



# The *DEFENDANT*

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'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)

## Travelling with Frances and Gilbert Through the Holy Land

by *Emily de Rotstein*



Emily de Rotstein

In 1920, Chesterton and his wife Frances visited the Holy Land. This article by **Emily de Rotstein** first appeared in *Gilbert* magazine (January-February 2020), edited by Dale Ahlquist, and is reprinted with their kind permission. Emily is Executor Director of the Chesterton Schools Network, a growing movement of parent-led schools, founded in Chesterton's name, which offers a classical education and has now expanded to 30 schools in the USA, Canada and Italy.

**W**hile planning a recent adventure to Israel, my husband and I were excited to learn that our trip coincided with the 100th anniversary of Gilbert and Frances Chesterton's travels to Egypt and Palestine for Chesterton's book, *The New Jerusalem*. We were inspired to retrace their steps as we visited the Holy Land, using Chesterton's book as our guide.

My copy of *The New Jerusalem* was a constant companion as we traveled to Tel Aviv via Amsterdam and Zurich, and I finished it just as we touched down in Israel.

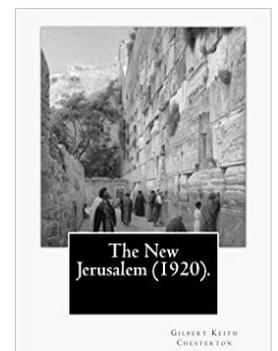
Chesterton's writings on Islam, the Crusades, Zionism, and his philosophy of sight-seeing were profound and prophetic. But as brilliant as the book was, I was disappointed. There were virtually no dates, no itinerary, no details. It was, as Dale Ahlquist describes it, a "philosophical travelogue."

Without an itinerary to follow, it seemed we wouldn't be able to retrace Gilbert and Frances' journey after all. We resolved simply to immerse ourselves in our own

adventure instead of trying to replicate theirs. We attended the wedding of a dear niece in the old city of Jaffa, spent a day touring the holy sites in the Old City of Jerusalem, traveled into the Negev desert to stay overnight in an authentic Bedouin tent; and visited the desert home of David Ben-Gurion on the Kibbutz Sde Boker. It was an extraordinary trip.

Back in the office, memories of the Holy Land still lingered in my mind. As I stood in the library shelving books, I happened upon Denis J. Conlon's biography, *G.K. Chesterton – A Reappraisal*. To my surprise, the book opened to Frances Chesterton's vivid account of their 1920 trip to the Holy Land. I was instantly transported there with her.

Frances' diary makes for fascinating and often humorous reading, and provides an unusual window into the British Mandate



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Period, a time when traveling to the Holy Land was uncommon and arduous. Frances' writing provides new insight into the Chestertons' beautiful marriage and reveals her adventurous spirit, warmth, and devotion to Gilbert.

### **Chestertons in the New Jerusalem**

On December 29, 1919, Gilbert and Frances Chesterton departed by train from London for a three-month journey to the Holy Land, fully-funded by the *Daily Telegraph*. Chesterton's travel accounts were to be published regularly in the newspaper as he reported them, and were later published in book form as *The New Jerusalem*. Frances was suffering increasingly from arthritis, and welcomed the opportunity to miss part of a harsh British winter.

Frances recounts the first leg of their journey, noting: "Arrived in Paris about 7. Terrible hunt for the big box – found finally with a damaged lock, and at great expense landed at Gare de Lyons Palace Hotel – very nice room – good dinner." They reached Rome on New Year's Eve and continued on to Brindisi where they boarded a boat to Alexandria. After several days in Cairo, including a visit to the Pyramids and the Sphinx, they set off into the Sinai, and "slept in fits and starts as the train slowly crossed the desert."

They arrived in Lydda (known today as Lod, site of the modern Ben Gurion International Airport), and, after breakfast in a tent, traveled by car on to Jaffa (now part of Tel Aviv). Frances writes, "the badness of the road is quite indescribable and I thought we should never reach the hotel in safety. But so beautiful. My first glimpse of Palestine will always be associated with great groves of orange trees and fields of scarlet anemones."

Four weeks after departing London, Gilbert and Frances finally reached Jerusalem, arriving in the pouring rain. With no other vehicle available for the last leg of their journey, they caught a ride from the train station in a Red Cross ambulance and entered Jerusalem through the Jaffa Gate. Just three years earlier, British general Edmund Allenby entered the Old City of Jerusalem through the Jaffa Gate on foot, liberating Jerusalem from Turkish rule.

The Chestertons settled in to the Hotel Grand New (now the New Imperial Hotel), just inside the Jaffa Gate – "Quite comfortable hotel – bed and sitting room." This was home for Gilbert and Frances for the next two months and they kept a busy schedule of daily social engagements: dinners; tea parties; Gilbert's lectures; visits to schools and orphanages; excursions to sites such as Jericho, Jordan, the Dead Sea; and visits with dignitaries, including the famous Zionist, Chaim Weitzmann, who later became the first president of Israel.

Frances recounts her frequent walks in and around the Old City – "a hopeless town to find one's way about in – no names or numbers anywhere" – finding her way to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, discovering the Via Dolorosa, coming out unexpectedly upon the Dome of the Rock.

Gilbert accompanied her on many long walks, out to the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane, to the Kidron Valley, and along Jericho Road to Bethany, to see the tomb of Lazarus.

While Frances had hoped to escape the British winter, the cold weather and pouring rain followed them. On February 9, the rain turned to snow and continued for days, a record of 3 feet that still holds to this day. Frances wrote, "The dining room is flooded and unusable, and there is no water – managing to keep warm, however, in fur coat all day."

By February 17, Frances reports "Jerusalem herself again. Warm and sunny like a lovely May day. As Gilbert was busy, went alone by the Jaffa Gate along Jaffa Road to the Garden of Gethsemane. A small boy rang at a bell for me and obtained the key of the Garden. It is like a cottage garden at home, just earth and little beds of marigolds, pansies, and wallflowers. One of two olives (one called the Tree of Agony) so old they might have been there in Our Lord's time. The old Franciscan monk who let me in just waited patiently while I walked. He gave me a sprig of rosemary "for remembrance."

Frances returned to the Garden of Gethsemane with Gilbert a few weeks later. She writes: "A glorious day. The old Franciscan gave me a bunch of violets and rosemary from the Garden. Then we wandered in the fields and I found anemones and grape hyacinths and ragged robin."

### **Jerusalem and conversion**

The Chestertons said farewell to Jerusalem on March 30 and returned to London via Alexandria, Brindisi, Rome, and Paris. In her biography of Chesterton, Maisie Ward said that his visit to Jerusalem had been a determining factor in Gilbert's conversion. Perhaps the trip also prepared the way for Frances. Perhaps the old Franciscan was praying for her in the Garden of Gethsemane. ■



*Emily Rotstein with her husband and friends in front of the hotel where the Chestertons stayed in Jerusalem*

# A New Chesterton Movie

by Karl Schmude

**A** Sydney filmmaker, Elvis Joseph, has recently adapted for the screen Chesterton's first play, *Magic*.

*Magic* (subtitled by Chesterton, *A Fantastic Comedy*) was first staged in London in 1913. It is reputed to have been a favourite play of the Swedish director, Ingmar Bergman, and influenced his 1958 film, *The Face* (also released as *The Magician*).

Elvis wrote the screenplay of Chesterton's *Magic* and also directed the movie. His aim has been to be faithful to the original play while expanding the world beyond the single room in which *Magic* is set.

Elvis and his wife Heather are the founders of Rooftop Films. The name derives from Elvis's memory as a young boy in Baghdad, Iraq, watching movies on his rooftop, but it was also inspired by their joint desire to create movies that are uplifting and thought-provoking. "We love Chesterton because his work does exactly this," Heather has said, "and we would like to expose him and his ideas to the world. And where else to share good news than from the rooftops!"

Since discovering Chesterton some ten odd years ago, they have wanted to bring his stories to life on the big screen. After countless meetings with producers, directors and others, they realised the only way of accomplishing this task was to take on the challenge themselves.

While having over 25 years' experience in the film industry, they are first-time independent film-makers. They had an absurdly small budget to work with, but following Orson Welles' adventurous lead as an independent film-maker, they thought that Chesterton's *Magic* was the perfect place to start.



Actors in the *Magic* production of Rooftop Films. Left to right - Barnaby Goldwyn as Doctor Grimthorpe, Joe Loria as Hastings, Nick Parker-Pendree as The Duke, David Lucas as Mr Smith the Vicar

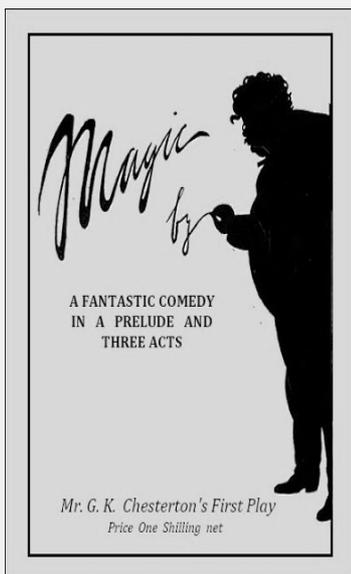
The project has benefitted from the gracious collaboration of many creative people, including actors and crew members, many of whom are graduates of the Academy of Film, Theatre & Television (AFTT) in Sydney, and gave of their time freely or on the basis of deferred payment.

*Magic* is due to premiere in early 2021, and will be available to watch via selected video-on-demand streaming services.

Rooftop Films have plans beyond the production of *Magic*. Elvis and Heather are already at work on a second Chesterton movie project – namely, his 1909 novel, *The Ball and the Cross*.

They are excited by the adventure of bringing Chesterton to the screen, and are hoping to expand their production facilities and develop links with any Chestertonians who might be interested and able to assist them in their work.

It is possible to follow their story on Facebook and Instagram - at @RooftopFilmsOfficial. ■



## Excerpts from *Magic*

While subtitled *A Fantastic Comedy*, the play *Magic* abounds in sharp, serious insights characteristic of Chesterton:

"I object to a quarrel because it always interrupts an argument."

"There is no bigot like the atheist."

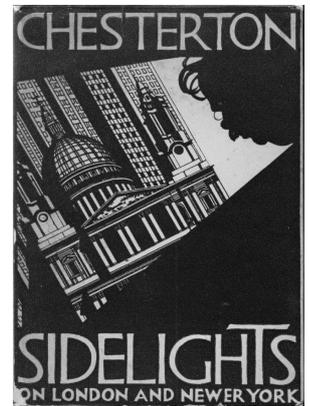
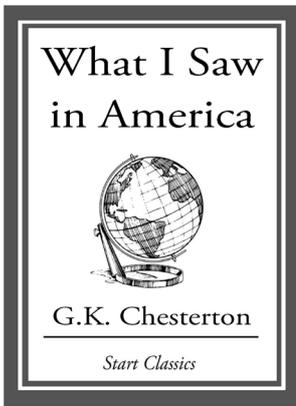
"Fairy tales are the only democratic institution. All the classes have heard all the fairytales."

"The Duke is the kindest of men, and always trying to please everybody. He generally finishes by pleasing nobody."

Duke: "Are you interested in modern progress?"

Conjurer: "Yes. We are interested in all tricks done by illusion."

"Does it never strike you that doubt can be a madness, as well as faith? That asking questions may be a disease, as well as proclaiming doctrines? You talk of religious mania! Is there no such thing as irreligious mania?"



*The Chestertons arriving by ship in New York in January 1921*

# Selecting the Story - Chesterton in America

*by Garry Nieuwkamp*

*A perennial issue in our media-saturated age is the inevitable selectivity of judgment on the part of any author or news outlet. What to report and focus on – and what to ignore or even suppress? Garry Nieuwkamp, a regular contributor to The Defendant, reflects on this issue in relation to Chesterton's writings on America.*

In her book *Stonewalled*, (2014), Sharyl Attkisson documents the decline in investigative journalism after having worked in the industry for over thirty years. Having caught the government of the United States in a scandal of its own making (the details are not important), she found herself being intimidated, harassed, and ultimately spied on by the very government she was investigating.

The media itself was unhelpful. The belief that the traditional U.S. media might be motivated solely to get at the unbiased truth behind a story was becoming increasingly naive. 'Fake news' was being normalized. From Hillary Clinton's having 'to duck and run for cover to escape the flying bullets' on landing in Bosnia, to estimation of crowd size at an inauguration address, 'fake news' is easy to identify if you happen, for example, to have been on the tarmac with Clinton, or present in the inaugural crowd.

What cannot so easily be identified as 'fake news' are the stories that ought to have been told but were never given the green light.

The point to make is that journalism is imbued with value judgments at every level, and the prism through which the world is viewed will colour the reporting. Chesterton, who saw himself as a journalist first and foremost, is no exception to this observation.

Chesterton made two trips to America in his lifetime - the first during the presidency of Warren G. Harding (1921-23), the second during Herbert Hoover's (1929-33). On both occasions he published an account of his

travels – following his first trip, *What I Saw in America* (1922), and a decade later, *Sidelights on New London and Newer York* (1932).

Travel writing is not new and Chesterton's accounts of his travels belong to a long tradition. In fact, it is difficult to read Chesterton's *What I Saw in America* and *Sidelights* without calling to mind Alexis de Tocqueville and Charles Dickens, for example, both of whom wrote accounts of their travels that remain classics. Both reflect a particular worldview and had particular interests that focused their attention on what was seen - and *pace* Attkisson, what was not seen.

The French novelist Céline noted that fiction and truth can have an uneasy relationship. Think of Hilary Mantel's re-imagining of the character of Sir Thomas More and try to tease apart the truth from fiction. Chesterton is correct in warning at the beginning of *Sidelights*: 'The critic is really disliked, not because he treats wrong things as wrong, or even as exceptionally wrong; but because he treats himself as exceptionally right.'

Chesterton is nervous about writing about America and is consequently concerned about a 'shocking exhibition of mildness and tact.' He is worried about failing 'to condemn things that really ought to be condemned,' a failure that puts the reader on notice.

Every writer has these choices to make and, 'in judging the New World,' Chesterton tries 'to avoid the least suggestion that the judge himself is not in danger of being judged.'

## Searching for answers

De Tocqueville's family had a long association with the French monarchy. His parents were imprisoned in the Bastille, and his travels in America were influenced by his family's memory of the Terror and subsequent events. He wanted to understand the nuts and bolts of a functioning republic, so he was constantly making comparisons to home.

When Chesterton writes, 'America is the only nation in the world that is founded on a creed,' it was de Tocqueville searching for answers, who elucidated the creed and who 'confessed to seeing more than America.'

'I sought there,' he wrote, 'an image of democracy itself, of its penchants, its character, its prejudices, its passions; I wanted to become acquainted with it if only to know at least what we ought to hope and fear from it.'



Alexis de Tocqueville

When Chesterton compares the great experiment of democracy in America to a melting pot, he remarks: 'the melting pot must not melt.' It has a certain shape and substance. De Tocqueville sees the character of Anglo-American civilization, the shape and substance of the melting pot, if you like, as 'the product of two perfectly distinct elements that elsewhere have made war with each other, which in America, they have succeeded in incorporating somehow into one another. I mean to speak of the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom.' They have been incorporated in one another because 'the township had been organized before the county, the county before the state, the state before the union.' As Chesterton was quoted by a journalist as saying: 'Direct government as you get in the village or the parish is best.'

## Dickens and slavery

Dickens, on the other hand, was not as sensitive as Chesterton to offending people, in his critique of America following his trip in 1842 during the presidency of John Tyler (1841-45). His experience of the workhouse attuned him to abuses of power, and his American itinerary takes in a blind and deaf school, mental asylums, factories and prisons.



Charles Dickens

Dickens is horrified by slavery and is contemptuous of the violence towards the slaves. 'The sensation of exacting any service from human creatures who are bought and sold . . . is not an enviable one.'

## Critic of capitalism and puritanism

So what exactly did Chesterton see in America? How does Chesterton see the world? Two themes immediately come to mind. He is a critic of capitalism and he dislikes puritanism. He arrived in America during the early days of Prohibition and immediately notices that it is the working class 'who can be made to work if only they can be kept from festivity.'

For Chesterton, drinking is a part of life. If Prohibition in the cause of worker efficiency can be applied to that, 'it can be applied to anything.' 'Fun is freedom; and in that sense is an end in itself. It concerns the man not as a worker but as a citizen, or even as a soul; and the soul in that sense is an end in itself. That a man shall have a reasonable amount of comedy and poetry and even fantasy in his life is part of his spiritual health which is for the service of God; and not merely for his mechanical health, which is now bound to the service of man.'

Chesterton wants to destroy the capitalistic system because he believes 'it makes free men more servile than slaves,' so this colours what he sees. He has Main Street in his sights. He explains to a journalist: 'I am a democratic Bolshevik, not a socialistic Bolshevik. I believe no one class should rule the masses.'

So this is the book that Chesterton writes. While he sees the racial divide, he has little to say given that he is travelling during the era of Jim Crow and the reawakening of the Ku Klux Klan. He suggests that, regarding the Negro: 'I do not think I have anything particularly valuable to say or suggest. I do not profess to understand this singular dark and intricate matter; and I see no use in men who have no solution filling up the gap with sentimentalism.'

Chesterton focuses his criticism on capitalism, which he sees as 'a fence or gate erected across a road.' He doesn't see the use of it, and gives reasons for wanting to clear it away. It motivates him to make the case and write the book. He draws our attention to one blight but barely registers the other. He's interested in slavery, but it is the slavery of the modern economic system rather than the historical legacy of racial oppression.

Yet it is almost impossible to be disappointed with Chesterton's writing, even if his choice in analysing America was to focus on certain conditions rather than others. The paradox is, that if it *is* possible to be disappointed with Chesterton, it is not with the books that he wrote, but with the book he *didn't* write. I'd have forgiven the sentimentalism! ■

# Kierkegaard and Chesterton – Use and Misuse of the Media

by Gary Furnell

*Chesterton and the Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, had apparently different views of the benefits of journalism, but as Gary Furnell, secretary/treasurer of the Australian Chesterton Society, reveals, their outlook was substantially similar.*

Chesterton enjoyed being a journalist because he liked polemics and debate. Kierkegaard also liked polemics and debate but he deplored journalism.

Kierkegaard was born in Denmark in 1813 and died in 1855, nineteen years before Chesterton's birth. Chesterton was probably unaware of him. It wasn't until 1939 that Kierkegaard's books were translated into English and published. By then, Chesterton was dead.

Kierkegaard, primarily a writer, was also a lay-churchman, preaching occasional, thoughtful sermons in the Danish Lutheran Church. He grew increasingly and publicly critical of the status and role of the state-sanctioned Church. In fact, he said the goal of his writing was to smuggle Christianity back into Christendom. He thought the Danish church "had exchanged the strong whiskey of the gospel for lemonade". He wanted people to get a burning mouthful of the gospel's strong whiskey. The press was among those who stood in the way of his project.

As Kierkegaard wrote:

"The lowest depth to which people can sink before God is defined by the word "Journalist". If I were a father and had a daughter who was seduced, I should not despair over her; I would hope for her salvation. But if I had a son who became a journalist and continued to be one for five years, I would give him up."

This sounds like angry prejudice. It may not be. So why was Kierkegaard so perturbed by journalists and their newspapers? He once expressed umbrage at an article about him in a Danish scandal-sheet, *The Corsair*, and thereafter he was lampooned for several years as an amiable lunatic, resulting in his being mocked in Copenhagen's streets. Kierkegaard grieved that the newspaper's venom isolated him from the common people whose company he used to enjoy.

But well before this nasty period, he was deeply alarmed by the role of the press in Danish society because it both distracted humanity and distorted truth.

He thought the press distracted people from a necessary inwardness by focusing their attention exclusively on outwardness; spiritual matters were neglected while external matters were promoted as overwhelmingly important.

Kierkegaard defined worldliness as treating relative values as if they were absolute, and absolute values as if they were relative. Generally speaking, this is what newspapers – and the broader media – are about; what they regard as



*Chesterton at the microphone during a broadcast he gave in his closing years*

significant and newsworthy are often matters that are ephemeral, even trifling, while eternal, spiritual matters are routinely neglected.

## Silence in the midst of noise

Kierkegaard wished the world was given one gift: silence, so individuals could begin the process of encountering themselves. He disliked the distracting "noise" created by the press.

Kierkegaard understood, too, that what the press presented was mostly bad news, and since the everyday goodness of God is intended to draw us to Him, the persistent presentation of bad news subverted the idea of pervasive and eternal Goodness. That is, it presented a darkened picture of reality that distorted people's vision of reality.

Further, Kierkegaard thought that the press created an abstraction, the public, and used this abstraction to level opinion to acceptable norms, while sowing confusion. The public could hold the most contradictory positions over the course of a few days simply because it was an abstraction. For example, news-feeds might proclaim "Public outrage over X and Y!" And next week the headline

will read: "X and Y have strong support". In each case it seems a public voice is presented, but it's strictly a non-entity, a nothing. What public was outraged, and what public was supportive?

Careful investigation might reveal two or three dozen activists were outraged and one or two government ministers were supportive, but that isn't the headline. It may only be admitted at the rag-end of the article. However, the headline and the article subtly suggest that to be out of step with this greater public is to be ill-informed - and therefore potentially isolated. And this abstract public is more readily accepted when society takes eminence over religion, which has the individual first facing God rather than first facing his peers.



Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855)

This makes it harder for the individual to hold clear, well-founded opinions in the face of media pressure and confused reporting. Kierkegaard called this attempt to cajole uniformity by wielding the abstraction of public opinion "levelling". And he called the individual's submersion in a collective "massification". For him, the press were at the forefront of massification.

Given press distortions, Kierkegaard said a sort of wise disinterestedness was needed to provide the time and the silence for crucial eternal matters. He knew when the eternal was neglected, the temporal would be inflated to preposterous importance.

### Chesterton on the media

Many of Kierkegaard's criticisms (he wrote in the 1840s and 1850s) were echoed decades later by Chesterton. Like Kierkegaard, Chesterton saw that newspapers were distorters of truth, with immense power over opinion:

"There never was a power so great as the power of the Press. There never was a belief so superstitious as the universal belief in the Press. It may be that future generations will call these the Dark Ages, and see a vast mystical delusion spreading its black bat's wings over all our cities." (*Daily News*, May 28, 1904)

Chesterton knew the press distorted the truth by presenting fragments, usually lurid, of a story. And often there was no attempt to follow-up a story or clarify a previous obfuscation. He wrote:

"Modern man is staggering and losing his balance because he is being pelted with little pieces of alleged fact . . . which

are native to the newspapers; and, if they turn out not to be facts, that is still more native to the newspapers."

The two men also saw that bad news was the chief news of the press. The exceptional things are reported, not the normal good things. This gives a false picture of the reality we inhabit.

"They only represent what is unusual," Chesterton said. They don't report a happy picnic, a good night's sleep or a great dinner party even though these types of cheerful occurrences are the common experience of humanity. But they aren't newsworthy; they aren't macabre or tragic or rare enough.

It becomes difficult to believe in Eternal Goodness when we are constantly bombarded with images and episodes of immanent badness. In contrast, Chesterton championed the primacy of spiritual values which is why we still read his newspaper articles today; they have enduring value.

Kierkegaard disliked journalism, but Chesterton, who ran a newspaper, had a better view of where the deeper problem lay: rich media barons and wealthy advertisers ultimately set the tone.

Chesterton called his paper *G.K.'s Weekly* expressly to link himself, an identifiable proprietor/editor with well-known convictions, to the newspaper. He said newspapers are the hobbies of a few rich men, made richer by advertising. These rich men rarely write for their newspaper; mostly they hide their name and power, but the power is real nonetheless. In other words, we suffer under an oligarchical media; what we don't have is a popular media.

Poet Les Murray defended talk-back radio because it was a rare means for the common man to have, at least for a few minutes, an uncommon audience. Letters or emails to the editor are other valuable means for readers to express their views.

We can hope the internet has changed the oligarchical ownership of the mass media; it may be too early to judge. Already Google, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are looking like domineering entities, owned by a few fantastically rich, mostly faceless men.

What can we do?

Kierkegaard might counsel: cultivate disinterestedness. Buy a newspaper only once a month rather than daily or weekly; limit the television news or current affairs programs you watch; don't listen to the radio's hourly news updates; ignore the digital news-feeds.

Chesterton might counsel: read classic plays, novels and poems; read history to develop perspective; scrutinise media reports in the light of the Church's doctrines and the wisdom of humanity's good traditions.

If we ignore much of the media's platitudinous reportage, and heed the (imagined) counsel of Kierkegaard and Chesterton, we're likely to be happier and more attendant to serious matters: our soul's state, our intimate relationships, the exploration of our life's unique vocation.

One sincere person beginning to do this would truly be newsworthy, like the one sinner whose repentance brings outbursts of joy in heaven. ■

## Chesterton during the COVID-19 Lockdown



Stig Abell

An English journalist and newspaper editor, Stephen "Stig" Abell, has invoked one of Chesterton's most memorable comments during the COVID-19 lockdowns in Britain.

In an August 16, 2020 column in the *Sunday Times* (London), Abell, who has recently served as editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*, offered these reflections on his experience:

"Since almost exactly the beginning of lockdown, my neighbours have had the builders in. They have moved out, of course

(I imagine them often, sipping cool cocktails in some sort of parkland far from the city), leaving my locked-in family racked by the obdurate noises of clanging scaffolding and insistent drilling.

The Victorian economist Walter Bagehot was right when he noted: "You may talk of the tyranny of Nero and Tiberius; but the real tyranny is the tyranny of your next-door neighbour."

I have, I admit, thought of the words of GK Chesterton more than once this summer: 'The Bible tells us to love our neighbours, and also to love our enemies; probably because generally they are the same people.'"

## Star of *Everybody Loves Raymond* admires Chesterton



Patricia Heaton

Patricia Heaton, a star of the award-winning American TV sitcom, *Everybody Loves Raymond*, has recently been using Twitter to encourage her fans to read Chesterton.

A report on the American evangelical Christian website, *Faithwire*, on September 18, 2020, reveals that Heaton reads Chesterton's writings every night before she goes to bed. She describes his words as "a balm for the soul."

"If you want to be transported out of this vulgar, hate-spewing, brainless, illiterate world we live in," she wrote, "G.K. is your man."

The actress, who is Catholic, went on to call Chesterton "witty, optimistic, learned, insightful, gentle, [and] joyous."

## Finishing a radio sport program with a Chesterton quote



Ralph Barbieri

A well-known American sport commentator, Ralph Barbieri, who died last August in San Francisco, was notable for finishing his radio shows with a quote from Chesterton.

Barbieri's program ran for nearly three decades on the San Francisco radio station, KNBR (680 AM). A fellow media identity, Herb Caen, a columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, gave him the nickname "Razor" on account of his raspy, high-pitched delivery.

"Razor" Barbieri attracted a large and loyal audience, which heard him quote Chesterton to close his program every afternoon. The quote was drawn from a chapter of *Orthodoxy*, "The Eternal Revolution" - "Angels can fly because they can take themselves lightly."

## A Chesterton gift for Christmas

If you have a friend or family member who might like to read about Chesterton regularly, why not take out a subscription for them?

Simply go to the enclosed membership form and tick the relevant box. Then send \$30.00 to the Australian Chesterton Society's Secretary/Treasurer, Mr Gary Furnell, or deposit the funds in the Society's bank account. Details are available on the form.

### Executive of the Australian Chesterton Society

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c/- Editor of 'The Defendant'

### Society Membership

The annual membership fee of the Australian Chesterton Society is **\$30.00**, which entitles subscribers to receive the Society's quarterly newsletter, *The Defendant*.

Subscriptions may be sent to the Secretary/Treasurer, Mr Gary Furnell, at the address in the adjacent box or by electronic transfer -

**BSB:** 932-000 (Regional Australia Bank, Armidale NSW)  
**Account No.:** 722360

**Account Name:** Australian Chesterton Society

**Please include your name as depositor in the details box.**