Pope did not take place in private, but before television cameras and the whole world. And people the world over watched ... for days at a time. Our memories of what he was like before his “retreat” or “departure” have now become suffused with the profound weight of post-mortem insight. He was a best seller in life and also in death. This world leader of a billion Roman Catholics was the

first pontiff of the media, satellite and Internet age. He had a commanding presence on centre stage and thrived on those occasions.

While Pope John Paul II did leave behind a spiritual testament that was read to the Cardinals and later shared with the world, his last major formal document was an Apostolic Letter entitled *The Rapid Development*, released on January 24, 2005. It was addressed “To Those Responsible for Communications” and contains an important message to every media mogul, copy editor, reporter, writer, broadcaster, web master and blogger, whether Roman Catholic or not. A “spirituality of communication” is one of the major contributions of the letter that is none other than John Paul’s Testament on Social Communications. It is not a coincidence that the last document of this great Pope should be on the theme of Communications, for if any church leader ever embodied and exemplified the great communicator, it was John Paul II.

The contents of this remarkable document were somewhat eclipsed by the late Pope’s final suffering and death, and the election of his successor. In *Rapid Development*, John Paul was concise in reviewing the Christian view of history: “Salvation History recounts and documents the communication of God with man, a communication which uses all forms and ways of communication.” He then notes that history’s greatest communicator, Jesus, used a variety of techniques: “He explains the Scriptures, expresses himself in parables, dialogues within

the intimacy of the home, speaks in the squares, along the streets, on the shores of the lake and on the mountaintops. The personal encounter with him does not leave one indifferent, but stimulates imitation: *'What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops,'* (Mt 10:27)."

John Paul II also states that "The media provides a providential opportunity to reach people everywhere, overcoming barriers of time, of space, and of language; presenting the content of faith in the most varied ways imaginable; and offering to all who search the possibility of entering into dialogue with the mystery of God, revealed fully in Christ Jesus."

The most interesting aspect of *Rapid Development*, however, may be its comments on communication within and by the Church. After citing a number of other statements and documents on public opinion in the Church, the letter states: "Communication both within the Church community, and between the Church and the world at large, requires openness and a new approach towards facing questions regarding the world of media. This communication must tend towards a constructive dialogue, so as to promote a correctly informed and discerning public opinion within the Christian community."

We have a long way to go in this area both in the Church and in our media establishments. Barrier walls and hostilities that exist between media and Church must be overcome. It serves no purpose for Church officials and leaders to vilify those involved in

the media, to stonewall and not respond to the constant "urgent" phone calls of this reporter, that producer, some editor. That's the nature of the beast! They don't call it breaking news for nothing! Nor does it serve any purpose for those in the media world to ignore or marginalize the Church and religious issues into banal, trivial matters that don't merit serious reflection. We have much to learn from each other, and we have much good work to do together to serve the cause of truth and decency in a world that is becoming more devoid of value, virtue and meaning.

Throughout his nearly 27 year Pontificate, John Paul II taught us that communication is power. He told us to use that power wisely. Prudently get our message out and it will have a shot at bearing fruit, despite obstacles. And if anyone knew about obstacles, John Paul II did - having lived long and prospered, despite being faced from the very beginning with the tyranny of Nazism and then Communism. Hiding our message will do no one any good, after all. Like the mustard seed in that New Testament parable, we must sow in order to reap.

On Easter Sunday 2005, one of Pope John Paul II's oldest friends said, in a voice tinged with both gratitude and sadness, "I think they are finally beginning to understand him." It was an acute observation, and a telling one.

As the curtain was about to fall for the last time for the Great Communicator John Paul II in April 2005, the athlete was immobilized, the distinctive, booming voice silenced, and the hand that produced voluminous

encyclicals no longer able to write. Yet nothing made him waver, even the debilitating sickness hidden under the glazed Parkinsonian mask, and ultimately his inability to speak and move. In fact, the most powerful message he preached was when the words and actions failed. It was then, in the passion of Karol Wojtyla, that the world saw what authentic communication was all about.

The forces he partially unleashed against authoritarian regimes during his lifetime were only side-effects of the way the man who began life as Karol Wojtyla viewed humanity. At the beginning of the third millennium, we have economic globalization. But this must be accompanied by a moral globalization. Whether or not one shares John Paul II's motivating beliefs, one can certainly acknowledge that his was the most impressive attempt so far made by any single human being to spell out what moral globalization might mean, starting with a lived practice of universal solidarity, charity, and hope. And he did this by communicating his message boldly and respectfully wherever he went.

He taught us that there is much more to the Church and the papacy than preaching, speaking, writing, greeting people and travelling - although he certainly did enough of all of that. He communicated through spontaneous, symbolic actions that were often more eloquent than some of his speeches, homilies and encyclicals - especially his final moments on the world stage. Those actions were often powerful symbols. The word "symbol"

comes from the Greek word *symbolein* - "to bring together"; it's the opposite of the Greek word *diabolein*, "to break apart, to divide" - the origin of our word "diabolical". Symbolic actions help to bring people together in peace and in love. Up to the moment of his death - and even after, Pope John Paul II was bringing people together in peace and in love. That was communication at the service of truth.

In Karol Józef Wojtyla we had a brilliant teacher, communicator and model of goodness and humanity... a wise communicator who would become a "Pontifex Massmediaticus". He began his historic service to the world with words that would become the refrain of the past 27 years: "Do not be afraid!" Would that many of us in the Church and in the media world take these words to heart! Think of the walls that might come tumbling down! Imagine the bridges that would be built!

Fr. Thomas Rosica, C.S.B., is C.E.O. of the Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation and Television Network. He is also a member of the General Council of the Basilian Fathers of Toronto. From 1999-2003, he served as National Director and Chief Executive Officer of World Youth Day 2002. He has taught Sacred Scripture in Toronto, London and Windsor since 1990, has lectured widely and has published numerous articles on scriptural, theological and pastoral topics. He can be reached at: rosica@saltandlighttv.org.



Mutual Submission



Pope John Paul II used Ephesians 5 when looking at marriage. This is one of the most controversial Scripture passages. People just don't like to hear this one. A lot of women have a difficult time with this passage. Because this piece of Scripture has been misunderstood and misused, there is good reason for the controversy.

As we look at these passages and learn from the Pope's insights our marriage relationship can be enriched – we are free to discover who we really are in God's plan for husband and wife in married life.

“Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. As the Church is subject to Christ so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Eph 5:21, 24-25).

St. Paul is not justifying male domination here. All Scripture must be

taken in context. In Ephesians chapter 4, just prior to this passage, St. Paul is telling us we must be transformed in our hearts and minds. *“You must lay aside your former way of life and the old self which deteriorates through illusion and desire and acquire a fresh, spiritual way of thinking. You must put on that new man created in God's image whose justice and holiness are born of truth”* (emphasis ours).

St. Paul is calling us back to God's original plan for us – the original plan which was a perfect balance between the sexes – not the man lording it over the woman. We are called to *“be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ”*. This is not one-sided, it is MUTUAL submission. A husband must have reverence for the beauty revealed by his wife and vice versa. As Pope John Paul put it: *“So therefore that ‘reverence for Christ’ and ‘respect’ of which [St. Paul] speaks, is none other than a spiritually*

mature form of that mutual attraction: man's attraction to femininity and woman's attraction to masculinity” (ToB, 379).

According to the analogy in this scripture passage from Ephesians, the wife is the symbol of the Church and the husband is a symbol of Christ. What did Christ do? He died for his bride. Christ came not to be served but to serve, to lay down his life for his bride. Men are called to do the same. This gives a different perspective on the whole passage. Even if you break down the word SUBMISSION it helps also. SUB – put yourself under. MISSION – from the Latin, *missio* – the mission of your husband. As women we are called to come under the mission of our husbands. What is the mission of the husband? *“Love your wife as Christ loved the Church.”* How did Christ love the Church? By dying for her. As men, we are called to die for our wives.

Women are called to receive the love that God is lavishing on us through our husbands. We have to allow men to serve us. Pope John Paul said, *“Since the ‘submission of the Church to Christ . . . consists in experiencing his love,’ we can conclude that the wife's ‘submission’ to her husband [also] . . . signifies above all ‘the experiencing of love’* (ToB, 320). Sometimes this is easier said than done. It is difficult to receive love from others. Often we associate being loved with doing things for others rather than receiving. We don't need to perform for love – we need to receive God's love directly from him as well as through our spouse.

So this teaching gives us a whole

new insight into “mutual submission”. It is mutual as we are submitted to Christ who is the head of the Church. It is much easier to submit one to the other when we are both submitted to Jesus in our married life. Here is where we will experience the fullness of life and love as we pour ourselves out for each other, dying to ourselves as Christ died for his bride, the Church.

Now, isn't that a much better way of seeing and understanding Ephesians 5?

Charles and Christine Labrosse have been married 20 years and are parishioners of St. Mary's parish in Ottawa. They are involved in a number of ministries in the parish including Marriage Preparation and the Spiritual Gifts Seminar. They also belong to the covenant community the Companions of the Lamb.



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Patrick Riley



Three Cop Outs

My four-year-old grandson Will likes to watch action movies almost as much as I do. Recently he went for a haircut and would only allow his bangs to be trimmed so that he could look like Luke Skywalker. He also managed to sneak a peak at the movie *Lord of the Rings* and when a certain hockey player showed up at his door, Will told his Dad that the visitor looked like a cave troll. He's very serious about what he's watched and often role plays. Those who think movies, TV and video games do not influence the behaviour of children are falling for an illusion, or else they are somewhere asleep in

the balcony. Cop Out number one: "Its only entertainment it doesn't influence anybody."

It doesn't take an expert to draw the correlation between television, movies and video games and the copycat violence in our schoolyards and neighbourhoods. Simply watch the documentary *Bowling for Columbine* by Michael Moore from Columbia Pictures and you'll get the jist of the idea quite adequately.

A movie watcher such as I, who only now and then watches sports and news on television, will make the trip to the theatre if the feature has a lot of special effects, otherwise I'll rent it when

it comes out and see it on the smaller screen with less dynamism. If they blow a lot of stuff up, I'll see it in the theatre. I often feel a little guilty for the time spent watching movies. It may be time wasted that will never return. Still, a person needs to recreate and time spent with loved ones watching a good movie can contain many wonderful moments. It's a tradition in our family to go to the Blockbuster with Dad. We always talked about the movie afterward, what was good about it and what was not so good.

As a music teacher and the Director of the Summer Rock Camp, I get to spend a lot of time listening to the current music of youth and hearing the stories of their lives. They like to talk often in lessons. Many students have their own bedroom replete with a television with access to hundreds of channels, a computer with Internet capabilities and a video game player with games that mirror the most violent aspects of the world outside. I often wonder if today's children live in a virtual world and not the real one. One can play soccer and hockey on a computer and never join an actual team, or play "Guitar Hero" and mistakenly assume one is learning skills in music. Many take guitar and bass lessons but never join a band. The world promotes "self" first and others somewhere down the line. Perhaps we are seeing the death of "team?" Something or someone is trying to divide and conquer us. No exercise, no human interaction, no wonder!

We are now capable of shutting the rest of the world out and keeping our neighbours at arms length whenever

and wherever we want. If ever there was a solitary, lonesome picture, it is of a young person walking alone under a hood with the ear buds in. They appear anonymous, faceless, without identity and deaf to the outside world, when in reality they are the arms and legs that God will use to save our tomorrow.

Movies and music videos that cater to manipulated tastes have little that governs their content. I recently studied the top 20 videos on "Much Music," for a song writing class that I was teaching. There was a great deal of wonderful creativity and skill there. The videos however, seldom have anything to do with the song lyrics and I was surprised to find that only a few of them were without an attractive female in either her underwear or a two-piece bathing suit. Is that necessary? If it is, it's kind of a sad trend, isn't it? Music should stand up on its own without this kind of exploitation. Cop Out number two: "We give the public what it wants. If people don't like it they can always turn it off."

Another cause for concern for me in the movie industry is its casual usage of the Lord's Holy Name. I find this vexing because it never adds to the plot or to character development and often hints at a greater ill, much like a symptom of a cancer. Hollywood's usage of the Holy Name of Jesus is callous, apathetical and disrespectful to say the least and they get away with it because it's acceptable these days. The same could not be done with the sacred names of "Yahweh," "Jehovah," "Allah," or "Buddha." So why is it okay to abuse the name of Jesus? I make the sign of

Fr. Frank Pavone



STARING DEATH IN THE EYE

A few of my colleagues in the pro-life movement have at times made the blanket generalization that showing pictures of aborted babies “doesn’t work” or is “counterproductive”. They say people already know abortion is evil, and seeing the photos will only turn them away from our movement. Nor, they say, will the photos persuade someone not to have an abortion.

May I present some evidence to the contrary. These are three of hundreds of emails I receive from people who see these photos at www.priestsforlife.org/images.

1. “Up until I visited this site I had been pro-choice. I thought that I would do an Internet search to see exactly what an abortion entails. After seeing the images on your site, there was no decision to be made. I figured that whatever hardships having a baby at this time would bring me, would be far easier than living with the guilt I knew I would never rid myself of if I was to get an abortion. The pictures had such a powerful effect on me. They helped me to be strong and realize that this pregnancy was made possible by God and if it wasn’t meant to be, that was his choice, not mine.”

2. “Hello, I am a 16-year-old female

and I just finished looking at the pictures on your site and reading what actually happens during an abortion. Up until five minutes ago I was extremely pro-choice. Because of your site, I realize that abortion is not a choice about a woman’s body . . . it is the LIFE of a BABY. Never before did I realize how truly horrible and careless abortion really is. Maybe it’s because I’d never seen the pictures, or read the actual descriptions of abortion. Maybe I was too afraid to know the truth. But within 3 minutes of viewing your website, my face was covered in tears. Those pictures just really hurt to look at. I cannot express how grateful I am that you have shown me the truth about abortion. God bless you.”

3. “Thank you so much for your website. I am 14 weeks pregnant and my partner wants me to have an abortion . . . so I thought about it. I got on the Internet trying to see how much it cost and I was lead to your site. I wanted to see what happens and what they look like at 14 weeks. Thanks to your site, I am not going to do it. I am unable to commit murder. That is like killing my own children at their age. This is a remarkable website. Everyone should see this site before they consider having an abortion. Everyone needs to see this

the cross in the theatre when I hear the Lord’s Holy Name misused as a visual sign of its sacredness and as a peaceful protest. Cop Out number three: “We just reflect reality. Don’t blame us, blame society.”

My father was a member of the “Holy Name Society” and he taught me to bow my head anytime I heard the name of Jesus. I don’t recall his ever using the Lord’s name inappropriately, no matter how whacky things got. He also bowed his head, or crossed his forehead, or tipped his hat whenever he passed a Catholic Church in respect for the holy presence of Jesus in the Tabernacle. Respect is contagious, but so is disrespect. Remember faith is caught not taught.

What do Catholic youths learn when they hear the Lord’s name used inappropriately, or when the villain is a priest or Bishop and no one says anything about it? In the movie *Sin City* one of the main villains is a Cardinal who is also a part-time cannibal and in the same movie the gun-slugging prostitutes wear crucifixes. Rarely do you see a cleric from another major religion as the bad guy. This is needless and harmful and leads one to postulate that there is a deeper anti-Catholic sentiment in Hollywood which often rears its ugly head in subtle ways on the screens that our children view. A book published recently on this subject *The New Anti-Catholicism: The Last Acceptable Prejudice*, by Philip Jenkins, deals with this in great detail.

A Cop Out is to withdraw from an activity because of lack of nerve or inclination, to choose to say

nothing because it would make for an uncomfortable situation. It’s a kind of frightened laziness that lets the unhealthy elements flourish and the healthy ones wither. It’s a kind of sin of omission. The great folk singer Pete Seeger once said “The media is a sword rusting in the scabbard while there’s a fight for survival going on.” Is there an immediate answer to this? Only that parents spend time with the ones they love, watch what they watch and talk about it after.

One exception worth noting is found in the movie *The Last Crusade*. The character Indiana Jones and his father are on a hunt for the Holy Grail while fighting against the powers of darkness. Indy takes the Lord’s name in vain and gets slapped by his father for blasphemy. A rare event on the big screen.

Pat Riley is a Third Order Carmelite and the leader of the Atlantic Service Committee Music Ministry (The Day), as well as liturgical music minister in his parish. He teaches at the Canadian Conservatory of Music. Pat and his wife live in Dartmouth, NS.



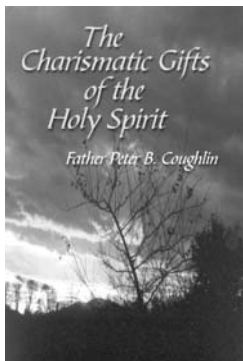
to determine if they are able to live with themselves after doing this.”

Many other messages like these are posted at www.priestsforlife.org/images.

Now, if someone prefers not to use the photos, that's fine. Many others will, and there are many other kinds of pro-life work to go around. But please don't say the photos don't work. They certainly do.

Fr. Frank Pavone is an internationally known pro-life activist, speaker and author. He has led the Priests for Life movement since 1993. He has served at the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Family. Norma McCorvey, the "Jane Roe" of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision Roe vs. Wade, called Fr. Pavone "the catalyst who brought me into the Catholic Church." Priests for Life can be contacted at email: mail@priestsforlife.org; web: www.priestsforlife.org.

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POETRY

By Paul David Colgin

Jacob's Struggle

Genesis 32:23-31

All night no less, the struggle,
that any might also see face-to-face,
man to God, angel, man, a self-to-be.
What is this dislocation,
this standoff, this blessing, this identity?
"I will not let you go!"
And so metamorphosis and corrected character
from whom nation, from whom Saviour,
from Whom everlasting dawn.

FEATURE

Mary DeMarco



Hook, Line & Sinker

On October 30, 1938, Orson Welles broadcast on a popular radio program, an adaptation of the science fiction novel *The War of the Worlds* about a Martian invasion of the earth. The script of the radio play was written to simulate a radio broadcast of a news event. Although there were announcements during the broadcast that this was not a current event but a drama being presented, many people who tuned in thought that an actual invasion of earth was occurring by people from outer space. After the panic had settled, a perspective news columnist for the *New York Tribune*, Dorothy Thompson, wrote in her column that the reaction of the people to the radio drama demonstrated that through the use of mass communication, the public could be manipulated and led to believe "totally unreasonable, completely fantastic propositions as to create a nation-wide panic".

Welles had no intention of misleading or manipulating the public. However, today as we have progressed to numerous forms of media communication including the radio, the science of media influence has also advanced to include the deliberate manipulation of audiences

for various reasons. We are familiar with the reporting of disasters such as hurricanes, tsunamis, railroad crashes, car accidents, fires, etc. when the media goes into a frenzy to titillate and entertain the masses as they report the news and supposedly warn the public. Or under the guise of taking a stand and supporting a particular political party, some members of the media have even sunk to the level of lying, exaggerating and misrepresenting issues. They excuse this as editorializing or "putting a spin" on a story. Some media outlets find it acceptable to invade an individual's privacy or to encourage others to do so, sometimes illegally, in order to get "the news." An example of this is, the paparazzi who harassed Princess Diana, or those who broke into U. S. Vice Presidential nominee Sarah Palin's private email. Sometimes media representatives take deliberate measures to destroy movements or groups which they perceive to be in opposition to their views. The established Church sometimes falls victim in this last category.

The media tends to view the public as a "mass" which can be influenced through entertainment. They see information, humour, sensationalism, and sex, all to be a part of this entertainment package.

They editorialize, use clips (segments of interviews or information), to create what they think to be responsible journalism, educating the public. Notables who are aware of this and have “media savvy” admit that they have to exercise caution and prepare for media interviews or they will be misinterpreted, misrepresented or misunderstood.

Unfortunately, we, the public, often encourage and collude with the media in their mission because we do want to be entertained. Often we allow ourselves to be misinformed because we don't want to or can't take the steps to be properly informed. Or perhaps we just agree with the spin that the media is presenting. We give into the charisma of media darlings ignoring the consequences of supporting the stars we have chosen. Again, because we like to be entertained, we are willing to sacrifice morality for our personal enjoyment. We willingly allow ourselves to be seduced and used. A new danger has arisen in terms of media influence on society.

Intellectuals such as Jose Ortega y Gasset, T.S. Elliot and others represent the Aristocratic Theory of mass society, predicting that society would be dominated by “philistine masses, without centers or hierarchies of moral or cultural authority”. The Frankfurt School of cultural theory posited “the masses are precisely dominated by an all-encompassing cultural industry obedient only to the logic of consumer capitalism”.

A third more contemporary view of

popular culture often called “Progressive Evolutionism” takes a more positive view of the capitalist economy as the source of opportunity through a fully democratized system of mass education. Contemporary studies of the culture,



which developed in the late 1970's and 1980's, also take a positive outlook. They focus on culture as a complex formation of interactions between people and groups and emphasize the capacity of consumers to resist indoctrination. However, these modern thinkers seem not to take into account that they are not apart from culture themselves but are influenced by the culture in which they live. These thinkers seem to ignore the effect of secular humanism and other philosophies on public and private thought. Secular humanists

think that mankind doesn't need God and can construct a good society through their own efforts. If one's mind is already molded in a certain attitude, it is difficult to have self-awareness and the self-control needed to resist the negative aspects of that attitude.

However, not all contemporary thinkers are satisfied to accept the status quo. A long list of notable writers and thinkers has challenged the manipulation of people by the media.

The momentum of modern cultural change increased in tandem with the development of new forms of media presentation from the expression of ideas in the form of literature, on the radio, movies, television, and now the computer. The effect that instantaneous widespread dissemination of ideas without critical review had on people did not go unnoticed. Soon it was seen that not only ideas could be presented to the general public but that the media could be used as an instrument of coercion and manipulation. In affecting peoples' thinking, ideas affected their life-style, opinions, and beliefs and how they lived out these things. Almost in a game of “catch up” critics of the media expressed, after the effect, warnings of how the media was causing deep change in our society and culture, particularly its negative effect on religion and the family. James Hitchcock in his excellent book, *What is secular humanism?* points out that a moral revolution against theocentric values has been promoted by the media. He saw that this moral revolution was achieved in a variety of ways. Firstly, it began by people talking about what

previously was unmentionable. The justification for this was that in order to educate, all topics should be open to discussion. However, the media used this excuse not because they wanted to educate but because they wanted to sensationalize.

Unfortunately, the mass media has the power to give respectability to topics that do not deserve it. An example of this was during the American 2008 presidential race, *Saturday Night Live*, did a skit on Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin's husband, portraying him as committing incest with his daughters. Not only should this not be a topic for humour; but the fact that it was ever presented showed a loosening of moral values and also, devalued the importance of truth. However, the stars involved got the international publicity that they wanted and the standards for what should be presented on television were again lowered. This example also introduces the second stage of the moral revolution which James Hitchcock notes: the use of ridicule to devalue institutions, ideas and people. One of the most powerful ways to discredit accepted beliefs is through the use of ridicule. Family, religion and patriotism have all been undermined by media attacks using ridicule.

The third stage of the media effort to initiate a moral revolution loosening moral values is by exploiting traditional sympathy for the underdog. Intellectuals, the Church, traditional morality, are all depicted by the media as “powerful, dominant and even tyrannical systems.” (Hitchcock) The Pope and Church leaders are portrayed as authoritarian

Fr. Thomas Rosica, C.S.B.



World Youth Day 2008



bullies and know-it-alls. In the name of freedom of expression, the individual is released from any moral directive. The media convinces people that the Church is unnecessary. People are encouraged to be self-sufficient and told that it is their inherent freedom to be so.

The Church rises like a star out of the morass of incertitude, ignorance and sin caused by the revolution that the media intended to change society and undermine traditional values. Guided by the Holy Spirit, using tactics of love, knowledge and affirmation of good, the Church does not submit but makes a powerful counterattack. Forefront in this defense, rises Pope John Paul II and his successor, Pope Benedict. George Weigel, in his biography of Pope John Paul II states that the papacy has been “a one act drama” involving the tensions between various false humanisms that degrade the humanity they claim to defend and exalt” (*Witness to Hope*). In his book, *The Acting Person*, Pope John Paul sorts out the difference between secular humanism espoused by the masses and the human person acting in freedom guided by the Holy Spirit. “It is man’s actions, his conscious acting that makes of him who and what he is.” This statement is reminiscent of Jesus saying, “for the tree is known by its fruit” (Mt 12:33). This simple but profound statement teaches us how to deal with media influence. The media can be judged by the results of their acts. We in turn have a responsibility to choose good as we act. The study of media influence is interesting because although the media seems to have immense power, it is ultimately destined to lose. It is with

the hope that the Church stands firm, that it and we are called to be a witness to hope.

Mary DeMarco and her husband Don live in Kitchener, Ontario. They are parents to five children.

POETRY

By Paul David Colgin

The Birth and Resurrection of Jesus

Matthew 1:18, 28:1-7

Mysterious conception and
 miraculous –
 life spirit, direct from the will of God.
 Life not begun but birth – revealed
 – real
 becoming then and there from the
 Begotten.
 Womb foreshadowing tomb,
 resurrection life retaken
 and reborn from his will joined to his.
 Spirit with mother and new man
 again,
 now always rejoicing at
 Life’s most authentic inceptions.

Pope Benedict XVI taught some powerful summer school lessons at World Youth Day 2008 in Sydney, Australia last summer, in the midst of a Sydney winter. What are some of the more salient lessons that stand out for young people throughout the world? The mega gathering of young people in Sydney afforded Pope Benedict the opportunity to articulate his concern for nature, ecology and the environment. By appealing to the ecological and environmental sensitivities of young people, the Pope taught them that they really believe God created all things and that God’s plan for creation must be respected.

The stunning presentation of the Stations of the Cross at Sydney’s most

striking sites was a highly effective Gospel teaching instrument and method in a relatively new Christian land. The pageant was viewed by hundreds of thousands of people in the city, and by a television audience of about 500 million viewers. Condemned to death at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Jesus was whipped and scourged at the majestic Sydney Opera House. Jesus and the cross were then taken by barge under the majestic Sydney Harbour Bridge to Darling Harbour, where the Lord was helped by Simon of Cyrene, played by an Aboriginal actor who caused Australians to reflect on the way that colonial powers captured and manacled indigenous people on the edges of the Australian frontier in the

19th century.

In the fading light of that Australian winter Friday night, Jesus was then dragged to centre stage, stripped of his robes and tied to a wooden and metal cross that was hydraulically raised up for the final torment overlooking Sydney's Harbor. Echoing the historic WYD 2002 Stations of the Cross in Toronto, the Lord's body was gently lowered by a long satin cloth, cradled by a sorrowful Mary, and carried on the shoulders of his disciples through the throngs of mourners along the harbour. The dramatic ending set the stage for Christ's resurrection.

At the end of the Stations of the Cross, the Pope met young people with histories of drug addiction and other problems who are following the "Alive" rehabilitation program. The Pope spoke openly with them about today's false gods and the worship of three things: material possessions, possessive love, or power.

"Dear friends, I see you as ambassadors of hope to others in similar situations. You can convince them of the need to choose the path of life and shun the path of death, because you speak from experience. All through the Gospels, it was those who had taken wrong turns who were particularly loved by Jesus, because once they recognized their mistake, they were all the more open to his healing message."

Pope Benedict used the occasion of the July 19th Saturday morning Mass to personally identify with the pain of the victims of clerical sex abuse in Australia, going even further than the apology he issued in the United States several

months earlier: "Here I would like to pause to acknowledge the shame which we have all felt as a result of the sexual abuse of minors by some clergy and religious in this country. Indeed, I am deeply sorry for the pain and suffering the victims have endured, and I assure them that, as their pastor, I too share in their suffering. These misdeeds, which



constitute so grave a betrayal of trust, deserve unequivocal condemnation."

The Saturday evening prayer vigil at the Randwick Racecourse (called the "Southern Cross Precinct" for WYD 2008) on July 19th began in darkness, gradually illuminated by torches borne by dancers on the podium, representing the opening to the Holy Spirit. "Tonight we focus our attention on how to become witnesses", the Pope told the young people in his address.

"You are already well aware that our Christian witness is offered to a world which in many ways is fragile. The unity of God's creation is weakened by wounds which run particularly deep when social relations break apart, or when the human spirit is all but crushed through the exploitation and abuse of persons. Indeed, society today is being fragmented by a way of thinking that is inherently short-sighted, because it disregards the full horizon of truth, the truth about God and about us. By its nature, relativism fails to see the whole picture. It ignores the very principles which enable us to live and flourish in unity, order and harmony."

Yet, the Pope went on, "such attempts to construct unity in fact undermine it. To separate the Holy Spirit from Christ present in the Church's institutional structure would compromise the unity of the Christian community, which is precisely the Spirit's gift! ... Unfortunately the temptation to 'go it alone' persists. Some today portray their local community as somehow separate from the so-called institutional Church, by speaking of the former as flexible and open to the Spirit and the latter as rigid and devoid of the Spirit."

"Let us invoke the Holy Spirit: he is the artisan of God's works", the Pope concluded. "Let his gifts shape you! Just as the Church travels the same journey with all humanity, so too you are called to exercise the Spirit's gifts amidst the ups and downs of your daily life. Let your faith mature through your studies, work, sport, music and art. Let it be sustained by prayer and nurtured by

the Sacraments. ... In the end, life is not about accumulation. It is much more than success. To be truly alive is to be transformed from within, open to the energy of God's love. In accepting the power of the Holy Spirit you too can transform your families, communities and nations. Set free the gifts! Let wisdom, courage, awe and reverence be the marks of greatness!"

At the liturgy on Sunday July 20th, culminating six days of public and private events of World Youth Day, Pope Benedict XVI spoke about the spiritual desert that is spreading; interior emptiness, an unnamed fear, and a quiet sense of despair afflicting humanity. He also described a new generation of Christians "that is being called to help build a world in which God's gift of life is welcomed, respected and cherished – not rejected, feared as a threat and destroyed. A new age in which love is not greedy or self-seeking, but pure, faithful and genuinely free, open to others, respectful of their dignity, seeking their good, radiating joy and beauty."

In remarks at the concluding Mass thanking Pope Benedict XVI, Sydney's Cardinal George Pell said that World Youth Day acts as an antidote to images of Catholicism as in decline or wracked by controversy. "It shows the Church as it really is, alive with evangelical energy." "Your Holiness, the World Youth Days were the invention of Pope John Paul the Great. ...[yet] World Youth Days do not belong to one pope, or even one generation, but are now an ordinary part of the life of the Church."

Benedict XVI provided Australia

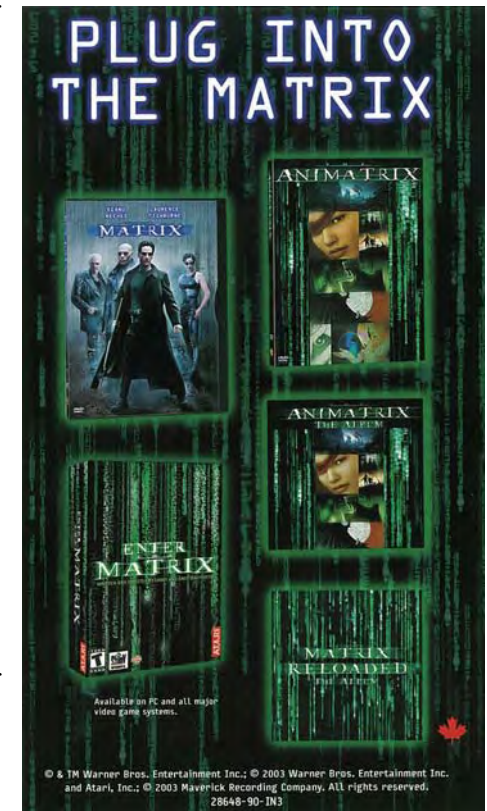
Jennifer Cauchi



BUYER'S REMORSE

I think we all have had a bad case of buyer's remorse. Since the boob tube was first introduced to the "all-American" family as a substitute fireside storyteller, until the present time when most middle-class families have one in every room, we have become hooked. Hooked up, that is. I can see it now...a vision of a teenage boy...he's dying and he's hooked up to all kinds of wires. There's one for the TV, the computer, the MP3 player, the cable that uploads his Youtube from his cell phone to his media player, and on and on. The doctors and nurses come running and one young surgeon announces, "wait, there's wireless now...all he needs is this chip and everything will sync up at the press of a button...he'll be free!"

Sounds like something out of *The Matrix*, doesn't it? In case you don't know the storyline, *The Matrix* is a science fiction film in which the real world has been taken over by computers. Humans are kept in a state of virtual reality or dreamland, but they think that everything is real and normal. One human, Neo, is offered a chance to escape by another already freed human, Morpheus. All he has to do is take the blue pill and he is able to see the truth

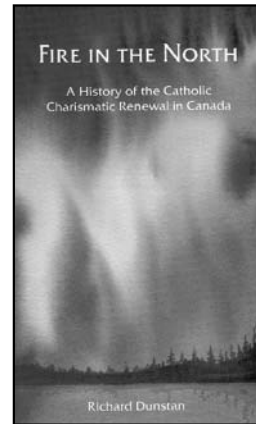


with a program for the spiritual and social renewal of an entire nation. Whereas the Olympic Games, brought much luster and glitz to the land down under in 2000, World Youth Day 2008 brought not gold, silver and bronze medals, but something even greater: it gave Australia and Sydney a soul and a future.

Benedict XVI provided Australia with a program for the spiritual and social renewal of an entire nation and offered young people the necessary encouragement, inspiration and vision to do that. In Sydney, the young people of the "Generation John Paul II" and of the "Generation Benedict XVI" received power from on high as the Spirit was poured out so lavishly upon them (Acts 1:8). Now let us pray together that they may become the Spirit's joyful witnesses to the ends of the earth.

On Sunday July 27, 2008, having returned to Castelgandolfo, Pope Benedict shared with the world his memories of World Youth Day in Sydney, where he had the opportunity "to encounter the youthful face of the Church". He said: "This World Day became a new Pentecost, from which the mission of young people started out afresh, called to be apostles of their peers like so many saints and blessed" such as "Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati whose relics, placed in Sydney's cathedral, were venerated by a constant pilgrimage of young people. All young men and women are called to follow their example and share the personal experience of Jesus which changes the lives of his 'friends' with the power of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God's love".

Fr. Thomas Rosica, C.S.B., is C.E.O. of the Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation and Television Network. He is also a member of the General Council of the Basilian Fathers of Toronto. From 1999-2003, he served as National Director and Chief Executive Officer of World Youth Day 2002. He has taught Sacred Scripture in Toronto, London and Windsor since 1990, has lectured widely and has published numerous articles on scriptural, theological and pastoral topics. He can be reached at: rosica@saltandlighttv.org.



Fire in the North

Here at last is a history of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Canada. Richard Dunstan has brought together research from many sources as he shares the Holy Spirit's journey in this country. He gives a wonderful overview of the Spirit's work across this land. Definitely a book that will be enjoyed by anyone excited about the Spirit's work in the Canadian Church.

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that there is a war between good and evil.

“Let me tell you why you’re here,” says Morpheus to Neo. “You’re here because you know something. What you know you can’t explain - but you feel it. You’ve felt it your entire life. That there’s something wrong with the world. You don’t know what it is, but it’s there, like a splinter in your mind, driving you mad. It is this feeling that has brought you to me. Do you know what I’m talking about?”

“The Matrix?” Neo asks.

“Do you want to know what it is?” asks Morpheus. Neo nods. “The Matrix is everywhere. It is all around us. Even now in this very room. You can see it when you look out your window, or when you turn on your television. You can feel it when you go to work, when you go to church, when you pay your taxes. It is the world that has been pulled over your eyes to blind you from the truth.”

“What truth?” asks Neo.

“That you are a slave, Neo. Like everyone else, you were born into bondage. Born into a prison that you cannot smell or taste or touch—a prison for your mind. Unfortunately, no one can be told what the Matrix is. You have to see it for yourself.” Morpheus takes out two pills: one blue, one red. “This is your last chance. After this there is no turning back. You take the blue pill—the story ends, you wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill—you stay in Wonderland, and I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes. Remember, all I’m offering is the truth, nothing

more.”

The Matrix has often been used as an allegory for the pretend world of modern communication and technology that we live in today. What are the values that are being taught to us by the popular media? Are they skewed? How deep will the rabbit hole go?

First of all, by popular media, I mean to say the communication methods most widely experienced in our culture on a day-to-day basis, specifically advertising, news, and the entertainment industry. One hardly needs to comment on the persuasion techniques used by marketers. Some marketing research companies even go so far as to hire “moles” to infiltrate the youth scene and report back on up-and-coming trends for teens.

Then there is the “News”. It should stand for “Not Entertaining, Won’t Sell” – If it bleeds it leads. You know the drill. Remember the coverage of Terri Schiavo? If CNN and the rest of the major news shows had sought out and presented the truth of what happened, they wouldn’t have been able to drag the story out for so long, because there would have been no controversy. In fact, she probably wouldn’t have died if people were aware of all the facts. I’ve actually heard her brother, Bobby Schindler, tell the Schindler family’s side of the story and it’s quite convincing and scary. The media portrayed Terri as a dying woman who had allegedly told her husband before her mishap that “she would never want to live like that”, the classic argument for assisted suicide. We didn’t hear much of the family’s side. In fact, Terri’s family was

vilified throughout the ordeal.

We didn’t hear much from the news reporters about the abusive nature of Michael Schiavo before Terri’s “accident” either. To this day, her vegetative state is widely reported as a result of bulimia. Nor were we told of the family problems between Michael and Terri’s parents that precipitated his denial of her care as far back as 12 years before she was finally ordered to be starved and dehydrated. We were not told of the time in 1993 when Michael ordered doctors not to treat Terri’s urinary tract infection.

What about Michael’s cohabitation with another woman in 1995 and his subsequent fathering of two children and engagement to her? Why were these facts underemphasized? Why had Michael waited until 1998, eight years after Terri had her “accident” to finally begin the fight to have her feeding tube removed? Why would he have waited another two years to have two more witnesses (his brother and his sister-in-law) come forward and testify that Terri said she would have wanted to die if she were incapacitated. Her best friends and immediate family were not considered credible, but Michael’s were?! Furthermore, there were 25 national disabilities groups supporting Terri’s family, yet this was not reported.

According to Bobby Schindler, the autopsy report was the largest distortion of facts. It was reported that her brain was half the size of a normal brain, and this was evidence of her advanced vegetative state. But this was after being dehydrated for 14 days! Your brain would be shrivelled

too—the brain is supposed to be made up of 70-80% water! We didn’t hear about how she smiled and was able to mumble “mommy” at the beginning of her rehabilitation before it was halted by Michael. There are many more facts that were ignored by the media, so Terri’s family published her story, *A Life That Matters: The Legacy of Terri Schiavo*. For more details on the case, you can find them at <http://www.terrisfight.org>.

It’s amazing, but right around the time that all this happened, an award-winning movie, *Million Dollar Baby* came out in theatres. The movie tells of a heroine’s plight to cope with her infirmities and her knowledge that she will never be able to continue life as a world-class fighter. Her life was so miserable that she no longer desired to live, and so she is eventually able to convince her trainer to put her to death. Leaves you with a warm, fuzzy feeling, doesn’t it? Despite the darkness of this film, and its “Right to Die” message, it was critically acclaimed. Why does the Hollywood Establishment dwell on such movies, even when they aren’t the ones making the big bucks at the box office? According to Lionel Chetwynd, one of Hollywood’s most vocal conservatives, the most important motivator for filmmakers is “their wish for recognition as artists from peers, critics, and the liberal elites”. He says, “And it has been true from the late sixties on that if you wanted to be seen as an artist, you have to be a liberal—you have to rail against the government, be edgy” (<http://www.city-journal.org/printable.php?id=1888>). So, maybe

Tony Gizzie



The Great Communicator



it's not a sinister plot to destroy the morality of the free world. Maybe in Hollywood, they still haven't been able to loose themselves of their "bad-boy" image.

"Woe to humanity should it lose the meaning of truth, the courage to seek it, the confidence of finding it" (Pope John Paul II, *Faith and Reason*). We live in a marketplace of ideas all competing for our allegiance. Few today question the impact the media has on our culture. Even the youth are quick to admit the power that the media has in influencing our lives. Does that mean we should toss out our flat-screens and unplug the high-speed cable? Should we boycott the theatres and cancel our subscriptions? This may be a bit extreme, and self-defeating. Not all of us are called to seclusion or hermitage. Rather, we need to have the confidence to engage the world and face the truth head-on. One evangelist, Dr. Larry Poland, head of Master Media International, feels that we mustn't condemn Hollywood: "One day I was reading that passage in John 3 that said 'God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved' and I thought, 'Hello! You can substitute Hollywood. God didn't send his son into the world to condemn Hollywood, but that Hollywood through him might be saved.' And so, that's our mission, love these people unconditionally.

"I hate what they do. I hate the environment. It's a dark spirit. Many dark spirits prevail in Hollywood, but these people are just lost, and they're hungry, and they're open."

Poland and other evangelists have much hope for the entertainment industry and the media in general. I guess *The Matrix* got it right. We are all kind of hooked up to this alternate reality. And the only one who can set us free is...no, not Rogers High-speed Portable Internet...but Jesus Christ and his Church!

Hollywood, CNN, and other popular media may have lost the truth, but like Neo, there are still media and entertainment professionals who have the courage to seek it and the confidence of finding it. There are Catholic and Christian networks like Salt & Light, EWTN, and CTS. There are producers willing to take personal financial risks on films like *Bella* and *The Passion of the Christ*. There are glimmers of hope in news reporting like the overwhelmingly positive coverage of World Youth Day 2002 Toronto and Pope John Paul II's funeral. As seekers of truth, we need to support these efforts through our purchases and viewing habits and to pray for producers and media executives, entertainers, journalists. Our youth should be encouraged to pursue careers in media and we should all be taught how to evaluate movies, music and television. We need to fast from any questionable content (like giving up *Family Guy* for Lent), and to learn to just say, "No thank you, I would not like any Matrix today. I'll take some Heaven."

Jennifer Cauchi teaches religion at a Catholic secondary school in Brampton, Ontario. She and her husband Geoff live in Oakville, Ontario and are active members of St. Andrew parish.

Let us take a trip back in time to the early 1940's, to a small apartment located in the city of Krakow, Poland. There, a small underground troupe performs a play to an audience of a dozen people. They sit quietly, watching the main actor, a handsome, blond-haired young man in his early twenties. He acts with

confidence and has a strong stage presence. No one in the apartment that evening, and certainly not the young man, knew that in time, the world would become his stage. Listening to his words, those present could hardly imagine the countless millions who would eventually hear his voice.

For in the midst of war-torn

Poland, the thoughts and prayers of the actors and the audience alike were about survival and freedom. In time, this young man, this Karol Wojtyła, would be acting in a play not based on the great Polish romantics. His new part would be scripted by the Gospels, a role inspired by the Word of God.

“One thing Karol Wojtyła rarely did was read newspapers; nor was he particularly interested in watching the news on television or hearing it on the radio... In the era of mass media Wojtyła has refused to be personally connected to this seemingly essential feature of contemporary life - even while making as potent use of it as any figure in history” (*His Holiness*, Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, 1996).

Over the course of the 20th century no one man used the influence and accessibility of the media as effectively as our late pontiff, John Paul II. While appearing in person to millions, as he travelled to over 130 countries, he was seen by an even a greater audience through the marvel of the electronic media. It would not be an exaggeration to say that he, not the late president Ronald Reagan, was the Great Communicator.

For those who followed the Pope on television, who could forget the scenes of the pontiff bending down to kiss the soil of the land he had just arrived at, or his waving to massive crowds from his popemobile, or of his sitting on an elevated sanctuary before millions, preaching the word of God? These images will remain with us for our lifetime.

Yet, looking back, the remarkable

thing about the late pontiff was not how he put his message out to the multitudes, but that he stayed true to the course he felt the Church should travel. As is the case for those who strongly profess their beliefs, this did not always meet with the approval of the western media, who appeared to follow their own agenda. It is interesting to note that it was not until after the fall of the Soviet Union that the secular media increasingly saw this pontificate as being conservative, and moving the Church away from mainstream Catholics, particularly in North America and Europe.

“One paradox of the Polish Pope is that while he is rightly revered for helping bring down the godless communists, he has replicated something very like the old Communist Party in his Church... Karol Wojtyła has shaped a hierarchy that is intolerant of dissent, unaccountable to its members, secretive in the extreme and willfully clueless about how people live...” (Bill Keller *New York Times* May 4, 2002).

Large segments of the western media attempt to offer the world news from a secular perspective. However, they expect the newsmakers to play ball with them by their rules. After all, it is a business and the world is their playground. To John Paul’s credit, he clearly understood that he, not the media, led the Catholic Church and that he would pronounce his vision of faith guided not by Neilson’s ratings or a particular political viewpoint but based on the teachings of Jesus Christ.

“Most Catholics choose to be Catholics on their own terms... Where they think the Pope really doesn’t

understand, they reserve the right to follow their own consciences and appeal to a God who does understand” (Rev. Andrew Greeley on NBC’s *Today Show* October 7, 1995).

His consistent stands against abortion, euthanasia, homosexual union and the ordination of women were, in the eyes of the liberal press, not politically correct, thus suspect and open to intense scrutiny. True, the media loved it when John Paul’s visits to Poland transformed the country, and were shocked by his near assassination in 1981. Yet, they scorned the fact that he spoke against the revolutionary theology movement that was then taking place in Central and South America. On one hand, they lauded the Pope’s efforts to reach out to other faiths, such as his visiting a Rome synagogue, or establishing diplomatic ties with Israel, but they were merciless in their criticism over his agreement to have a Carmelite convent be built near Auschwitz. It appeared that they wanted to do our thinking for us.

Towards the end of his life, John Paul’s suffering and acceptance of his illness became an inspiration for all. But even as death approached, the press was writing about his conservative rule, on how he turned the Church away from the progress of the second Vatican Council, ironically the Council where Karol Wojtyła first made a lasting impression on his fellow Cardinals.

“It seems that this firmness is what made him so popular. And it is perhaps this firmness that held the Catholic Church together during a time that has seen other socio-cultural centres either explode or implode. He was autocratic

with the Church but up close and personal with the people. The question is, though, could it all boil down to the cult of personality? What will be the legacy of JP II’s understanding of the mass media?” (*Pop matters* April 4, 2005).

Even so, the media did hype this Pope’s news-making proclamations and travels, right up to the time of his passing, and in that regard, John Paul was a willing, charismatic participant. However, it is important to remember that he stayed true to his message of faith, regardless of the media coverage. He never wavered as a man, or as our spiritual leader. In this respect, he was unshakeable.

As Catholics there are lessons we can learn from the interplay that occurred between the media and the Pope. First, we must remember that the Church is based on the Word provided by our Lord, Jesus Christ. His message was, is and always will be clear and resolute. The times change, but not the message. Over the past hundred years we have the famous come and go, enormously popular trends fade, and political systems crumble. The Word of God is constant. John Paul II clearly understood this, and stood firm against the fickle winds of change.

Because of the length of his reign, it was inevitable that the media have cast him as a man who was out of sync with his times. It would be unfortunate for Catholics, to reach this conclusion. His leadership was brilliant, his guidance sound. In this respect, we should thank the media, who in spite of themselves helped the Pope deliver his message to

Sue Atkinson



Having spent the past several years with teenagers in our home, I have become aware of the prevalence and the power of the mass media in the lives of young people. Music, television, movies, magazines and computer use - all of these come into our home and influence our children, for good or for ill. We need to take care to guard our "domestic church" from the negative influences of the media. Just as our places of worship should not be used for anything other than worship of God, so our homes should be sacred places in which anything coming into our home should not draw us away from the Lord

commitment and storylines in sitcoms rely heavily on insults and innuendo for the laugh tracks. Magazine photo images are airbrushed and manipulated to give the appearance of perfection and home computers can be a gateway to ungodly images and pursuits.

We live in a society in which the media generally places little value on modesty, purity, integrity, truth, true love, commitment, and real beauty. Satan has taken all these wonderful gifts of God and has twisted them, presenting a counterfeit of each. Young people are surrounded by counterfeit beauty and love to the point that they lose their ability to recognize the real thing if they met it. If we make our homes places of true beauty and love, monitoring the many media influences that come into our home, then our young people will have a better chance of recognizing that beauty.

us all. As he so eloquently wrote, "We give thanks to God for the presence of these powerful media which, if used by believers with the genius of faith and in docility to the light of the Holy Spirit, can facilitate the communication of the Gospel and render the bonds of communion among ecclesial communities more effective" (His Holiness John Paul II, 2005).

For Catholics who are interested in the reporting of Church news apart from the secular media, please log into the following websites:

- www.catholicregister.org
- www.vatican.va
- www.saltandlighttv.org

Tony Gizzie lives in Oakville, Ontario where he is a member of St. Andrew parish.



Explosion of Fire

Edited by Fr. Peter Coughlin

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by Geoff Cauchi



Discernment & Vigilance

“In the first place, a vast work of formation is needed to assure that the mass media be known and used intelligently and appropriately. The new vocabulary they introduce into society modifies both learning processes and the quality of human relations, so that, without proper formation, these media run the risk of manipulating and heavily conditioning, rather than serving people. This is especially true for young people, who show a natural propensity towards technological innovations, and as such are in even greater need of education in the responsible and critical use of the media.” (Pope John Paul II, *The Rapid Development to those Responsible for Communications* January 24, 2005).

The Church teaches that both media professionals and media users have ethical duties (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace* par. 562).

The professional is called upon to use “communications media” to promote dialogue, “becoming vehicles for reciprocal knowledge, of solidarity and of peace”, to “foster understanding between peoples” (*Rapid Development*, par. 11). “Serving the human person through the building up of a human

community based on solidarity, justice and love, and spreading the truth about human life and its final fulfillment in God remain at the heart of ethics in the media” (*Compendium*, par. 562). The first duty of media users, on the other hand, is to be “discerning and selective” (*Compendium*, par. 562).

It seems to me that, in order to carry out these ethical duties, Roman Catholics need an authentic formation in the faith, and the confidence that they can always rely on the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

As the late Pope John Paul II said: “Everyone should know how to foster an attentive discernment and constant vigilance, developing a healthy critical capacity regarding the persuasive force of the communications media... Also in this field, believers in Christ know that they can count upon the help of the Holy Spirit. Such help is all the more necessary when one considers how greatly the obstacles intrinsic to communication can be increased by ideologies, by the desire for profit or for power, and by rivalries and conflicts between individuals and groups, and also because of human weakness” (*Rapid Development*, par. 13).

“Attentive Discernment”, it seems

St. Paul must have recognized the power of the influence of the surroundings of the early believers, given his admonition to the Romans: “Do not model yourselves on the behaviour of the world around you, but let your behaviour change, modeled by your new mind. This is the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do” (Rm 12:2). We need to encourage our children to have their love and honour for the Lord in mind in everything that they do, listen to and watch. (One of our daughters remarked to me not long ago that she found that her mood and her thoughts were more positive when she listened to worship music than when she listened to popular secular music.) St. Paul encouraged the Philippians very specifically, “Fill your minds with everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise” (Ph 4:8).

One of our best defenses against the negative influences of the media on our children is to “put on the armour of God” (Eph 6:10), as St. Paul advised the Ephesians, “so as to be able to resist the devil’s tactics. For it is not against human enemies that we have to struggle, but against the Sovereignities and the Powers who originate the darkness in this world, the spiritual army of evil in the heavens” (Eph 6:11, 12). The mass media can send out “burning arrows of the evil one”, for which we need the shield of faith to put them out.

The world - especially via the media - tells us that the void many

young people find in their lives can be filled with money, luxuries, people and pleasure. But physical things cannot fill the thirst in our souls for God. As in the oft-quoted phrase from St. Augustine, “You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you”, we have a hunger for the infinite - truth, goodness and beauty. That hunger can only be satiated by a relationship with God, through his Son Jesus. We either seek after and love the things of the world, or we love God. Only God can fill that void in us and in our loved ones.

Discussing the impact of the media with our children, particularly our teenagers, we can help them find the truth amongst the counterfeit. We can help them find true love and beauty that can only be found in God. And that is “the real thing”.

Sue and her husband Paul have five children, ranging in age from early grade school to university. The Atkinson family attends Annunciation of the Lord Church in Ottawa.



to me, is the ability to know when the producer of any given media message has a distinct insidious agenda in putting his message out there. And the first step in becoming “agenda conscious” with respect to destructive messages

advertising professionals and special interest group activists have also been well trained in the use of the “science of coercion” and seem to be even more willing to use it on consumers of their work.

Consider the following story related by Beverley Eakman in *Cloning of the American Mind: Eradicating Morality Through Education*, 1998: “Out of curiosity back in 1985, I answered a blind ad in the Washington Post’s want ads. It was at the World Population Institute. They needed a writer and a PR assistant. I was interviewed by the president of the Institute, Werner Varnos. He explained the purpose of the WPI was to encourage worldwide population control, to raise awareness among industrialized nations of the tragedy of unwanted children. Then he told me what my duties would be.

“Remember ‘Meatball’s vasectomy?” he asked, referring to Archie Bunker’s son in the 1970s sitcom, *All in the Family* . . . ‘Well... that was ours. We worked with the writers of the show to come up with that segment. It’s all part of our effort to help mold public opinion.’”

“What an interesting idea”, I chirped. “Oh, our PR people work with script writers and producers all of the time,” he said. “That would be part of your job. Remember Maude’s abortion?”

“Mr. Varnos continued along cheerfully in that vein, and we went on to finish a more or less cordial interview. Actually, I learned a lot that day. I never again wondered why I sometimes got the feeling TV plots were staged to

influence my opinions. Because they are. Politically correct, well-heeled interest groups strike deals with producers and networks all the time. It’s all part of somebody’s job.”

Now, behavioural psychologists will tell you that a majority of viewers will “buy” these sales pitches. Most people will concentrate on a show’s special effects or “laugh lines”. Many viewers - particularly those without firmly entrenched beliefs of their own -will soak up the hidden political attitudinal messages without thinking about it; they will internalize the messages. Why? Because most TV shows don’t challenge thought on a rational level; TV generally functions on the emotional and subliminal levels.

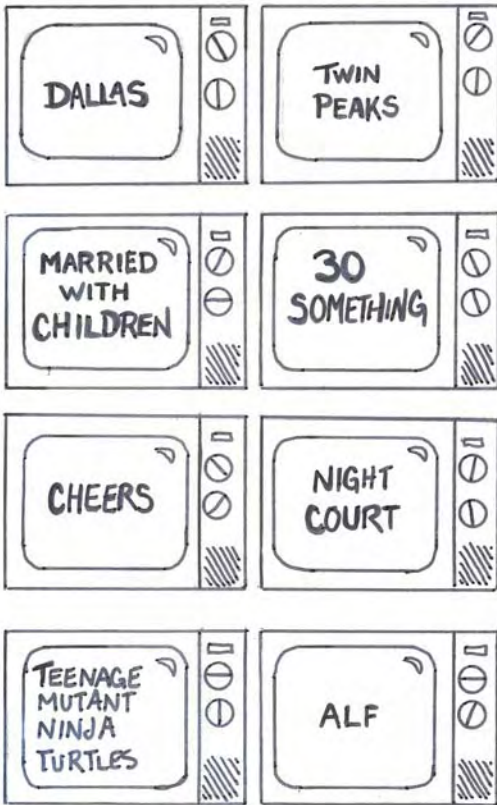
Professional manipulators in group situations sometimes operate in a similar fashion. TV panders to the viewer’s natural inclination to feel superior. So may the facilitator or change agent. Those who watched Archie and Edith Bunker’s antics in *All in the Family*, for example, were supposed to see themselves as more enlightened than the bigot and dumb housewife on TV.

Modern education, like television, also discourages logical thought by placing children in the same kind of hypothetical, either/or situations that TV viewers get in sitcoms, instead of being taught anything substantive. For example, either you’re naïve and believe in nonexistent, supernatural beings; or you’re enlightened and take all that religious stuff with a grain of salt. What actually happens in the case of the trumped up situation comedies like *All in the Family* is that while Mr. or

Mrs. Couch Potato are busy laughing at the antics of Archie, Gloria, Meatball, and the rest of the cast of characters, the viewer’s perception of himself and his role is altered. Viewers are supposed to get so caught up in the show that they never realize what they are absorbing - for example, in *All in the Family* the idea that authority is stupid. Most people, if they considered the undertone of this particular sitcom at all, thought the main message was racial tolerance. It wasn’t. The primary purpose was to dash the notion of authority figures, particularly male authority figures.

This story came to my mind again when I recently came across, while channel-surfing, an episode of *Life According to Jim*, featuring Jim Belushi as the husband and father of a sit-com family. He and his wife were having a discussion in their bedroom about whether he or she should be the one who should be sterilized, to avoid having more children. She wanted him to have a vasectomy, and recited to him all the typical arguments why it would be preferable to her having her “tubes tied”. He was squeamish about the idea of the vasectomy, and the writers of the program had him coming up with all kinds of humorous excuses for not agreeing to it, including one that painted any religious opposition to sterilization in a bad light. He said: “Doesn’t the Bible say ‘Thou shalt not vasectomy?!’” The clinching argument for the wife was her suggestion that if he went through it, it would mean that he could “have her anytime and any place”.

There was no exploration of



in the media is to understand just how widespread is media manipulation.

I urge parents to become familiar with and understand the terms associated with some of the more insidious psychotherapeutic strategies today’s schools use to undermine the values students bring with them from home: non-directive education, values clarification, situation ethics, and the deliberate induction of cognitive dissonance. Mainstream media,

Charles Barton



Spreading the Word

“Please be seated Mr. Dafoe. Father Kolbe will be with you in just a minute.”

Looking around the small office, Mr. Dafoe saw a plain, simple office. It was the office of Fr. Kolbe, the head of the largest religious community in the world, but the only remarkable item to be seen was a large crucifix behind the desk of the owner of the office; remarkable because this crucifix did not try to minimize the impact of the cross. This Jesus was bloody. He wondered about the priest who would be drawn to such a dramatic cross.

“Mr. Dafoe, I’m glad to meet you, but why does a newspaper reporter travel all the way from Winnipeg in Canada, to visit a simple priest in Poland? I’m afraid that you have come a long way for no reason. Besides, with all the tensions in Europe right now you could find many more exciting stories in Berlin.”

As a reporter Mr. Dafoe looked carefully at his questioner. He saw before him a simple man in a plain Franciscan robe. Age and the pain of an ongoing battle with tuberculosis could be seen on the bearded priest’s face. “Yes



Father. Most of the press, in fact the whole world, is watching Hitler and Prime Minister Chamberlain at Munich, but for some reason my wife told me that I had to come to see you!”

“Your wife? You travelled all the way to the monastery of Niepokalanów in order to interview a simple priest just because your wife told you so?”

“Yes Father. It appears that she was given one of your magazines, and demanded that I see you when I visited Berlin, so I took a train to Warsaw, and here I am. My wife said that Hitler, the politicians and all the generals may think that they run Europe – but that you work for someone who rules the world!”

“It sounds as if you and I have much in common Mr. Dafoe. We both try to do what the Lady in our lives asks of us, but I am amazed – a copy of my magazine made it all the way to Winnipeg. God be praised! Now, Mr. Dafoe, now that you have come so far, what would you like to know?”

whether sterilization (of either of them) would be healthy for their marriage – the only issue was which one of them would be sterilized. There was no acknowledgement of the possibility that such a contraceptive mentality could lead to the husband treating her as an object, as Pope Paul VI so accurately predicted in *Humanae Vitae*.

I personally know many couples, both non-Catholic and, sadly, some Catholic, who had this same “discussion” in their mid-thirties. In light of Ms. Eakman’s story, one cannot help but wonder whether programs like the vasectomy episode in *Life According to Jim* have been deliberately crafted to “help” couples considering such a decision to choose an option that does not honour God.

If the “first step” in developing “attentive discernment” and “constant vigilance” when it comes to media manipulation is recognizing that media outlets will regularly attempt to lead you away from your faith, the obvious next step is to become well-formed in your faith so that you can recognize when certain ideas being promoted by the media are destructive. The particular examples of media manipulation I have given dealt with life ethics and personal sexual ethics. How many young Catholics, in their formation as Catholics, have been encouraged to read and study *Humanae Vitae* and John Paul II’s *Evangelium Vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*)? How many of them have even heard of these documents?

In *Evangelium Vitae*, John Paul II said: “The first and fundamental step towards this cultural transformation

[building a Culture of Life] consists in forming consciences with regard to the incomparable and inviolable worth of every human being. It is of greatest importance to re-establish the essential connection between life and freedom. . . . No less critical in the formation of conscience is the recovery of the necessary link between freedom and truth. As I have frequently stated, when freedom is detached from objective truth it becomes impossible to establish personal rights on a firm rational basis; and the ground is laid for society to be at the mercy of the unrestrained will of individuals or the oppressive totalitarianism of public authority [96].

John Paul II well understood the importance of both an authentic Catholic education and the active participation of well-formed Catholics in the fields of media and journalism.

Geoff Cauchi and his wife Jennifer live in Oakville and are active in St. Andrew parish. Geoff practises law in Mississauga. He is currently President of Halton Pro Life and a member of the Board of Alliance of Life (Ontario).

Rev. Dr. Peter B. Coughlin



Discernment of Truth

“Well, Father, I’m a reporter, and I’ve seen many things in my time, but I have never seen anything like this place before. You called it a monastery, but this place is enormous and busier than a beehive. I expected to find secluded monks praying in their cells, but there is much more going on here. Can you explain Niepokalanów?”

“Well, as I said before, Mr. Dafoe, you and I, we have much in common. You report for a newspaper in Canada, and I report the love of God from a monastery in Poland.”

“And you also have a radio station. They also tell me that there are over 750 brothers here.”

“True and they all have a skilled trade in order to support the monastery. Most, however, are involved in printing our magazine, the *Knight of the Immaculate*. We now print almost a quarter of a million copies for each issue. We are spreading the word!”

“Wow, that’s a larger circulation than my newspaper back home, but is all this really what a religious order should be doing? Shouldn’t you be spending your time in prayer? The world could sure use the prayer right about now! Aren’t you afraid of a war?”

“That’s a very good question, Mr. Dafoe. Rest assured that we still have time for prayer but as your wife said, I work for a boss, and he tells me to spread the word of God’s love and mercy. We may be coming to a time of war, but we should not fear. Yes we must pray, and we must hope, but we must also trust in God’s unbeatable truth. After all, we have Mary and the Holy Spirit on our side. The real fight will not be on

a battlefield, the true fight will be in the hearts and minds of men. The most significant battles in the universe occur there.”

“You know, Father, most of my fellow reporters are covering the passing glory of Hitler, and his terrible army. As always, the press covers all the bad news of this world, but I think that I found the real story here. This is something that is true, something that will last. I must write about this. I sure hope that my readers in Winnipeg will understand.”

Charles Barton and his wife Cathy attend St. Leonard’s parish in Brampton. They have a son, and a daughter who is studying at the Catholic University of Dallas. Charles has been involved in the Renewal for over 30 years.

“Let us deluge the world with writings about Jesus Christ and Mary, in all languages. It is the surest way to fight and disprove all the errors propagated by the press, for the press is the most powerful spreader of errors on the planet. Let us cover the whole world with writings that bear Words of Life, and it will learn again the joy of living”
(St. Maximilian Kolbe)

On December 8, 1975 Pope Paul VI issued an Apostolic Exhortation on *Evangelization in the Modern World*. In section 78 he addressed himself to all servants of the Truth: “The Gospel entrusted to us is also the word of truth. A truth which liberates and which alone gives peace of heart is what people are looking for when we proclaim the Good News to them. The truth about God, about man and his mysterious destiny, about the world; the difficult truth that we seek in the Word of God and of which, we repeat, we are neither the masters or the owners, but the depositories, the heralds and the servants.

“Every evangelizer is expected to have a reverence for truth, especially since the truth that he studies and communicates is none other than the revealed truth and hence, more than any other, a sharing in the first truth which is God himself. The preacher of the Gospel will therefore be a person who even at the price of personal

renunciation and suffering always seeks the truth that he must transmit to others. He never betrays or hides truth out of a desire to please men, in order to astonish or to shock, nor for the sake of originality or a desire to make an impression. He does not refuse truth. He does not obscure revealed truth by being too idle to search for it, or for the sake of his own comfort, or out of fear. He does not neglect to study it. He serves it generously, without making it serve him.

“We are pastors of the faithful people, and our pastoral service impels us to preserve, defend, and to communicate the truth regardless of the sacrifices that this involves. So many eminent and holy pastors have left us this example of the love of truth. In many cases it was a heroic love. The God of truth expects us to be vigilant defenders and devoted preachers of truth.

“Men (and women) of learning – whether you be theologians, exegetes or historians – the work of evangelization needs your tireless work of research, and

also care and tact in transmitting the truth to which your studies lead you but which is always greater than the heart of men, being the very truth of God.

“Parents and teachers your task – and the many conflicts of the present day do not make it an easy one – is to help your children and your students to discover truth, including religious and spiritual truth.”

Pope John XXIII in *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*), paragraph 90 wrote: “Truth further demands that the various media of social communications made available by modern progress, which enable the nations to know each other better, be used with serene objectivity. That need not, of course, rule out any legitimate emphasis on the positive aspects of their way of life. But methods of information, which fall short of the truth, and by the same token impair the reputation of this people or that, must be discarded.”

The task of evangelization is to spring from and promote a spirit of unity within the Church as well as within the whole Christian community. Thus those involved in evangelization must reverence the truth, especially that first truth which is God. This evangelical truth is the basis for our liberation and peace of heart. In the bright light of truth knowledge is to be shared.

Late in 1998 Pope John Paul II spoke to the Australian Conference of Bishops and commented on the role of the mass media: “Unfortunately, the teaching of the Magisterium is sometimes fuelled by media interest in dissent, or in some cases by the intention to use the media as a kind of stratagem

to force the Church into changes she cannot make.”

St. Paul says, “*Away with falsehood then; let everyone speak out the truth to his neighbour*” (Eph 4:25).

God is the source of all truth and his word is truth, his law is truth. Jesus Christ manifests the whole of God’s truth. He is the truth and the light of the world. To follow Jesus is to live in “*the Spirit of truth*” whom the Father sends in his name and who leads “*into all the truth*” (Jn 16:13). Followers of Jesus are to be witnesses of the Gospel and of the obligations that flow from accepting the word of truth. By the example of their lives and the witness of their word they have the obligation of manifesting the “*new man*” which they put on in Baptism and reveal the power of the Holy Spirit by whom they are strengthened through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The disciples of Jesus have “*put on the new man, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness*” (Eph 4:24). When they put away falsehood they are putting away all malice, guile, insincerity, envy and slander. Truth is the virtue which consists in showing oneself true in deeds and truthful in words. We are to live in conformity with the Lord’s example and abide in his truth. “*If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth*” (1 Jn 1:6).

The communications media plays a major role in modern society, a role which is increasing as a result of technological progress. Information, cultural promotion and formation are formed

by the extent and diversity of the news transmitted and the influence exercised on public opinion. The whole truth is not always respected or communicated with concern for the good and safety of others, respect for privacy and the common good. All too often there is interference by the media in the private lives of persons engaged in political or public activity, in entertainment and sports. To the extent that it infringes upon their privacy and freedom such interference should be condemned.

All Christians exercise a role in discernment based on their knowledge of Christian revelation, God’s will written in their personalities, gifts and charisms, the

input of wise, loving friends and the nature and needs of the times in which we live. Ordinary discernment is usually a process involving extended prayer, the gathering and contemplation of facts and consultation with others. We can all discern truth and our discernment is always easier when we know the Scriptures and the teaching of the Church. We are able to discern truth from falsehood when we have “*put on the mind of Christ*.”

Discernment is never judgment of a person. It’s more than intuition, reading body language or a situation, or normal discomfort in the presence of evil. Truth is truth. And so, we must always be careful of the reputation and well-being of others, of what we pick

up, hear or see, since we can be wrong.

Discernment is a vital tool in spiritual warfare. Discernment means to separate a thing mentally from another or other, to perceive or recognize, to make out clearly. “*The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned*” (1 Cor 2:14). The ability to discern is given to us by the Holy Spirit when we become believers.



It develops with use. God should be our only source of discernment. He is the one who wants to direct, guide and inform us. Remember: whatever guides us is our god.

There are two major areas in which we need discernment. First, is the discernment of God’s truth. The Spirit reveals to us how the Word applies to us in any given time or place. Discernment is for the moment. Second, God’s direction, guidance and information for us personally, aside from the Word, comes through God’s thought in mental pictures, visions, dreams and the words of others.

Discernment will only come when we truly believe that God wants to communicate with us. It’s a matter of listening to the voice of the Shepherd and following him. God speaks to us in a voice, a way, we can hear or recognize. Discernment comes with a choice to listen since we can refuse to listen or

turn off God, as it were. God never speaks contrary to his revealed Word and so discernment should always be sought from God. Discernment comes with practice. It's like recognizing a voice on the telephone; and God can speak to us in a variety of ways. It's okay to ask God for confirmation of what he is communicating to us so that we don't make mistakes.

Faced with massive amounts of information through the communications media, the arts, entertainment, politics, economics, etc. we must discern what is true, noble and good. When our hearts are clean, our minds clear and we know the truth then by God's good grace we are able to discern truth from falsehood. We must so saturate ourselves with the truth we can have it at our fingertips and quickly make choices between God's truth and the enemy's lies.

Rev. Dr. Peter Coughlin, Editor of The Bread of Life magazine, has a Doctor of Ministry degree from the Graduate Theological Foundation. Currently pastor of St. Andrew parish in Oakville, Ontario he continues to serve the renewal of the Church through the Charismatic Renewal and the ministry of healing.



POETRY

By Paul David Colgin

Death of Samson Judges 16:23-31

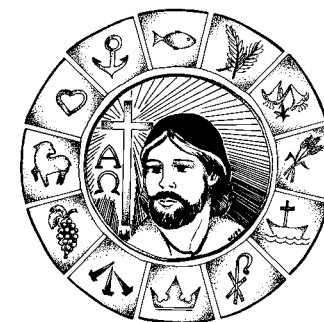
After such a life, a fearsome, final feat,
so surrounded by the symbols of his
faith
and fathers and foes
and so ecstatic in his prayer for
redemption –
so might we all be.
Our blindnesses abound
but cannot conquer in the end
unless we fail to pray,
concealing ourselves from the
strength that,
at once, both saves and summarizes.

YOU WERE ASKING...

Fr. Rick Jaworski, CC



...ABOUT THE BIG ZONK



My mother went to school with Monty Hall (also with the guy who played the bear on the Andy Williams show). Monty is most famous for the game show *Let's Make a Deal* where contestants had to choose between the prize in the box or behind the curtain, or behind door number one, two, or three. Sometimes the hidden prize was no prize at all but a "zonk".

All our life we will face choices. And if we are free to choose, then we are responsible for our choices. (In the past, some philosophers debated whether or not we had free will, the freedom to choose. Although some advocated the position that everything was determined, they certainly didn't live their real lives as if this were true.)

It might sound paradoxical to our fallen minds, but we are really, truly free only when we will always choose the good. The possibility of choosing between good and evil only exists when our freedom has not bound itself definitively to its ultimate good which is God (*Catechism* #1732). Under the banner of the right to choose, 80-90%

of Canadian children with Down-syndrome are aborted; murdered (84-91% in the USA; 94% in England; 95% in Spain). So, while our human dignity necessitates respecting a person's individual right to free choice, there are limits for the common good. Not everything that can be done, should be done - in art, in science ... The choices we make shape our very being and determine our ultimate destiny. Not something with which we want to take the chance of getting a zonk.

When opening this current Pauline year, Pope Benedict selected three Scripture texts to guide us in knowing who Paul is and what he has to say to us today: *"I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me"* (Ga 2:20); *"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting"* (Acts 9:4f); and *"with the strength that comes from God bear your share of hardship which the Gospel entails"* (2 Tm 1:8).

"I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me" (Ga 2:20). Jesus was the centre of Paul's life: a living, personal relationship with him; a personal encounter of his love. Other

people may say that all religions agree; that in living our life and making the choices that we'll face, all religions boil down to the same common denominator of being good, loving others, or some similar phraseology. Yet we do disagree on the particulars. Moreover, not everything, every individual circumstance can be codified. A living relationship to our God is needed to guide our fallen minds. Christianity is not about a set of moral rules; it's about a personal relationship.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9:4f). Paul, in the process of persecuting Christians, encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus. Jesus says that in persecuting the Church, Paul had been persecuting Jesus himself. We need others, we need the Church - Christ's body - to help guide us. Our relationship not only with Jesus, but with his body, with others, has implications for our choice of eternal destiny. Growth in the virtues, growth in the spiritual life is, at its base, all about growth in love. In loving others, we love Jesus.

"[W]ith the strength that comes from God bear your share of hardship which the Gospel entails" (2 Tm 1:8). But what is love? God is love. Jesus showed us who God is and what love is by freely loving us unto death, death on a cross. "There is no love without suffering - without the suffering of renouncing oneself, of the transformation and purification of self for true freedom" (Pope Benedict). That is why St. Augustine could say in his Seventh Homily on the Letter of John, "Love, and do what you like."

"The one who loves Christ as Paul

loved him can truly do as he pleases because his love is united to Christ's will and thus with God's will; because his will is anchored to the truth and because his will is no longer merely his own, arbitrary to the autonomous self, but is integrated into God's freedom from which he receives the path to take" (Pope Benedict). . . . A path leading to heaven, to eternal life with God, and not to "the Big Zonk".

Fr. Rick Jaworski is a member of the Companions of the Cross in Ottarwa. He has a licentiate in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome.

Do you have any questions about the Catholic faith?

Please send them to

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PO Box 127
Burlington, ON L7R 3X8

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www.thebreadoflife.ca

Our heartfelt thanks to Bruce Saumure for all his work redesigning our site!

What is the Holy Spirit Saying to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal After 40 years

by Lorraine Shonaman

Published and distributed by: Atlantic Service

Committee

It seems the Holy Spirit is saying quite a bit about the Charismatic Renewal after 40 years. Actually much more than I thought he was saying. The author Lorraine Shonaman has truly been an instrument of information as she brings together many quotes from different authors including the statements of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI.

She gives a clear picture of the past 40 years and brings fire and hope for what is to come. "Everything that the Holy Spirit did, in and through the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, was to prepare us for ministry. We have not laboured in vain." Ms. Shonaman states that "the Renewal is needed more than ever and we need to remain steadfast in the work the Lord is calling us to do. We need to shake off our tiredness and pray to the Holy Spirit to reenergize us."

I loved it when I read, "The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is not dying!" I for one thought that maybe it was, however the author tells us it is "very much alive... It is going to look different so don't hang on to the old... the mighty river of the Holy Spirit will flow over the earth and renew everything."

This book will refresh you while strengthening your endeavours of hope as you walk in the power and love of the Holy Spirit rooted in the unity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

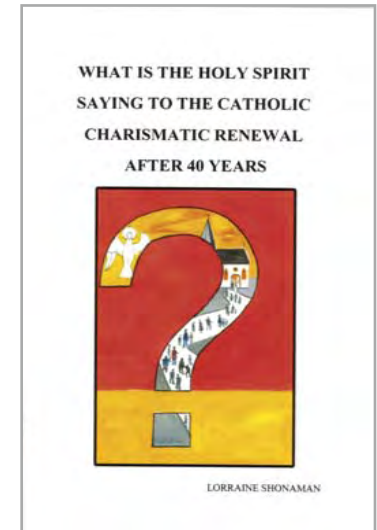
The best thing you can do for yourself and others is to buy this book, actually at this price buy many and pass them on. This book isn't just for those of us who have been and are involved in the Charismatic Renewal, every member of the Church should have an opportunity to read it, for I believe it will bring light into each life; it did for me.

To buy this book please contact: Atlantic Service Committee:

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Cost: \$10.00 Cdn. (includes shipping and handling)



Reviewed by: Elaine Balestrini Vizard

God's Choice

by George Weigel

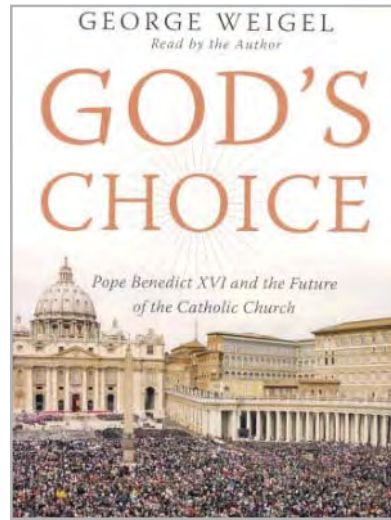
Harper Collins Publishers Inc. New York, NY 2005

ISBN: 10:0-06-621331-2

George Weigel wrote the comprehensive and bestselling biography on Pope John Paul II entitled, *Witness to Hope*. When I read that book I gained so much insight into the late John Paul II that I fell in love with him and all that he stood for, understanding in a deeper way why he was who he was.

This well-written book presents the events at the end of John Paul's life and death and what has happened since then in a very comprehensive way. One of the things I enjoy so much about Weigel's writing is that he doesn't sugar coat things – he tries to give an honest assessment of the Church in its historical context. He takes the complexities of the Church and the world at the present time and puts context to where we are as Catholics and how we got here.

He reflects on the greatness of John Paul and what he brought not only to the Church but to the world. Because of his great contribution we have a future that is full of hope and promise as a Catholic people. This book is a must read for anyone who wants to take a wide, comprehensive view of the Church in the context of the world in the present day. I thoroughly enjoyed



the book, and found I was once again touched by the profound teaching and contribution Pope John Paul made for us all.

Reviewed by Christine Labrosse

If you would like to get any of these books, any local Christian bookstore will be happy to order them for you if you bring them the book title, author's name and where the book was published.



Deacon Victor Vere



Media Ethics...

Relatively Speaking

Is there such a thing? That is the question I asked myself when given the task of writing this column. I asked the question simply, because most media people have a bias. Sometimes that bias distorts truth, justice and charity. Other times its gets the “word” out. From God’s point of view all communication ought to be premised in truth, and presented justly and charitably.

Firstly, the media is as old as mankind. Be it the tribal council of hunters sitting around the campfire, or women drawing water at the well. What is important to this article is the method and intent of such communication.

At one time, a man’s backyard was his world. Today the world is the backyard. Technology has made this possible. Therefore it is even more important that those whose business is the media, act responsibly balancing the public’s need to know with the impact such knowledge will have on those receiving it. For a Christian, gossiping and spreading scandal is never justified.

News can make and break empires. Most of us remember “Watergate”

as a media event that brought down a president. Yet media brought the world together as people across the globe viewed the funeral of Pope John Paul II, grieved through the events of 9/11, or shared the devastation of the great tsunami in Indonesia. Certainly these events brought people together in prayer, and an outpouring of volunteer efforts and financial assistance.

There is no doubt that the media in any form is a powerful force to contend with in contemporary society. People are influenced in their thinking for good or for evil. Consider Mel Gibson’s production of *The Passion of the Christ*. For a moment in time, one man’s film about the greatest life every lived, galvanized the globe into thinking about the death of Jesus.

Sadly today, the media many times seeks what is sensational and shocking. Lives of rock stars and Hollywood stars seem to be the current interest of many. Violence, war, and natural disasters also have a way of dominating the media at times.

Yet much good can come from media coverage when nations unite

to send relief to disaster areas. The media has helped us “become green” as stewardship of our planet has become a global concern. We watched Terry Fox hop the highways of Canada, and became ecstatic when Henderson scored the winning goal to beat the Russians in the Canada/Russia hockey series.

The point of all this is that the media is neither good nor bad. It is one more tool for getting the “facts” out and shaping public opinion. It is how we use the media and for what purposes that determines the good or the bad. And that evaluation from an ethical point of view seems to be purely subjective – or is it?

Scripture tells us that we are NOT to bear false witness against our neighbour. Jesus tells it much more simply when he says, “*Let your yes mean yes and your no mean no.*” In other words, silence is preferable and certainly golden most of the time. Jesus also says simply, “do not tell a lie, white or black”. The Lord disliked gossip and the destruction of reputations.

More often than not, the media can present an image of things or people. For example, the greatest exploitation in media presentation these days to my mind, is the soft core pornography used to sell everything from toothpaste to vacations. Pretty cosmetics, Hollywood endings, and fairytale marriages make the ethic “anything goes” seem reasonable to thinking people. Therein is the lie in the situation.

At the root of such thinking is a North American belief that total perfection, total beauty, and absolute happiness can be yours if you but buy

this shampoo, drink that type of beer, be seen at certain types of parties, and drive a special kind of automobile. That is imaging.

We can get detoured and forget that we are created in the IMAGE of God.

It all comes down to asking yourself this question, “What do I want?” and secondly, “Who do I believe?”

If Jesus Christ is the answer to both of those questions for you, then you need not worry about any form of media and what that media presents to you. If Christ is not the answer to those questions, perhaps it is time for a true “reality” check.

Ultimately we all stand before God responsible for “news” we spread about ourselves and others. We are also responsible for discerning “media” presentations and encouraged not to bend with every wind that blows. However if we are obligated to express a view, and the media is our tool, we are ethically charged to do so with justice, truth and charity.

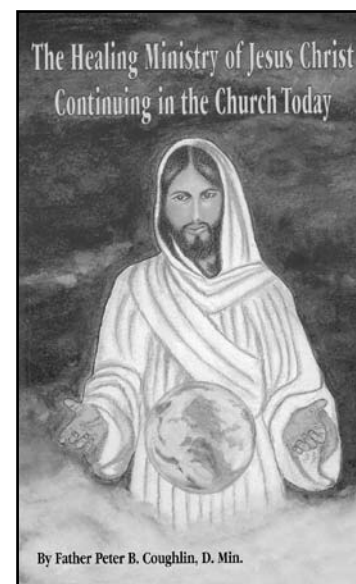
If you have nothing good to say about a situation or person, perhaps it is still good manners to say nothing.

Deacon Victor Vere was ordained to the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie in 1984 and has been practising Criminal Law in Sudbury, Ontario for over 35 years. Deacon Vere is married with three children, three grandchildren and two Siamese cats. He is currently assigned as deacon to Our Lady of Hope parish.

The Healing Ministry of Jesus Christ Continuing in the Church Today

By Rev. Peter B. Coughlin

This book explores the healing ministry, prayer for healing, the Scriptural foundations revealing the practice of Jesus and His disciples. Looking at the sacraments of healing, their pastoral applications and day-to-day experience of divine healing. Various practical procedures are given for different ministry forms. Also, possible dangers, abuses and aberrations in healing ministry are presented together with answers to regularly asked questions about healing. The final chapter looks at the challenge and place of healing in evangelization today. Being published particularly for the Catholic Church, this book is written to encourage expectant faith and the empowerment of people to pray in Jesus’ name for healing, with wondrous results.



Can be ordered through the office of the C.C.S.O. Bread of Life Renewal Centre or from the web site at www.thebreadoflife.ca

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Doreen Juurlink



Sharing God's Love

The media today has a wide spectrum including television, radio, newspaper and computer. The technology of computers has given us the opportunity to share God's love immediately with others.

"We can ask the Lord to help us understand how to communicate with God and with other human beings through the marvellous communications media. The media provides a providential opportunity to reach people everywhere, overcoming barriers of time, of space and of language: presenting the content of faith in the most varied ways imaginable and offering to all who search, the possibility of entering into dialogue with the mystery of God revealed fully in Christ Jesus" (Pope John Paul II).

The Bread of Life magazine has a web site (www.thebreadoflife.ca) which provides a list of prayer groups, catalogue of publications and resources for prayers and devotions. There are also web links to sites that support the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, which enables us to strengthen our spiritual journey.

For those who don't have access to computers you can always ask friends or family to print off prayers or devotions.

Dear Lord:

Today, as I work on my computer I pray that the Holy Spirit will teach me to use this computer for your glory. Hear my prayer and grant your blessing so that all knowledge received is for your glory and will lead me closer to you. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

POETRY

By Paul David Colgin

About the Name

He is the Word
for each experience and every state,
identifying, christening with
redeemed fate
the heavy, the light, the day and
night,
all that makes men right and hale
with the power to prevail.
He is the way we become,
by who he is, what he's done,
what he teaches, how he loves,
and by no less than resurrection
proves.
So subsists the Name which draws
existence to its intended self,
because
it speaks eternal incorruption.
So creation cannot but proclaim
no mere man, but the Son of Man
I Am Who Am became.

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