

## PAUL BRAZIER

“Everything comes to an end: therefore take heart for we pass from one thing to another until at last we arrive at eternity. Even seeing how the things of this life end so quickly ought to console us, because the nearer and more quickly we are approaching that end towards which all our activities should tend.”

*St Teresa Margaret of the Sacred Heart*<sup>1</sup>

At about 10.00 pm on Easter Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2011, the feast in the Tridentine rite of his favourite saint, St Peter Canisius, bishop and doctor of the Church, Paul Andrew John Brazier, died suddenly at his home in Faulconbridge in Sydney’s Blue Mountains, leaving a wife, Georgina, and children, Jean, Elizabeth, Isabel, Paul, Andrew, Madeleine, John and William. He was 58. There has, arguably, been no Catholic layman since Bartholomew Augustine (Bob) Santamaria to rival his influence on the workings of the Catholic Church in Australia, though his influence operated in a manner radically different from that of Santamaria.

He was instrumental in the removal, for misconduct, of a number of Australian bishops; in the prevention of certain *episcopabili* (potential bishops) among the clergy from being appointed to that high office and, in the humbling of the entire Australian bishops conference in 1998. Little wonder, then, that no bishop attended his funeral in St Mary’s Cathedral, Sydney on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> May.

Concerned over the serial negligences of the bishops, particularly their tolerance of the abuse of *Third Rite Reconciliation* which ‘protestantised’ the Sacrament of Penance, he organised rafts of Catholic laity throughout the country to report abuses committed by priests in their parishes. The results, refined in statutory declarations, provided the stumbling block when the Australian bishops arrived in Rome for their 1998 *ad limina* visit. The ‘Statement of Conclusions’ of 14<sup>th</sup> December 1998<sup>2</sup>, to whose terms they found themselves constrained, stands as a monument to Paul’s efforts to preserve the orthodoxy of Australian Catholics.

For that intervention, conducted for the good of their flocks, Paul was hated by many bishops and categorised by one of them as ‘un-Australian’, a criticism he felt deeply. Very few Catholic documents manage to excite the interest of the media: the ‘Statement of Conclusions’ was one that did.<sup>3</sup>

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Between 1993 and 1997 I worked with Paul in the offices of the *St Joseph Foundation* in the suburb of Penrith in Sydney’s outer west. We conducted our legal businesses

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<sup>1</sup> Teresa Margaret Redi, 1747-1770, Discalced Carmelite. Quoted in Joan Carroll Cruz, *The Incorruptibles*, Tan Books, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the reference at the Vatican website under ‘Statement of Conclusions’, [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc\\_con\\_ccdds\\_doc\\_20000630\\_dichiarazione-vescovi-australiani%20lt.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20000630_dichiarazione-vescovi-australiani%20lt.html)

<sup>3</sup> Cf., ABC *Four Corners* program of 8<sup>th</sup> March 1999; <http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/stories/s20286.htm>

as barristers in company with the work of the *Foundation* which Paul had established after the model of an American organisation of similar name.

Paul was a man of great intellectual power but of immense emotional complexity, the cause of this latter an upbringing in which he seems not to have experienced a normal childhood. This gave rise to certain personality traits, the chief of which was an overweening *amour propre*, and to conduct which could at times be petulant and unrestrained. Similar complexities of character have been observed in other men of powerful intellect, notably Herbert Vere Evatt, former Australian High Court Justice and leader of the Australian Labor Party (known universally in Australia as 'Doc Evatt'), and the English Catholic author, Evelyn Waugh. Given his troubled background it is remarkable that Paul should have returned to the faith he had all but abandoned when he completed his schooling with the Jesuits at St Ignatius College, in the Sydney suburb of Riverview; and that he should have returned to it with such vehemence.

Some time in the 1970s, so he told me, he had dealt with a prominent member of the Sydney clergy who conducted a newspaper column. At the conclusion of the business between them this priest had said to him something like this:

"You are obviously a bright young man. It's important that you understand the reality about the Mass and what we priests are about. When we say the words of consecration, nothing happens: the bread remains bread: the wine remains wine. But we have to go through the charade..."

These words precipitated in Paul immediately a revulsion for what the priest had suggested, an instance perhaps of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit through the Gift of Knowledge.<sup>4</sup> He was in no doubt that he was guilty for his own lapses from the demands of the faith but understood the faith itself to be true in its claims.

With the single-mindedness which was such a mark of his character, Paul searched the Church's teachings to discover the source of this aberration in the media priest. He found it in the encyclical of Pius X, *Pascendi*, where the saintly Pope condemned the heresy of the age, Modernism. Ever after he would proclaim the importance of this encyclical for the Catholic; ever after he would say, even to bishops, that he could 'smell' a Modernist. He was critical of the architects of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for the omission from that document of any mention of *Pascendi*, or of Pius X, the only Pope to be canonised by the Church in 500 years.

I remember attending with him a series of parish lectures given by a priest of the Parramatta diocese. In the first lecture this priest upheld the Church's teaching in *Humanae Vitae*, and I was fulsome in my praise of his orthodoxy. Paul was not convinced. In the very next lecture the priest qualified the Church's teaching on contraception with the Protestant appeal to the superiority of individual conscience.

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<sup>4</sup> One may find something similar in the life of St Thérèse of Lisieux. Hyper-sensitive to misfortune, she describes how in the moment that she overheard one of her sisters confiding in another that she must be preserved from suffering, she was seized with the desire for suffering.

It was in 1993, I think, that the American Dominican, Fr Matthew Fox, visited Sydney to advocate his heterodox 'creation spirituality'. Paul made representations to Sydney's Cardinal, Edward Clancy, to prevent Fox's attendance at St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, but the Cardinal refused to act. Six of us, led by Paul, travelled down from the Blue Mountains to the meeting to see what we could do.

Some 1,500 people had gathered in the meeting hall and we seeded ourselves among the mass. Fox had been speaking for 35 minutes or so when Paul interrupted from the front left. Fox answered but Paul continued to argue with him. When Fox resumed he was interrupted by another of us, then another, and another, and the meeting degenerated. I recall Fox standing on the stage bent over, head down with his hands on his knees as if he had been assaulted, while the nun chairing the meeting sought to restore order. The meeting resumed eventually and continued to its end, but we had made our point.

On 27<sup>th</sup> October of the same year, after Pope John Paul published his encyclical on truth, *Veritatis Splendor*, the Modernists in the Sydney clergy tried to shade it with a reading to accord with their pre-conceptions. They organised a meeting at the Marist Fathers Hall at Hunters Hill and, again, Paul organised a group attendance to counter the heterodox. As the meeting was about to begin, I overheard a nun at the rear of the hall indicating Paul who was large of stature near the front of the Hall, saying excitedly to her neighbour: "Look. There's that man again!"

Paul and I attended a sale of books at the library of the seminary of the Congregation of the Mission, the *Vincentians*, in the Sydney suburb of Marsfield. That visit will ever mark, for this writer, the signal parable of the devastation of the Church that followed the Second Vatican Council.

The seminary had failed for want of vocations and the Congregation's executive decided to conduct a fire sale of the library's 2,000 odd books. The library was a relatively modern building of concrete construction faced with brick, on two floors, some 130 feet in length and about 40 feet wide, well laid out, carpeted. In the atrium at a small table with a book and a cash box, one of the remaining priests of the establishment sat complacently in mufti. There was only one rule for the sale: each book would cost one dollar. It mattered not whether it was a tome that had cost fifty pounds to produce, or a paperback that cost one; it mattered not whether it was a collector's item, or a book that deserved to be thrown in the rubbish. The price was one dollar.

On each floor, arrayed crossways, were thirty to forty double sided racks, filled with books. The bays were identified according to subject matter—'Philosophy', 'Logic', 'Moral Theology', 'Dogmatic Theology', 'Church history', 'Languages', 'Anthropology', and so forth. Those attending were presented with a problem: the light from the windows was inadequate and, although there were fluorescent light fittings, the members of the Congregation thought so little of the exercise that they had not troubled to reconnect the power. In each row, books leaned against the bay

ends, or against each other, or lay on their sides, higgledy-piggledy; the floors were dirty, the shelves dusty. It was long since anyone had given the library attention.

All the riches of the Church's best minds lay there in the semi darkness in chaos. And mixed in with the Church's wealth were the tendentious, the heterodox, and the plainly heretical texts; works by Rahner, Küng, Schillebeeckx, Bultmann, Moran, Teilhard de Chardin, and their ilk. The thought impressed me forcibly: it was this poison in the midst of the healthy stock which had served to destroy the Vincentians' religious and priestly lives.

Among the books was an early English vernacular breviary, pre-dating the translations of 1970-71. The pages were marked, as place markers, with holy cards, memorials of the ordination in the 1960s of eight different priests. Here are the sentiments expressed in two of them—

The Almighty has done great things for me

To remember with thanks

My

ORDINATION DAY

Perth

8<sup>th</sup> July 1967

N.... N....

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PLEASE PRAY FOR

N.... N...

ORDAINED PRIEST

PERTH

SEPTEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>

1968

When, later, I searched the Church's Directory of priests on the mission in Australia, not one of the eight was listed as still exercising his priesthood.

We took away as many books as we could manage, Paul insisting we include the heretical texts as well as the orthodox that we might better be able to address the evils they encompassed. We also took fourteen years worth of the English edition of the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, covering the close of the pontificate of Paul VI, the short pontificate of John Paul I, and the opening years of that of John Paul II. Included were the Wednesday Audiences of 1979 and 1980 in which John Paul II exposed his idiosyncratic views of sacred scripture.<sup>5</sup> Paul had earlier drawn to my attention the problematic teaching about women in his Apostolic Letter, *Mulieris Dignitatem* (August 15, 1988). I spent several weeks studying these addresses, discovering as I did so the provenance of the Pope's views.

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<sup>5</sup> Later published as *Original Unity of Man and Woman—Catechesis on the Book of Genesis*, 1981. Its misleading content was later developed under the equally misleading title "Theology of the Body".

There was one other trophy of this visit, another indicator of the chaos wrought by Vatican II, a copy of Pope John Paul's first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*, much highlighted. If I had been in religion at the time, and with doubts about my vocation, that confused and confusing document would only have served to confirm them.

That the late Pope, now beatified, was himself a man of complex character, the following serves to demonstrate. In the early 1990s orthodox Catholics were greatly concerned about two issues: the push among the Modernists in the Church for women to be ordained priests, and the pressure in support of this for permission for women and girls to serve at the altar. A rumour spread late in 1993 that the Pope had given this permission. With his customary application, Paul studied the history of the Church's attitude to the issue and current Church legislation. He did more. He heard that Mother Teresa of Calcutta had spoken to the Pope on the subject, so he rang her one evening in India. She told him—

“Don't worry, the Holy Father promised me that he would never permit altar girls.”

The same, or the next, evening he rang the Vatican to speak to the Pope himself. He got to the Pope's Secretary, but no further. Knowing his power of argument, I wonder how differently things might have turned out for the Catholic faithful throughout the world if he had managed to speak to the Pontiff.

To assist him in dealing with the issue, I spent the Easter of 1994 translating the valuable analysis by French theologian, Aimé-Georges Martimort, *La Question du Service des Femmes a L'Autel*.<sup>6</sup> On 17<sup>th</sup> June, Paul produced a paper, *The Pope Has Not Approved Female Altar Servers*, published by the John XXIII Fellowship in Melbourne, in which he distinguished carefully between an authentic interpretation of the text of canon 230 §2 of the 1983 *Codex Iuris Canonici* (whose terms did not exclude women as servers at the altar), and the separate step of altering the Church's legislation so as to permit it. Sadly, his reasoning was overtaken by the Pope's fiat permitting female altar servers promulgated in the AAS on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1994 and taking effect three months later.

A priest once reported to me the remark of an authority in Rome, that it was a time of great illegality within the Church. There could hardly be a better illustration than this overruling of Church legislation faithfully reflecting a liturgical principle maintained over twenty centuries. The root of the problem, of course, was that the canon itself had been sloppily drafted, or rather, that its drafting had been informed by 'the spirit of Vatican II' permitting an interpretation consistent with access by the secular to the realm of the sacred. The solution was not its interpretation, but *its amendment to exclude the irreligious possibility*. If in 1998, the Pope could insert substantial amendments to canons 750 and 1371 "to protect the faith of the Catholic Church against errors arising from certain members of the... faithful" [*Ad Tuendam Fidem* 30.6.1998], the slight amendment to canon 230 §2 to correct its looseness of expression would have presented no difficulties. But it was not liturgical principle that ruled the Pope's mind so much as his commitment to Feminist ideology.

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<sup>6</sup> Reproduced in *Notitiae*, Vol 16 (1980), pp. 8-16.

It might be said that the ruling in his Apostolic Letter, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, denying the possibility of the priesthood ever being conferred on a woman<sup>7</sup>, should have consoled the orthodox for his parallel lapse from liturgical principle. But it could not. *Lex orandi, lex credendi*: any retreat from principle must have an effect in scandal. Moreover, neither the Pope nor the head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Ratzinger, seemed capable of asserting what was obvious in its terms: that *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* was an infallible utterance.<sup>8</sup>

I suggested a break, and Paul and I drove down to Huskisson, on the shores of Jervis Bay, trailing behind the car my narrow-gutted 12 foot sailing dinghy. After we attended Mass on the Sunday at nearby Vincentia, I overheard Paul singing to himself the recessional song (not hymn!) "Sing a new song unto the Lord", but with his own refrain "and we'll all be Protestants one day...!"

A few days later, in pleasant condition, we went sailing on the bay. Off Hyams Beach, a sudden move by Paul, who was a big man, put the gunwale under and we capsized. He disappeared beneath the waves leaving a leather hat to mark the spot. As I said to his children later, "no one who has seen your father dumped unceremoniously in the sea can say that he hasn't lived a full life!"

One Christmas I joined Paul and his family at Gunnedah where Georgina's parents' had a property. We went to sail on nearby Keepit Dam on a day when a howling westerly had turned what two days earlier had been a mill pond into a maelstrom. Paul and I set off from the shore with mainsail reefed. With every wave we shipped water and the two tacks I put in brought gallons aboard. Some 300 metres from the shore I decided discretion was the better part and eased the sheets to take us back. The boat, to my amazement, planed downwind despite our weight and the water we had shipped. My guardian angel, who could see that I was planning to drown someone, intervened to ensure the rudder stock broke as we hit the shore: so we did no more sailing that day, much to the relief, I think, of Jean, Elizabeth and Isabel, for Paul would not allow his children to say 'no' to a challenge.

He had introduced early in the routine of his family the recitation of parts of the Divine Office to make up for their inability to attend daily Mass at his local parish church under its then incumbent. He once told me how he had been moved in the course of a languid discussion with Jean over the evils being worked within the Church by misguided priests and bishops, when she had quoted spontaneously from Psalm 54, "Yes, their words are like butter, but they are naked swords..."<sup>9</sup> *Ex ore infantium et lactantium perfectisti laudem.*<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1994. Perhaps the most important document of his pontificate.

<sup>8</sup> An issue not resolved until October 28, 1995 with a formal *Responsum ad Dubium*.

<sup>9</sup> Psalm 54: 22

<sup>10</sup> Psalm 8: 3

Paul cut his teeth in the pro-life movement. I first encountered him in the 1970s when he endeavoured to force a general meeting of the Right to Life Association in New South Wales to adopt his views. The Association, established by Vince Nesbitt in 1970, had sought to attract the membership of non-Catholics by accentuating what they held in common with Catholics, and ignoring the issue of contraception. Paul saw what many did not: that you cannot compromise on contraception because its end is identical to that of abortion. There were other, political, issues involved also. The parish priest of Doonside, Fr John O'Neill, sought to set up another organisation, the Catholic Right to Life Association, to ensure adherence to principle and in due course this was melded into an Australian branch of the American based *Human Life International* to which Paul became chief consultant. This organisation has endured through many vicissitudes to be the dominant pro-life organisation in the country.

Paul realised that all ideology involves the abandonment of common sense: that you cannot laugh with a Feminist about her Feminism, with Marxists about their Marxism, with a Calvinist at his Calvinism, or shake the stupidity of those who classify any humour over the patent differences between peoples as 'racism'. He delighted in mocking the proponents of such ideologies. Whilst a student at the Australian National University in Canberra, he had had a T shirt printed. On the front there appeared a number of male symbols surrounding one female symbol. When he entered the Women's Union and walked through the common room, the shirt drew the attention of every female present. When he passed and they saw the slogan he had had printed on the back there was a near riot and he had to sprint for his life out the back entrance.

A fellow student, a black African of imposing physique, and he would meet for a drink in the Union bar. The lighting was dim when he went to look for him there one day. As he walked over Paul said, "It's so dark in here it's impossible for us whites to see you blackfellers." Drinking nearby was the Aboriginal activist, Charles Perkins, who attacked him physically over his remarks and had to be restrained by Paul's African friend.

Paul once rang a talk-back radio host whose topic for the week was drivers and their shortcomings, expressing the opinion that women were incompetent drivers. He was delighted at the inability of the host or his contributors to see that their leg had been pulled. It took a week of airing of 'expert opinions' on the radio show to settle the resulting furore.

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Dealing with Paul was by no means an unmixed blessing as many discovered to their cost. Quick to give offence, he was equally quick in feeling offence, or what he perceived to be offence, in others and more often than not where no offence had been given. He could turn on his friends as readily as on his enemies. There were, as a result, some spectacular fallings out between Paul and his friends, episcopal, clerical and lay. Many were estranged from him permanently. Many, in the bitterness of what they perceived to have been betrayal, may have thought to apply to him the

saying about Cardinals, that they make bad enemies but worse friends. Others came to accept the ambit of his emotional complexity, and returned to deal with him, but with increased reserve.

He was an advocate par excellence. I once drove with him to a meeting in central Sydney. On the way into town he argued convincingly against the current theological position that holds that a child dying unbaptised could receive the beatific vision. On the way home he argued just as convincingly for the opposite position. A mutual friend told me of a discussion with Paul which had worried him intensely because Paul seemed to be departing from Catholic teaching, but I was not greatly concerned. I knew he would argue any position just for the sake of the argument. It is said of F. E. Smith (afterwards Lord Birkenhead) that while a student at Oxford, for his amusement he would attend the Union for the sole purpose of reducing the Speaker to impotence. Such was the power of his intellect, Paul could do the same with most opponents.

While he could use this power for ill, he could also use it for good. He was a devastating opponent in court, often leaving the barrister opposing him exasperated with the objections taken and his conduct of a case, especially if he was defending a prosecution or civil cause promoting abortion, or some other moral evil. He frequently defended those who, while demonstrating outside an abortion mill, had been charged with some petty misdemeanour, and was held by them in great affection in consequence.

On the *Memorial* of the Guardian Angels, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, in 1993 or 1994, Paul arrived late with his family in his parish church to find a visiting priest celebrating Mass. This priest embarked upon a homily in which he attacked the Church's teaching on angels. Paul interrupted him from the back of the church. He told him to leave the sanctuary, to take off the parish's vestments and to get out of the church, for he was a disgrace to the priesthood. "Not only," he told me later with heat, "was he denigrating the Guardian Angels on their feast day, but he was doing it in a church dedicated in their honour!" The church was Springwood's original parish church dedicated to St Thomas Aquinas and the Guardian Angels.

On another occasion when the family attended Sunday Mass at St Patrick's, Church Hill (Sydney), the celebrant, a Marist priest, advanced the Protestant superiority of conscience in his sermon on *Humanæ Vitæ*. Georgina pressed her husband not to intervene from the body of the Church. Instead, he spoke to the priest after Mass berating him for what he had done. The priest conceded his sermon had not been in accordance with the Church's teaching, but justified it by claiming that those who had listened could now proceed with their lives with untroubled consciences!

On this issue of conscience, it was Paul who drew to my attention the splendid 1968 pastoral of Irish Bishop William Philbin of the Diocese of Down and Connor:

"As Christians we have already exercised our conscience, that is, our moral judgement on the larger and more fundamental question of whether we accept Christ and His Church as holding authority from God to teach. Once we have made this acceptance, we

are obliged, and obliged by our conscience, to follow the authoritative guidance that comes from these sources.”<sup>11</sup>

The American convert, Gerry Matatics, opened an address in the parish hall of St Margaret Mary’s, Merrylands, western Sydney in 1994 with the comment, “All that is needed for a man and his wife to become saints in the modern world, is to comply with the Church’s moral teachings.”<sup>12</sup> That thought resounded deeply with Paul who rightly argued that financial pressures on young families caused by usurious loans made it an heroic task to give effect to the primary end of marriage, the procreation of children. In the sixteenth century St Peter Canisius had sought a clear ruling on usury. Pope Benedict XIV’s encyclical to the bishops of Italy, *Vix Pervenit* (1.11.1745) remained the only document formally addressing the issue, though the popes had issued rulings on particular questions since, and had periodically re-endorsed the Church’s condemnations.<sup>13</sup> But there is no mention of usury in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* whose section on economic activity and social justice confines itself to generalities. An issue so critical to compliance with the Church’s moral teachings had, seemingly, been ignored by the Church’s ministers.<sup>14</sup>

Paul was also a draftsman of precision as many a bishop discovered when presented with a letter he had prepared on behalf of a priest the bishop was seeking to intimidate. He was exhaustingly thorough. It was nothing for him to generate from the computer 30 or 40 successive drafts, refining the argument to render it unanswerable. I would complain over the waste of paper but his response was, “You have to get it right!”

His interchange in the Australian Catholic Journal *AD2000* in 1993-4 with Jesuit theologian, Fr Bill Daniels, over the endorsement by the Australian Catholic bishops in their 1974 statement on *Humanae Vitae* of the Protestant principle of superiority of conscience was memorable. Fr Daniels sought to argue that the addendum to the statement in 1976 forced upon the bishops by the Vatican did not derogate from their original statement. Paul demonstrated that it did; that the bishops had gone out of their way to ignore the terms of the addendum, and that Modernist theologians whose number included Fr Daniels, aided and abetted them in this fraudulent behaviour.

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*Dies irae, dies illa*  
*Solvat saeculum in favilla.*  
*Teste David cum Sybilla.*<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Quoted in John McKee, *The Enemy Within the Gate*, Houston, Texas (Lumen Christi Press), 1974, p. 227.

<sup>12</sup> Regrettably, Matatics has since lapsed into sedevacantism.

<sup>13</sup> Thus, Leo XIII *Rerum Novarum* (15.5.1891), nn. 2 & 17; and John Paul II in an Address to members of the National Council of Anti-Usury Foundations (14.4.1999).

<sup>14</sup> It is mentioned in passing in nn. 2269 and 2449. The Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Tarcisio Bertone, is on record as having said in 1997 “it seems opportune to publish a new encyclical on the subject of usury...”

<sup>15</sup> From the *Sequence* for the Mass for the Dead in the Tridentine rite.

Paul was a forceful advocate for home schooling, having early been disappointed by the teaching given his eldest, Jean, at what was reputed to be Sydney's best Catholic school. He persuaded innumerable Catholic parents in the years to come that they should educate their children at home; that it was not beyond their abilities, and that the preservation of their Catholic faith was worth any effort. He was an advocate, too, of the recitation of the Divine Office in the family home and persuaded many to this practice.

He brought a number of people into the Catholic faith both directly and indirectly. His perseverance effected the conversion on his deathbed of his grandfather from a rigorous atheism. The *ex tempore* peroration he gave which was to lead an Anglican to embrace the Catholic faith moved a woman present to proclaim it the best sermon she had heard in thirty years.

He agreed with me in reprobating the Vatican for removing from the Mass for the Dead in the *novus ordo* the majestic *Sequence* whose opening words are quoted above, as he laughed with me over the bathos of those words, in the choral rendition in Mozart's Requiem, being used to lard a television advertisement for car tyres!

Paul was quick to judge not only in respect of conduct (the external forum) but also of culpability (the internal forum). His penetrative intellect convinced him of the failings of others, and he often railed in private against particular individuals. He understood—perhaps few better—the portentous words of Our Blessed Lord, “Judge not, and you will not be judged” and he felt constantly, I believe, the conflict of his make-up with this admonition. He knew his was a sundering personality, and while he regretted the divisions wrought, he was unwilling to admit that he could have been wrong.

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The content of this website owes him an immense debt including—

- the exposure of the workings of the Modernist heresy within the faithful;
- the evils of ideology in general, and of Feminism in particular;
- the shortcomings of the Australian bishops, particularly their abandonment of principle in their 1974 statement over *Humanae Vitae* and their persistence in that conduct;
- the shortcomings of bishops and theologians generally;
- the different views over the Second Vatican Council's *Declaration on Religious Liberty* of Fr Brian Harrison (*Religious Liberty and Contraception*<sup>16</sup>) and Michael Davies (*The Second Vatican Council and Religious Liberty*<sup>17</sup>) and which of the arguments was the more convincing;
- the value of Fr Ralph Wiltgens' study of Vatican II, *The Rhine flows into the Tiber*<sup>18</sup>—

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<sup>16</sup> Melbourne (John XXIII Fellowship), 1988.

<sup>17</sup> Long Prairie, Minnesota (Neumann Press), 1992.

<sup>18</sup> New York, 1967; reprinted by Tan Books, Rockford, Illinois, 1985.

as well as innumerable other matters of principle and practice. On the mechanical side, I have long since adopted his practice of refining an argument in innumerable drafts.

I regretted he had little grasp of the philosophy of St Thomas. I once tried to teach him the basics of metaphysics, but his intellectual aggression made the task impossible. It pertains to the student, Aristotle says, to believe, and Paul was reluctant to commit himself, even provisionally, to thinking of which he had not first satisfied himself.

Our last contact occurred just before Christmas last when he rang to discuss my paper on Pope Benedict XVI's unfortunate comments on the use of condoms in *Luce del Mondo*.<sup>19</sup>

Many who knew Paul have reflected upon the differences that set them apart. There will be no such differences in heaven: there—

“the escaping of all dangers; the distinction of mansions; the concord of wills; where reign the amenity of spring, the lucidity of summer, the richness of autumn, and the quiet silence of winter...”<sup>20</sup>

Belloc laments in one of his essays the burden, in our earthly existence, of “the misunderstanding of mind by mind.” In heaven all misunderstandings will be resolved, something those who attended his funeral understood viscerally, for many were friends with whom Paul had fallen out at some time or other.

Let us, therefore, pray for the repose of his soul who, whatever his shortcomings, did so much for us, so much more than we could ever do for ourselves.

*Huic ergo parce Deus :  
Pie Jesu Domine,  
Dona eis requiem. Amen*

Michael Baker

24<sup>th</sup> May 2011—*Our Lady Help of Christians, Patroness of Australia*

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. *The Pope and the Question of Condoms* and subsequent papers, *The Pope and the Question of Condoms Part Two*, and *Worrying Times for Christ's Faithful People*, at <http://www.superflumina.org>

<sup>20</sup> St Thomas Aquinas, *Prayer on Heaven*, cf. <http://www.superflumina.org/prayers.html#thomas>