



The DEFENDANT

Newsletter of the Australian Chesterton Society

Vol. 24 No. 1

Summer 2017

Issue No. 92

'I have found that humanity is not incidentally engaged, but eternally and systematically engaged, in throwing gold into the gutter and diamonds into the sea. . . . ; therefore I have imagined that the main business of man, however humble, is defence. I have conceived that a defendant is chiefly required when worldlings despise the world – that a counsel for the defence would not have been out of place in the terrible day when the sun was darkened over Calvary and Man was rejected of men.'

G.K. Chesterton, 'Introduction', *The Defendant* (1901)

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Marshall McLuhan – The Medium was Chesterton

by Karl Schmude

In the 1960s, Marshall McLuhan was hailed as a media prophet acutely alive to the vast changes in social consciousness flowing from a modern communications revolution.

'The Medium is the Message' and 'The Global Village' are among the most memorable phrases that McLuhan coined. But he also predicted the rise of the internet and social media.

In 1967, more than a decade before the first website, he foresaw 'one big gossip column,' powered by an 'electronically computerized dossier bank,' that would store and preserve every kind of statement, from the most significant to the most trivial.

Remarkably, McLuhan's identification with a new stage of modernity went with a profoundly traditional faith. He was a Catholic convert – and a major influence on his conversion was G.K. Chesterton.



Marshall McLuhan

'I know every word of [Chesterton],' McLuhan once said. 'He's responsible for bringing me into the Church.'

McLuhan was a post-graduate student in Canada in the 1930s when he discovered Chesterton. He found Chesterton's ideas compelling, especially his novel way of restating perennial truths.

McLuhan himself had a similar propensity for paradoxes and new combinations of ideas.

His effectiveness as a media prophet, in the midst of the communications changes then sweeping the world, was due in part to a capacity for which Chesterton was

Save the date - October 21



'A good joke is the closest thing we have to divine revelation.'

Laughter in Paradise: G.K. Chesterton and humour

The next Australian Chesterton conference will be devoted to Chesterton's humour, and consist of papers on a range of themes, including 'Chesterton and the Marx Brothers,' and Christian humour in Dante's 'Divine Comedy' and the works of Chaucer and Cervantes as well as Chesterton.

The conference will take place on Saturday, October 21, at Campion College in Old Toongabbie, Sydney. For further information, please contact Karl Schmude – at kgschmude@gmail.com or on: 0407 721 458.

celebrated – namely, that of seeing a permanent order of reality, ultimately a spiritual reality, beneath the most tumultuous of passing social changes.

In 1948, McLuhan contributed an introduction to a book, *Paradox in Chesterton*, by a fellow Canadian, Hugh Kenner. It revealed the intellectual qualities of Chesterton that McLuhan found so appealing.

McLuhan stressed the metaphysical intuitions of Chesterton which, he thought, enabled him to go 'to the heart of the chaos of our time.'

Such insights enabled Chesterton to transcend the division that had developed in modern Western culture between abstract thought and psychological understanding. Modern intellectual life, McLuhan believed, had become dominated by a rationalistic approach – 'a mathematical and mechanistic order which precludes a human and psychological order.'

In McLuhan's view, this led to psychological chaos in human life, 'with its concurrent crop of fear and anger and hate.'

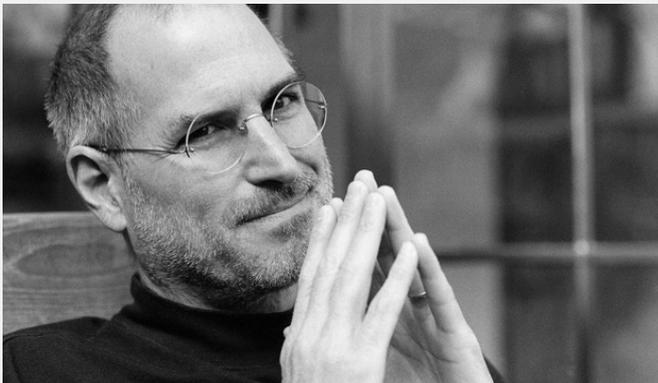
It is hard not to see the extent to which the prophetic insight of McLuhan was inspired by Chesterton's own understanding, in an earlier era, of the deep connection between spiritual and psychological conditions and social and political movements.

From childhood Chesterton loved smallness - always preferring, as he said, the microscope to the telescope – and these early psychological impressions supplied the seed-bed for his philosophy of Distributism – of widely distributed ownership as the only basis for social and political freedom.

The remarkable integration of Chesterton's ideas influenced McLuhan's approach to technology. McLuhan saw technology, not simply as a material and mechanical force, but as a spiritual and cultural wonder, enriching the human capacity for communication – and ultimately, communion. ■

Chesterton and the Book of Jobs

by Karl Schmude



While the links between Chesterton and Marshall McLuhan are direct and traceable, there are some intriguing - if speculative - affinities between Chesterton and another guru of the 'electronic age', Steve Jobs (1955-2011).

Jobs (pictured), founder of the Apple computer company, had an extraordinary impact on the development of personal computing, creating such devices as the iPod (digital music), the iPhone (multi-purpose smartphone), and the iPad (tablet computer).

It is fascinating to find in Steve Jobs - a figure, like McLuhan, so deeply identified with the modern communications revolution - several similarities with Chesterton.

No doubt they were hugely different in all sorts of ways, notably in religious faith (Chesterton, a Catholic, and Jobs, a Zen Buddhist) as well as in personality and

family background. Yet each possessed a poetic instinct and an artistic sensibility, which found expression in certain shared attitudes.

One was their sense of wonder at the world and a desire to spread this appreciation as widely as possible – Chesterton through his literary works, and Jobs, his computer inventions.

They both felt a certain 'romance' about technology, seeing it as an art and not just a science, and offering ways of enhancing human life, rather than distorting or deadening it.

A chapter in Chesterton's *The Outline of Sanity* (1927) is called 'The Romance of Machinery,' and as a journalist he was inspired by the material and almost mystical qualities of a newspaper: 'the great lights burning on through darkness into dawn, and . . . the roar of the printing wheels weaving the destinies of another day.'

Steve Jobs, for his part, wanted to make Apple products aesthetically attractive, a desire that he attributed to a course in calligraphy which he took as a young man.

The course enlivened him to the need for attractive typography, which he called 'beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture.' He incorporated these features into the first Mac computer, investing it with different typefaces and attending even to the elegance of the packaging in which the computer was presented. (*Continued on page 5*)



Greg Sheridan speaking at the 2016 Chesterton Conference.

Chesterton - The Journalist as an Artist

by Greg Sheridan

Greg Sheridan is one of Australia's best-known journalists, serving as Foreign Editor of The Australian newspaper since 1992. He is the author of several books, including *Living with Dragons: Australia Confronts Its Asian Destiny* (1995) and *Asian Values, Western Dreams: Understanding the New Asia* (1999), and most recently, a memoir of his early years in politics and journalism, *When We Were Young and Foolish* (2015).

This is an edited version of the paper he presented at the 2016 Australian Chesterton Society Conference, "A World of Wonder – G.K. Chesterton and the Literary Imagination," held at Campion College. The complete version is available on the Society's website (www.chestertonaustralia.com) in both video and text form.

Chesterton has been an inspiration to me as a journalist and as a human being. Certainly he was one of the big influences in moving me into the career of journalism.

Apart from Chesterton, two of the writers who have most influenced my outlook on life have been, like Chesterton, journalists - George Orwell and Malcolm Muggeridge.

Chesterton and Orwell in particular taught me how to think. Orwell was not as great a writer as Chesterton, but there was a clarity and a directness about his prose. This was something he shared with Chesterton: a love of physical observation, of concrete reality. He believed: 'Don't start with abstract ideas or abstract words, start with the concrete. Always root your thinking in the concrete, and then move on to the abstract after you have observed the concrete.'

Chesterton, much more than Orwell, was a tremendous influence on me, and I think he was the most extraordinary writer I have ever encountered, almost impossibly rich. Yet, while I love and admire him, let me start by being disagreeable because I am, after all, a journalist - and we are paid to be disagreeable!

So let me admit that, while I disagree with almost nothing uttered by Chesterton the philosopher or theologian – indeed, I learnt enormously from these writings - I part company with him on several things, principally his attitude to the Jews and to women's suffrage.

Chesterton's attitude to the Jews remains a complicated and much-controverted matter. He was not a virulent anti-Semite, but he did write things about Jews that, while not

President Obama's Decision on Israel – a Chestertonian Critique

Subsequent to his October 2016 conference paper, Greg Sheridan invoked Chesterton to highlight his criticism of a recent decision on Israel by the departing administration of President Obama.

In 'UN Resolution on Israel: Obama Compounds Middle East Mess' (*The Australian*, January 5, 2017), Greg Sheridan wrote:

The sheer irresponsibility and multiple counter-productive consequences of the outburst of anti-Israel actions from US President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry in their last days in office have been shrewdly captured by one of the world's great journalists.

'In a 1936 essay called 'The Stupidest Thing' [published in *The End of the Armistice*, 1940], GK Chesterton prefigured Obama perfectly:

"Any man at any moment may do a stupid thing. It is the rare privilege only of a gifted few to do about six stupid

things at once. It is reserved for really fine farcical heroes, like the heroes of the superhuman farces of PG Wodehouse; the sort of stories in which a man throws away a lighted cigar, which at one and the same moment sets fire to his father's most favourable will, spoils his fiancé's beauty, breaks the vase he might have sold for a thousand, sets the hotel on fire involving damages in millions and sings his sister's dog, so that it yelps and bites her wealthy suitor in the leg."

At the fag end of his presidency, Obama reversed the long-standing US position of vetoing wildly one-sided anti-Israel resolutions in the UN Security Council. Instead he passed a resolution claiming that every Israeli who lives anywhere beyond the 1967 ceasefire lines is an illegal settler, and that ludicrously blames Israel for the failure to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, and by implication puts that dispute at the centre of the Middle East's woes. . . .

This is truly an epic cluster mess that will have doleful consequences for a long time.

strictly anti-Semitic, were at the very least unsavoury in tone, especially in novels such as *The Flying Inn*.

He also opposed women's suffrage. His articles on this subject are very eloquent and powerful on the role of women in the home. Of course, modern ideology is at war with human nature, trying to pretend that men and women are exactly the same, or even worse than exactly the same, somehow or other interchangeable, and just exist in a fluid mix. Modern ideology has gone crazy, but I cannot go down with Chesterton along the line of saying that women should not be allowed to vote.

However, the mistakes are as nothing compared to the things that he got right, and the giant mountain of achievement of Chesterton.

Chesterton taught me a lot of things about how to think and how to do journalism. He had basic insights which informed everything else. One was that truth is always a living balance. You cannot collect truth as a single static statement. It is always a balance of competing truths. The very nature, the essence, of truth is to achieve the balance somehow.

Most heresy does not start with a lie. It starts with a truth that is held without balance against the other truths. So, fanatical nationalism starts with decent patriotism, but then it does not allow for any other truth to come in and qualify it.

There is that famous phrase in Chesterton's *Orthodoxy* where he gives the image of truth as a chariot racing ahead – swerving to the right and to the left, 'the wild truth reeling but erect.' It is a phrase that has always stayed in my mind.

Chesterton taught me, too, that faith is the basis of reason. There is that marvellous passage at the start of his autobiography where he describes his origins – and I paraphrase: 'my name is Gilbert Keith Chesterton and I was born in such and such on a particular date.' He points out that he has no direct evidence of this, but accepts it entirely on the basis of oral legend. He believes it as a matter of faith. Of course, this is the sort of faith people have all the time, the faith in someone who has told them something. Faith is not, as our age sometimes asserts, the enemy of reason. It is the basis of reason.

Chesterton taught me about the absolute immutability and changeless nature of human nature; that, while culture is very important, the essence of humanity is always the same.

He did this in the single marvellous image at the start of that great book, *The Everlasting Man*, where he ruminates on the nature of 'The Man in the Cave': 'Well, what do we see about the most primitive being that we know of? We have their cave paintings and nothing else. What do the cave paintings show us? They show us that primitive man liked to have artwork in his living room and was a bit of an artist in his

spare time. So, very, very similar to middle-class Englishmen of the twentieth century!'

In that one image Chesterton captures a whole body of truth, and then you can more or less forget everything else, about social evolution and acculturation, and certainly any racial distinctions that people might like to make. Human nature is unique, divine, universal and immutable. Human beings are essentially the same as they were three thousand years ago, or forty thousand years ago for that matter.

He also taught me that intellectual life, and above all, intellectual combat, is great fun. It is mortal, it is serious. You are conducting a serious battle against serious enemies, but it is enormous fun. No one entered controversy with more exuberant enjoyment and good will than Chesterton.

Chesterton also taught me - and this is something he shared with George Orwell - to argue from first principles; that the most powerful arguments about public affairs come from first principles; that you can observe the world with an unflinching regard for reality, but also can occasionally measure the events of today against an eternal standard. You should not be embarrassed about doing this. You might make a mistake from time to time. In fact, you are bound to make a mistake from time to time; as I say, I think Chesterton made plenty of mistakes. Anyone who writes two or three columns a week is going to make lots of mistakes. The price of entering the debate all the time is that you are going to make mistakes, and you cannot shield yourself from them by trying to make your arguments little. That just means that your mistakes are little, but so are your achievements.

Chesterton's arguments were big. He would argue from first principles, he would observe reality honestly, and he would measure things against an eternal standard, and he did that for the secular press. That was a great achievement.

Chesterton had a superb understanding of journalism. He saw both the paradox and the romance of newspapers. There is that marvellous passage in 'The Real Journalist' (in *The Miscellany of Men*) where he comments on how deceptive newspapers are. For someone who has worked for thirty-two years for *The Australian*, and forty years in journalism, I identify completely with his construction.

Chesterton pointed out that a newspaper comes out every day; it is full of straight lines and orderly progressions and neat sections; everything is in its place and there is a place for everything; there's a cartoon in the same spot everyday; and the front page is not smudged; and so on. But behind this facade of orderliness lurks a history of absolute chaos the night before; of desperate innovation, wild romance, furious dispute, and impossible deadlines. There is a race to get something in on time, knocking out one front page story with another, pulling things together at the last minute, changing the front page after the print run has begun, and pulling papers back and putting new ones in; a terrible clash of egos between

writers, huge clashes of views, furious arguments about what should be on the front page, what line the editorial should take! All of this tumult and romance produces this staid looking, orderly newspaper every day. Nothing could less look like the process that produces it than a newspaper. Chesterton could not have understood that had he not have been a journalist himself.

One of the great things about Chesterton, and also Orwell, is that they were not just great writers who dabbled in journalism. They were great journalists. They were both immensely proud of being journalists and would have described themselves all their lives as journalists. Of course they were journalists who wrote books, but there is no prohibition on journalists writing books. Lots of journalists write books - I have even done a bit of it myself. But their identity was an identity as journalists.

I believe Chesterton's greatness in part comes from his journalism, although he is remembered for his great books (*The Everlasting Man*, the *Autobiography*, *Orthodoxy*, the books about Thomas Aquinas, St Francis of Assisi, etc). Nonetheless, an essential part of Chesterton's genius came from his journalism.

Some literary critics have argued that if Chesterton had not spent so much time on journalism he would have written more great books; and they even produce some evidence and argue that when he gave up editing for a while he was able to work more fully on a book. But this seems to me wrong on two levels. First of all, I think it was Chesterton's immersion in day-to-day realities in journalism which fed so many of his higher insights. He was rather a large person and did not get around all that much in the way that Orwell did. Orwell went on his reporting assignments that produced *Down and Out in Paris and London*; he went to the war in Spain; served in India, etc. Orwell was a traditional journalist, out and about seeing things with his own eyes. Chesterton saw a lot of things with

his own eyes, but I think that, because he was rather less mobile than Orwell, the very business of producing and editing all the journals that he was associated with, and the need to turn his mind to columns time after time after time, gave him that involvement in the day-to-day concrete reality which, I believe, was an engine for his deeper writing. It gave him so much material for his deeper writing.

I think that is true about the best journalists throughout history. A ready example is my colleague, Paul Kelly, Editor-at-Large at *The Australian* and really the leader of our profession. He, like the best journalists, has a lifetime of involvement in the weeds, which they can then take to higher insights.

When history gives us a great genius, I think it is wrong to cavil about the shape of their lives and imagine that a differently shaped life would have been better. Shakespeare was the greatest poet our language has known, so should we lament that he spent so much time writing plays because we could have had another four hundred or so sonnets if he had not wasted his time writing plays? You just cannot have that sort of argument with history.

As a journalist influenced by Chesterton the journalist, I cherish a Chestertonian ambition – and that is to produce a book of my own newspaper columns. A small Australian publisher recently raised this possibility with me. When I checked with my usual publisher, they responded: "Write another proper book for us first and then we might give you your self-indulgence for a book of your columns (because books of journalists' columns do not really sell – except among the journalist's family!)." But if I ever do achieve a book of my columns, I will give it a familiar Chesterton title, which I think ranks among the great titles in publishing history, and which indeed is an expression of the central purpose of all journalism. The title, of course, will be: 'What's Wrong With the World?!' ■

Chesterton and the Book of Jobs

(Continued from page 2)

Both Chesterton and Jobs were acutely conscious of the human aspects of technology. They recognised the need for any business initiative, whether a farm or a computer, to be based on a broader view of commercial promise than mere practical performance.

Any such venture should not simply 'work'. It should not be purely functional. It should also address the full range of human needs and desires – such as being easy for ordinary people to use, and not simply something for the expert. It should be beautiful as well as serviceable. It should have a 'soul,' not just a body, reflecting what Chesterton once called 'sacramental sanity' wherein the body and the soul are combined.

Chesterton opposed what he called, in *The Outline of Sanity*, 'the Bluff of the Big Shops.' He argued that the modern emporium was impersonal as well as inefficient, and he preferred the small business for its individual service and accountability.

Despite the vast size of Apple as a company, Steve Jobs wanted the personal computer to be truly 'personal'. He focused on pictures rather than words, and laid down standards that are universally recognized and accepted.

Jobs was adopted as a child and, while his biological mother was Catholic and his adoptive parents were Lutheran, he rejected Christianity in his teenage years. But it has been argued, most notably by the recently deceased Italian writer Umberto Eco, that the rivalry between the two computing giants, Steve Jobs' Apple and Bill Gates' Microsoft, can be best explained in religious terms.

Apple was 'Catholic', relying on images and icons – akin to holy pictures – and being accessible to everyone, not just to a technical elite. By comparison, Microsoft was 'Protestant', stressing the importance of 'the word' and requiring special expertise and individual dedication and decision-making for success.

One wonders about the fascinating conversations that might have taken place between Chesterton and Jobs – full of the cross-fertilization that each of them, in their different fields, exemplified. ■

Bourgeois or Baroque?

by Joseph T. Stuart

One of the most significant essays by the English cultural historian, Christopher Dawson (1889-1970), was 'Catholicism and the Bourgeois Mind,' which first appeared in the journal *Colosseum* in December 1935 and is here analyzed by **Dr Joseph Stuart**.

Dr Stuart (pictured) teaches history at the University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota, focusing on the relation between religion and culture, particularly in modern times. He has a special interest and expertise in Christopher Dawson, contributing the introduction to a new edition of Dawson's *The Gods of Revolution* (published by the Catholic University of America Press in 2015).



Cultural history traditionally sets out to portray the character of an age as a whole. That is what Christopher Dawson set out to do in his sometimes misunderstood essay, 'Catholicism and the Bourgeois Mind.'

Dawson used 'bourgeois' and 'baroque' as ideal types of two organizing social principles shaping the lives of people in, respectively, the modern age and the baroque age of seventeenth-century Spain, Italy, and Austria.

He did not say these were the *only* organizing principles at these times, for a single concept cannot characterize an entire culture or historic age. Nevertheless, he styled the bourgeois as 'closed' and the baroque as 'open,' and I want to explore in this brief essay what he meant.

A passage from Dorothy Day's *The Long Loneliness* clarifies Dawson's meaning, when she contrasted around 1930 the closed character of the 'ordinary American' of West Side, New York City with the open one of the immigrant in East Side.

The desire for privacy among the people of the West isolated them, 'each afraid another would ask something from him.' In the East Side tenements, neighbours would run to see how the others were getting along and offer a bowl of soup or a dish of fresh rolls. The first was closed, the other open and 'baroque'—much nearer, in Dawson's judgment, to the Gospel ideal of charity as emerging out of inner freedom into ready giving without worry about the morrow.

The closed character of the 'ordinary American' derived, Dawson wrote in his 1935 essay, from a quantitative mentality in which 'all that matters is the volume of the transactions and the amount of profit to be derived from them.' Money is not only an end in this view but a means as well, the tool of further profit.

Day wrote of the 'bourgeois mediocrity' associated with this love of money that infiltrated the cult and culture of the immigrants arriving in America, so that they lost their faith and their folk songs and their costumes and their handicrafts as they tried to 'be an American.'

The way of life driven by this spirit is essentially about making money—a proposition that, undoubtedly, many Spanish slavers and gold mine operators of the baroque age would have been motivated by as well.

Nevertheless, it seems there was something new about the pervasiveness of this spirit in modern America to the attempted exclusion of other ideals. The psychologist and philosopher William James, in his 1902 work *Varieties of Religious Experience*, writing at the end of the Gilded Age of rapid industrialization and concentrated wealth, warned that: 'Among us English-speaking peoples especially do the praises of poverty ['openness' in Dawson's terminology] need once more to be boldly sung. . . . We despise anyone who elects to be poor in order to simplify and save his inner life. If he does not join the general scramble and pant with the money-making street, we deem him spiritless and lacking in ambition.'

The result of such money-mindedness was that Americans had 'lost the power even of imagining what the ancient idealization of poverty could have meant; the liberation from material attachments, the unbribed soul, the manlier indifference, the paying our way by what we are or do and not by what we have, the right to fling away our life at any moment irresponsibly — the more athletic trim, in short, the moral fighting shape.'

With prescient words he concluded: 'When we of the so-called better classes. . . put off marriage until our house can be artistic, and quake at the thought of having a child without a bank-account and doomed to manual labor, it is time for thinking men to protest against so unmanly and irreligious a state of opinion.'

The remedy for such a closed, bourgeois soul, in Dawson's view, was not Communism: that only continued to spread bourgeois values via different means. Rather, the remedy is to recover the 'baroque spirit' of an '*uneconomic* culture which spent its capital lavishly, recklessly and splendidly whether to the glory of God or for the adornment of human life.'

By this he did not mean a naive return to the past, as his American critics such as John Zmirak and Jeffrey Tucker have charged. Through an historical awareness of baroque culture, of a time and place existing before the dominance of bourgeois values in modern life, one can glimpse the possibility of living according to a different spirit than the bourgeois.

Dawson's critics argue that he is praising the wrong culture (the baroque)—that it is actually the *bourgeois*, modern civilization of free market and unprecedented material achievement that is more convergent with human dignity than the baroque.

Dawson's essay has even encouraged profligate choices among students reading it, Zmirak writes. Dawson is nostalgic for a time before the bourgeois spirit arose and makes false comparisons. He points to the beautiful things of the past (such as the Escorial in Spain) and compares them with the ugly things of the present (such as the devastated areas of industrial England), forgetting the ugly things of the past (short life expectancy) and the wonderful things of the present (antibiotics, low child mortality).

Julian Scott, Dawson's grandson and literary executor, has written to me recently from London that Dawson did not concern himself much with money. He spent his early married life in fairly straightened circumstances as he followed his vocation as a writer, although he could always rely on a small allowance from his father and later inherited his father's property.

It is possible that Dawson transmitted his disregard for money to his son Philip, who was always rather extravagant. So I think that John Zmirak has a fair point in wanting to dissuade his students from becoming profligates, and that Dawson's attitude could well lead to that, as his essay praises the 'man of desire' as against the 'man of reason.'

It is true that Dawson does not mention the internal critique of baroque culture and its approach to economics that did eventually develop within that world—as when Don Pablo de Olavide spoke to a group of noblemen on the importance of practical charity: 'Gentlemen, you would do far better assisting your neighbor to use this money to develop agriculture and increase the value of your properties and thus

give sustenance to the poor who are perishing; that would be a good devotion' (quoted in Ulrich Lehner's *The Catholic Enlightenment: The Forgotten History of a Global Movement*).

Sometimes yet another ornate Baroque church building is not what is needed at the moment.

However, to reduce the essay as simply an occasion of profligacy 'seems very narrow,' Julian Scott continued. If one looks at the essay as a whole, he writes, 'it is a typical Dawsonian "tour de force", which is very "Baroque" in the positive meaning he gives to that concept in the article – very rich, spiritual, erudite, insightful and humane.'

Despite the rural nostalgia that blinded Dawson to some of the achievements of the modern world, he combined in this essay his socio-historic analysis of particular cultures with an exercise of humanistic judgment on contemporary cultural values—a combination that, I would suggest, is one of the central reasons his work remains so compelling.

Dawson did not write the essay against the free market, but against the spirit that often drives it. The free market does not have to serve the bourgeois spirit, however. It does not have to be aimed simply at the making of more money as the highest end.

The parents of Katherine Drexel (1858-1955), who founded a religious congregation devoted to helping Native Americans and was canonized by the Catholic Church in 2000, certainly did not think so, as they taught their children how to use their great wealth, derived from investment banking, for the good of others.

Katherine then went on to reverse the American dream of 'rags to riches' with her story from 'riches to rags' by spending lavishly in the service of Native American and black communities around the United States.

Katherine Drexel chose to live out the poverty that William James connected to inner freedom, and embrace a baroque, open spirit as an answer to the Gilded Age's love of money. Dawson's essay points to that choice as the sign of an authentically Christian culture. ■



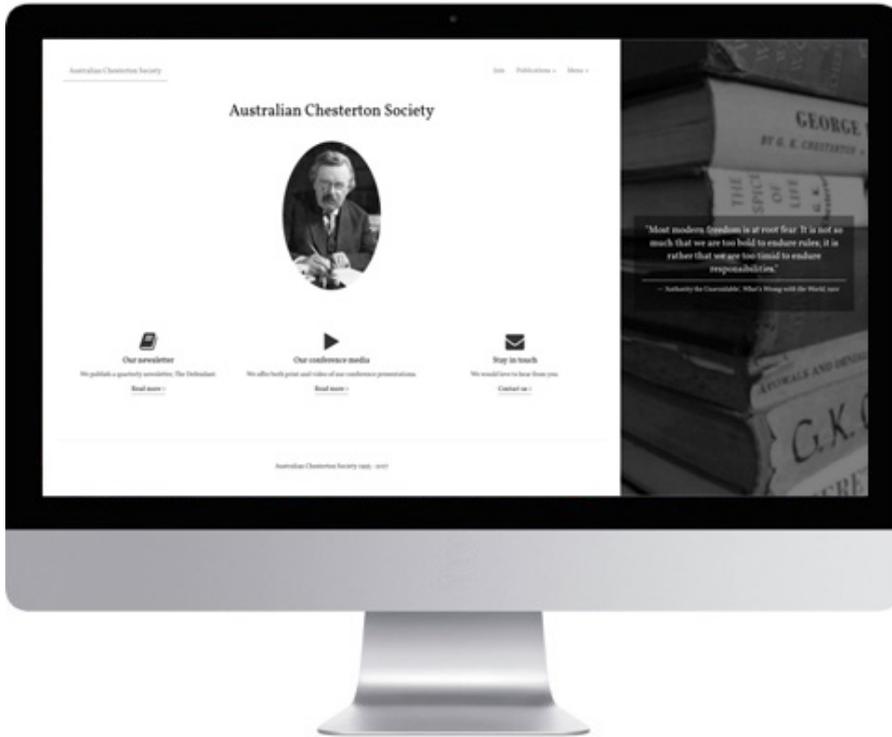
THE CHRISTOPHER DAWSON CENTRE FOR CULTURAL STUDIES

The Christopher Dawson Centre for Cultural Studies was established in Hobart in 2014 to foster awareness of the Catholic intellectual tradition as an essential component of human civilization. Its Director, Dr David Daintree, publishes an occasional e-newsletter, and organizes speaking events as well as an annual colloquium.

The **2017 Colloquium** will be held in Hobart on **Friday, June 30 and Saturday, July 1**, on the theme, 'Liberal Education: Restoring the Notion of Education as the Basis for Living the Good Life.' More information is available at: www.dawsoncentre.org

A New Website

The Australian Chesterton Society now has a presence in cyberspace – with a website that went ‘live’ prior to Christmas: www.chestertonaustralia.com



Developed and designed by Marty Schmude, the website provides details on joining the Society and also learning about the international Chesterton movement, via such journals as *Gilbert* (American Chesterton Society's magazine) and *The Chesterton Review* (a biannual journal of the Chesterton Institute at Seton Hall University in New Jersey, USA).

Of special value is the access now provided to back issues of *The Defendant* newsletter as well as to the various papers presented at recent Australian Chesterton conferences held at Campion College.

The early statistics of use reveal an international outreach. Unsurprisingly, the largest volume of ‘hits’ is from Australia (325, amounting to 65% of usage), but a significant number are from the USA (102 - 20%). Enquirers from a range of other countries have also used the website – Canada (19 - 4%), Russia and England (each 13 - 2.6%), Brazil (7 - 1.4%) and Poland (6 - 1.2%).

A major spike occurred at the time of a Greg Sheridan article on Campion College, published in *The Australian* (December 17-18, 2016), which included reference to his talk on Chesterton at the 2016 conference. From an average of several ‘hits’ a day, the number of page views on December 17 and 18 exceeded 100, including about 50 first-time visits to the website.

Chesterton on Mercy - a ‘Machinery of Pardon’

‘The real difference between the Church and the State is huge and plain. The State, in all lands and ages, has created a machinery of punishment, more bloody and brutal everywhere. The Church is the only institution that ever attempted to create a machinery of pardon.’

‘The Church is the only thing that ever attempted by system to pursue and discover crimes, not in order to avenge, but in order to forgive them. The stake and rack were merely the weaknesses of the religion; its snobberies, its surrenders to the world.’

‘Its speciality – or, if you like, its oddity – was this merciless mercy; the unrelenting sleuth-hound who seeks to save and not slay.’ (*Daily News*, February 20, 1909)



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Society Membership

The membership fee of the Australian Chesterton Society is **\$30.00**

Subscriptions may be sent to the Secretary/Treasurer, Mr Ray Finnegan, at the address opposite, or by electronic transfer –

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