

# NEWS

## FROM BRITAIN AND IRELAND

### Westminster warns Latin Mass supporters

Christopher Lamb

THE ARCHBISHOP of Westminster Vincent Nichols told traditionalists that if they denigrate the ordinary form of the Mass they risk alienating themselves from the Church.

Archbishop Nichols issued his warning in a message to the Latin Mass Society (LMS) as it was making final preparations for its latest training conference for priests to learn how to celebrate the Tridentine Mass. He told them that the old and new forms should feature at the conference and participants should celebrate both “wholeheartedly”.

“The view that the ordinary form of the Mass, in itself, is in some way deficient finds no place here. Indeed anyone who holds such a view does not come under the generous provision of *‘Summorum Pontificum’*. Such a person is inexorably distancing themselves from the Church,” wrote Archbishop Nichols in a foreword to a booklet that will be given to priests taking part in the 24-28 August conference at All Saints Pastoral Centre, London Colney.

Archbishop Nichols took the significant step of making his diocese jointly responsi-

ble with the LMS for the conference and reminded participants that the bishop has responsibility for the provision and oversight of the liturgy.

Since Pope Benedict’s *motu proprio* in 2007 liberalising the use of the old rite a number of traditionalists have insisted that they no longer need permission from a bishop to celebrate the extraordinary form.

Archbishop Nichols’ message makes clear his concern that some priests may be over eager in promoting the old rite at the expense of the new and risk divisions in their congregations. He stresses that the Mass is the source and expression of Church unity.

“That unity comes from Christ. We have no other. Our unity does not consist in a uniformity of personal taste or preference. Indeed, such matters should play a minimum part in our liturgy, particularly in the ministry of the priest,” writes the archbishop.

The LMS, however, only plans to celebrate the ordinary form of the Mass “prior to the conference”, and will use the Tridentine Rite during the conference itself.

Previous training conferences had been hosted by the LMS at Merton College, Oxford,

but this is the first time the Archdiocese of Westminster has provided a venue.

There have been questions over whether elements within the LMS see the newer form of the Mass as valid. This was part of a dispute within the society earlier this year when more moderate members of the leadership resigned, including Julian Chadwick, the former chairman, who in his resignation letter said some on the leadership committee were unhappy when Archbishop Nichols celebrated the new rite in Latin at a conference at Merton College in 2007.

“There was criticism at the committee for the society associating itself with a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Nichols on the grounds that the society had historically assumed a ‘neutral’ position on the validity of the ordinary form of Mass,” Mr Chadwick wrote in a resignation letter. He added, however, that this was “arrant nonsense”.

A spokesman for the LMS said: “The society has always affirmed the validity of the new rite and never will query it.” He declined to address why the archbishop had felt it necessary to emphasise the equal validity of the two rites to the conference.

### Facebook causes truancy, says Catholic child expert

**SOCIAL NETWORKING websites are causing truancy among young people, according to the head of the Westminster Catholic Children’s Society, writes Christopher Lamb.**

Supporting concerns raised by Archbishop Vincent Nichols, the society’s chief executive, Jim Richards, said many were playing truant from school as a result of bullying on Facebook and Bebo and some children were even being led to suicide. Archbishop Nichols said this week that such websites were leading young people to develop “transient relationships”, were “dehumanising” community life and meant a loss of social skills.

However, Emily Davis who set up Yfaith, for 11- to 13-year-old Catholics to explore their faith said the Church needed social networking, which “can be very effective in galvanising community for young people”. Ruth Davies, editor of Xt3, a Catholic social-networking website, said that such sites connected young Catholics.

(See *Taking a Stand*, page 15.)

### Equality rules ‘wholly unacceptable’

NEW EQUALITY rules proposed by the European Commission have been condemned as “wholly unacceptable” by the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, writes Isabel de Bertodano.

The Equal Treatment Directive is designed to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of religion, disability, age and sexual orientation, and has been the subject of a public consultation by the British Government. However, the bishops warned that it could be “an instrument of oppression” if it failed to balance the competing rights of groups.

They are particularly concerned by article 13, which requires that organisations amend any internal rules contrary to the principle of equal treatment.

“This could have the effect of requiring Catholic organisations to act against their ethos,” said Mgr Andrew Summersgill, general secretary of the bishops’ conference. He pointed out that if a Catholic event took place at a venue offering double, twin and single bedded rooms, the teaching of the Church would require that double rooms were only available to married couples.

“At this point the EU would be effectively be dictating to religious bodies what their faith does or does not require: a wholly

unacceptable position,” wrote Mgr Summersgill on behalf of the bishops.

He asked for clauses to be inserted on the right of organisations to act in accordance with their ethos. As an example he said a proposed rule on goods and services, was unclear about whether it applied to “the activities of a Catholic priest, if, as recently occurred, he were to refuse to take a booking for a church hall from a group of witches”.

Mgr Summersgill was referring to an episode in the Diocese of Shrewsbury in June, when a club for witches was refused permission to gather in a church hall.

Westminster MPs have already hammered out stringent equality regulations in Britain, including the Sexual Orientation Regulations, which had the effect of forcing many Catholic adoption agencies to close or distance themselves from the Church because they were obliged to accept adoption applications from gay couples.

The new EU rules are intended as a minimum standard and all member states must vote in their favour before they can be introduced. While opposing parts of the directive, English and Welsh bishops said they commended the moral principle underlying the bill about the innate dignity of all people.

# Irish study says integrated schools foster toleration

Paul Keenan  
In Dublin

A NINE-YEAR study into sectarianism in both integrated and segregated schools in Northern Ireland has found that Catholic and Protestant children are more tolerant if they are educated together.

The study by psychologists at the University of Ulster found that when pupils were educated together cross-community friendships formed and sectarianism was reduced.

It examined 1,732 children aged between 11 and 14 at integrated schools, all-Catholic schools and all-Protestant schools. Six per cent of schools in Northern Ireland are officially integrated, while a handful of Catholic and Protestant schools also educate children of different faiths.

The researchers measured pupils' attitudes towards issues such as support for the Catholic and Protestant faiths, support or lack of it for parades, discrimination by the police, and British Government involvement in Northern Ireland. They concluded that firmly held attitudes towards central issues that Protestants and Catholics disagree on changed through friendships in mixed schools. Where these sprang from activities outside the classroom they were

more fruitful than lessons designed to breed tolerance.

"It turned out that when children are creating a friendship, it's important that they did it by themselves, such as choosing who to sit next to in the cafeteria," said Professor Maurice Stringer, who led the study.

But Bishop Donal McKeown, chairman of Northern Ireland's Consultative Group for Catholic Education, argued that the Church was successfully countering sectarianism in its schools, telling *The Tablet*: "Any division of schools into implied categories such as 'virtuous' integrated and 'unhelpful' all-Catholic and all-Protestant schools is simplistic and patently inaccurate. It is very unhelpful to suggest that only those that bear the integrated label are working for reconciliation and have any serious contribution to make to the future."

Professor Stringer said the Catholic Church had been very supportive and had allowed a range of its schools to be involved in the research.

Dr McKeown, who is Bishop of Down and Connor, emphasised that the Church was heavily involved in seeking further ways to promote reconciliation and pointed to one Catholic grammar where the principal is a Presbyterian elder.

## Couples 'penalised for staying together'

FAMILIES ARE being penalised for staying together, according to a new study that claims to have found that some couples would have up to £10,000 extra to spend each year if they split up, writes *Isabel de Bertodano*.

The study by Care, a Christian charity that campaigns on both public policy and practice, found that middle- and low-income couples with children would gain significantly from the tax credits and benefits they would receive if they did not live together.

In the worst-case scenario a double-income couple earning £35,000 a year between them, living with two children in private-rented accommodation, would see their combined income increase by about 60 per cent if they split up. This is because if they live together their joint incomes take them out of the range of most tax credits and benefits but if they live apart the second earner's income (calculated at, for example, £150 per week) would be sufficiently low to attract most of the credits and benefits.

Dan Boucher, director of parliamentary affairs at Care, said the Government's tax credit and the wider benefits system were designed with the best of intentions but often had the unintended side effect of creating fiscal incentives to live apart.

"We're not arguing against tax credits, but against their current design," he said. "The couple penalty would be greatly eroded if tax credits took account of both parents, where two parents are resident in the family home along with their children. At the moment tax credits only have regard for one parent."

The Care analysis was based on the benefits and taxes that would be paid to 98 couples with varying incomes and numbers of children. It concluded that 76 of the 98 would profit from being single by an average of £68 per week.

This is the third annual Care review of the "couple penalty", which notes that the numbers negatively affected rose each time.

### IN BRIEF

#### Buckfast takes legal action

Scotland's biggest licensing authority is being sued by the company that distributes Buckfast, the mass-market monastic wine, amid reports that some shops have been told not to sell the drink. Glasgow's licensing board says it intends to "vigorously defend" a judicial review lodged by the drink's distributors, J. Chandler and Co. (Buckfast) Limited, set to be heard at Scotland's supreme civil court, the Court of Session in Edinburgh, in October. Buckfast Tonic Wine, which is manufactured by Benedictine monks on the edge of Dartmoor in Devon, has been accused of causing massive social problems in Scotland.

#### Green light for Christian exam

Creationist claims that the Loch Ness monster disproves evolution and apartheid was beneficial to South Africa are part of an exam ruled as equivalent to the international A level. The International Certificate of Christian Education has been officially sanctioned by the National Recognition Information Centre, which gives guidance on the validity of different qualifications. The course is based around the American-founded Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) programme, in which pupils spend half their time studying Bible-influenced textbooks.

#### Gay Quaker marriages

The Quakers have become the first Christian church in the UK to support gay marriage, following their annual meeting in York last weekend. The Society of Friends also called on the Government to change the law to extend marriage rights to same-sex couples. Other Christian denominations are able to bless civil partnerships, but do not recognise the union as equal to marriage. Some Catholic priests bless civil partnerships though the Church does not officially allow them to do so.

#### Birmingham vacancy

Bishop Philip Pargeter has resigned as an auxiliary in Birmingham Archdiocese, following his seventy-fifth birthday. The bishop, who taught for many years at the former seminary Cotton College, was administrator of St Chad's Cathedral before becoming an auxiliary bishop in 1990. His retirement means there are now two vacancies to be filled in Birmingham, following Archbishop Vincent Nichols' move to Westminster.

# Obituary

## Corazon Aquino

Former Philippines President Corazon (“Cory”) Aquino, who has died aged 76, remains the recognisable symbol of her country and the turbulence it has endured over four decades.

Never a power-seeker, this shy, devout Catholic widow assumed an office thrust upon her by tragic circumstance in February 1986 and persevered with dignity and stoicism. Among her major allies was the late Cardinal Jaime Sin, then primate of the world’s third-largest Catholic nation, who supported her enthusiastically throughout the six years – and seven coup attempts – of her presidency.

Born in January 1933 to an elite family, Maria Corazon Cojuangco was educated at an exclusive girls’ convent, and by the age of 18 had inherited a personal fortune. She married Benigno Aquino, leader of a fragmented opposition to President Ferdinand Marcos, who had in 1965 defeated Diosdado Macapagal (father of current President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo) to acquire the office to which he determinately clung for the next 21 years.

Following Marcos’ declaration of martial law in September 1972, Ninoy Aquino was imprisoned and later indicted on trumped-up murder charges. His murder on 21 August 1983 at Manila International Airport by military assassins, in full view of television cameras as he stepped off a plane, shocked the world. It also highlighted the grotesque nature of the Marcos regime, evoking universal condemnation, not least from Cardinal Sin who pronounced on Radio Veritas that the dictator had “... lost all moral authority for staying in office”.

Overwhelmed by public reaction, Cory

Aquino resolved to carry on her late husband’s fight. The snap election of February 1986 gave her the chance to bid for office, plagued by debts inherited from Marcos, inflation and capital flight, plus unremitting intrigues and coup attempts.

In retirement, Aquino initiated a foundation to assist disadvantaged Filipinos create small businesses. She also continued to endow church social projects in poor communities and street-children rescue centres from her private resources. At the same time, she openly supported the removal of Joseph Estrada from the presidency in 2001, but after evidence emerged linking President Arroyo to ballot fraud in July 2005 she called for Arroyo’s resignation.

Although lately associated with the opposition, Aquino never took an active part, and preferred the solitude of convent retreats to the noisy turbulence of Filipino politics. Her last 15 months were characterised by a doughty and losing battle with colon cancer.

Cory Aquino deserves to be remembered as one of the greatest moral symbols of the twentieth century. As a politician she was human, but as a symbol of hope and restorer of democracy, hers is a long-lasting legacy. Her abiding Christian faith proved invaluable to her in a world where uncertainty and corruption appeared to predominate.

Vincent McKee

**Maria Corazon Aquino, President of the Philippines 1986-92: born Paniqui, 25 January 1933, died Manila, 1 August 2009.**

■ Dr Vincent McKee is a specialist writer on the Philippines.



Cory Aquino preferred the solitude of convent retreats

## Catholics urged to take part in suicide debate

CATHOLICS ARE being encouraged by Archbishop Peter Smith to take part in a public consultation on assisted suicide, writes Isabel de Bertodano. It is seeking opinions on the question of immunity from prosecution in certain cases where a friend or family member helps a terminally ill person to die.

It was triggered by a House of Lords ruling last week in the case brought by Debbie Purdy, who has multiple sclerosis. Ms Purdy wanted to know whether her husband would be prosecuted if he accompanied her to the Dignitas clinic in Switzerland if she chose to end her life there. Five law lords agreed that clarification was needed about how it is decided whether to prosecute an assistant

to suicide and that guidance on this should be published.

Archbishop Smith, who is chairman of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales Department of Christian Responsibility and Citizenship, warned of the danger of pressures being placed on the terminally ill.

“We need to try in particular to ensure that there is no suggestion that certain classes of people have lives that are less worth living or less deserving of the full protection of the law,” said the archbishop. He added that Catholics should not only respond to the consultation, “but also work for a change of mind and heart in our society”.

(See *Tablet special report*, pages 6-9.)

## FROM THE ARCHIVE

### 50 YEARS AGO

Pope John XXIII marked the centenary of the death of St John Vianney, which fell on Tuesday August 4th, and the feast which he had transferred from Sunday to Saturday, by publishing an Encyclical Letter on the pastoral priesthood, of which St John Vianney is the patron. This second encyclical of the pontificate is entitled *Sacerdotii Nostri Primordia*, and these opening words indicate that the Pope begins by looking back to the first months of his own priesthood, when, on January 8th 1905, five months after his ordination, he was present at St Peter’s at the beatification of the Curé of Ars.

It was, he recalls, on the very first day of that beatification that he learned of the elevation to the episcopate of Monsignor Radini-Tedeschi, the great Bishop of Bergamo, who shortly afterwards chose the young Don Roncalli as his secretary. It was, the Pope adds, in the company of Monsignor Radini-Tedeschi that a few weeks later, early in 1905, he made his own pilgrimage to Ars.

*The Tablet*, 8 August 1959

### 100 YEARS AGO

**Obituary of Fr Kenelm Vaughan by his brother:** ... Again and again his life seemed saved only by a sort of miracle. On one occasion ... when two of the South American Republics were waging fierce war with one another, he was seized as a spy. In spite of his protestations that he was but a simple missionary ... he was taken out to be shot. ... Then, all at once, the thought flashed across him that in his little carpet-bag was a Spanish letter he had received from the Archbishop of Quito (Ecuador), which authorised him to say Mass and to solicit alms for his work. “Hold! Hold!” he cried to the officer, who was just about to give the command to fire, “I can prove my innocence”. The discovery of the letter aroused quite a revulsion of feeling throughout the camp. So, far from wishing to shoot him, these chivalrous Spaniards could not apologise enough and begged him to stay with them as long as ever he could to share their hospitality.

The above is but one among many extraordinary incidents in his life. An enterprising publisher offered Fr Kenelm Vaughn \$5,000 (£1,000) if he would write a full account of his adventures, escapes and encounters. But he was not to be tempted. With characteristic indifference to all that has to do with *this* world alone, he merely shook his head, and said with a smile: “No, it is not worth while; my desire is to pass out of this world unknown, and to be forgotten as soon as possible”.

*The Tablet*, 7 August 1909