Catholic Revivalism 1830-1960

The concepts of revivalism and renewal in the Catholic Church at first sight seem to be a dichotomy for they are phenomena more usually attached to Evangelical Protestantism. At first glance, they do not seem to sit easily with attendance at Mass, and devotional practice that includes reverence for Mary and the saints. Yet underpinning both Catholic devotion and Evangelical worship is a concern to fortify the spiritual lives of its adherents and to reclaim the lapsed. This article will examine the manifestation of these concepts in Catholic devotion within the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries placing it within the spectrum of evangelical Christianity.

The Origins of Catholic Revivalism

In the minds of many people the term 'Evangelicalism suggests a test of orthodoxy within a particular form of Protestantism whose adherents hold specific dogmas in addition to the basic concepts of conversion, repentance and rebirth. These dogmas - salvation through faith alone, predestination of the elect and the Bible as the inspired Word of God and therefore the ultimate authority in deciding matters of faith are the hallmarks of Christians in, for example, the Evangelical Anglican or the Baptist traditions. But there is a more generic meaning to the term that predates the concept of denominationalism, where it represents a style of religion that is marked by two distinct features; a personal experience of conversion that in turn leads to a quest for personal piety transcending any denominational barriers and this is the understanding of Evangelicalism, which is examined here. Such Evangelicalism has a long tradition in Christianity and in fact predates it with the Old Testament accounts of kings and prophets warning Israel of the consequences of apostasy and constantly urging them to turn back to God as in Amos 5:6 that clearly sets out the evangelical process of conversion and leading a better life resulting ultimately in the joy of salvation.

> *Seek good and not evil, that you may live, and so the Lord, the God of hosts will be with you.*[1]

The theme continues in the New Testament evident in the work of the Apostles carrying out what has become known as the Evangelical Imperative of Christ that they should:

> *Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. The one who believes and is baptised will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned... And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it. (Mark 16:15-16,* [2]*)*

It did not cease with the ending of the biblical era; figures such as the Celtic missionary saints had, as their raison d'être, the conversion of pagans to Christianity; St Francis of Assisi; St Ignatius Loyola and St Alphonsus di Ligouri and their followers were concerned with the revival of faith in people already baptised. It is, moreover, a style of religion that can have different emphases for different groups or individuals; so, for some such as those in the first definition of the term, it is a major constant in their devotional practice.

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[1] Quotations taken from the *New Revised Standard Version [Catholic edition: Anglicised text] This edition 2005)*

For others, such as Roman Catholics it is a strong current that periodically achieves prominence before fading into the background again as this article will demonstrate.

Revivalism is an element of Evangelical practice that is principally associated with a form of mass evangelism and is also a concept whose origin is often misunderstood to be solely within Protestantism. It was a particularly popular technique in the nineteenth century that lasted well into the twentieth century and may be still found in the United States of America under the guise of 'tele-evangelism'. However, the techniques used in Revivalism originated with the Society of Jesus founded by St Ignatius of Loyola and put at the service of the Pope. It was approved by Rome in 1540 and became one of the major influences in the Counter-Reformation church. They introduced a re-invigorated Catholic Revivalism through the carefully choreographed parish mission to restore the Catholicity of both individuals and the institutional Catholic Church. Preached over a week or a fortnight, the Catholic revival meeting or service followed an unchanging pattern of gradually confronting the people with the central truths of Christianity, namely sin, repentance and salvation through Jesus Christ that reached a climax with the reception of the Eucharist on the final day after confession and Absolution. Jay Dolan has christened this 'Sacramental Evangelicalism'.[2]
The style of the preachers was also influenced greatly by the Baroque culture, the dominant artistic movement of the seventeenth century that desired to evoke emotional states by appealing to the senses, often in dramatic ways. Its development was another result of the Counter-Reformation, when the Catholic Church sought to contain the inroads made by the Protestantism of the Reformation. Originating in Italy, the Baroque Art form was used as a means of both extending and stimulating the faith of the people in the church by evoking an overtly emotional and sensory reaction. Catholic churches were decorated with paintings and sculptures executed by artists such as Caravaggio that in one way were very natural and therefore easy to associate with; but in another way were full of dramatic and illusory effects that conveyed the majesty of God and provoked pietism and devotion from the onlooker. In the same way, the imagery used by the preachers contained both the natural and the preternatural delivered in a dramatic fashion. The Jesuits were later joined by other missionary Orders such as the Passionists[3] in 1725 and the Redemptorists[4] in 1749 and Finke and Wittberg have examined their role in Catholicism and concluded that it is similar to the Revivalism of Protestant sects such as the different Methodist Connexions.

> *The [Catholic] orders have served as leaders for new religious movements, and they were often the source of creative adaptations to new societal circumstances. Unlike the [Protestant] sects they performed these functions within the boundaries of their church*[5]

However, eighteenth–century political turmoil in Europe especially in France and Germany and the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773 led to Catholic Revivalism fading

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[2] Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience 1830-1900* 106-109.
[3] The Congregation of Discalced Clerks of the Most Holy Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ founded by St Paul of the Cross.
[4] The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (CSsR) founded by St Alphonsus Ligouri.
[5] Finke R, and Wittberg P., *Organisational Revival from Within* 154.

from prominence again, until it re-emerged once more in the mid-nineteenth century especially in the English-speaking countries.
Unlike Revivalism, Renewal is an ongoing process that seeks to transcend the everyday circumstances of an individual's life by re-invigorating their faith in different ways. In the timespan of this article, it could include the adoption of a new devotion or practice, membership of a sodality or going on Pilgrimage. It is not a choreographed exercise such as the revivalist mission, but may still engender an emotional response or a search for personal piety. It is also less vulnerable to cyclical fluctuations and in people's minds is associated more easily with Catholicism than the concept of Revivalism.

19th Century Devotional Revolution

During the C19th the English Catholic Church was experiencing an unprecedented period of expansion. Firstly, the establishment of new missions indicated a period of growth following emancipation and the increase of confidence within Catholicism. It was not only increase of population growth that enabled this to happen, however. A second cause was an active missionary zeal that could be seen at work in the parishes through Jesuits and some French émigré priests in particular. Preaching and pamphlets fuelled intellectual debates, and the work of the Revivalist missioners such as Luigi Gentili and Dominic Barberi were major forces in forming the new piety.
The Vicars Apostolic became firm advocates of new practices that were gradually infiltrating into English Catholicism from the continent and over the course of the C19th, there was a widespread change in the way in which religious commitment was expressed and understood by the majority of Catholics. For most of the eighteenth century, all that had seemed necessary to lead what was generally considered to be a devout life was to be baptised; to hear Mass on a Sunday; and to take seriously one's duties of going to confession and receiving the Blessed Sacrament at least once a year during Eastertide. Luigi Gentili, a Rosminian missioner had a low opinion of the situation that he found in England on his arrival in 1835; it was only later that he discovered that within its Catholicism 'many things he had formerly attributed to sluggishness were to be ascribed to prudence.'[6]

> *The Church of England was in disorder and likely to break up, he was very impressed with zeal of the Methodists who made numerous converts…Catholics had no zeal; if they only had half as much as the Dissenters, they would soon make progress. Priests only said mass when their duties so required. Most of the day churches were closed and they did not even have a light before the Blessed Sacrament. They did* not have public Rosary… sermons were cold and appealed only to the mind. [7]

Gentili was a controversial character in that his travels around England gave him a unique perspective on English Catholicism. He regularly sent reports to *Propaganda fide* at its request. His supporters claim that this was to enable the Holy See to obtain a complete picture of the situation in England in order to help their decision making, particularly about whether to restore the Hierarchy.[8] Others felt that he was acting as a spy wishing to make the English Church Italianate, and was therefore completely

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[6] William Ullathorne quoted in Leetham, *Luigi Gentili* 161.
[7] Leetham, L*uigi Gentili* 64.
[8] C. Leetham, Luigi *Gentili, Sower of the Second Spring* (London 1965) 277-8.

untrustworthy.[9] English priests who had been summoned to retreats given by him felt like John Lingard that

> *It appears to me to require a face of brass…for a foreigner to come forward and constitute himself the teacher and reformer of a whole national clergy, and in short of all, both clergy and laity. What can he know of our people, their habits, their circumstances and wants, and the peculiar conduct to be observed by them, mixed as they are…would he make us Italians?*[10]

In general, Gentili has been credited with bringing many unknown Catholic practices into England, such as public processions of the Blessed Sacrament, the May devotions, the Quarant'Ore and blessed medals. He tried to end what he saw as Jansenist practices that prevented frequent communion and promoted the regular Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. As a result, his biographer has claimed that 'Gentili was not substituting post-Tridentine customs in a liturgical country, he was bringing colour to a bleak climate of religious practice.' [11]

Gentili, Barberi and the other missioners were itinerant revivalists unfettered by restraints of administering a parish. The missions were most successful in the industrial cities, and they fostered the quintessential elements of evangelicalism, namely conversion, its urgency and its emotional impact upon the heart. Therefore, in their preaching they used well-known techniques that included the use of biblical texts, the playing upon people's emotions and the use of grand gestures and dramatic pauses. All of this was also seen in the work of contemporaneous Protestant missioners but where they differed was that for Catholic missioners the conversion decision was sealed by reception of the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist and maintained through the sacramental life of the Church; hence the symbolic ceremony of renewal of baptismal vows on the last night of a mission that emphasised the place of the community in the life of the individual. It was important that all communicants had been to confession and restitution was made a condition of penance. The missioners, with help from the surrounding clergy spent many hours in the confessional, they also needed to instruct the converts, and, in recognition of the fact that the children had a vital part to play in Catholicism, as they would be the ones to pass the faith on to succeeding generations an hour every day was spent instructing those who would be making their first Confessions and Holy Communion at the end of the mission. Gentili was unusual in that unlike the English priests who felt the correct age for such a step was at least ten years of age[12] believed that an earlier age was more appropriate, and so children as young as seven were prepared. In fact, Gentili was ahead of his time in this, as the adoption of seven as the age for a child to make a first Holy Communion was not promulgated until the decree of *Quam Singulari* in 1910 by Pope Pius X.

What the mid C19th missioners achieved in their itinerant ministry was summed up by Denis Gwynn commenting on contemporary reports of the missions

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[9] R. Schiefen, *Nicholas Wiseman* (Shepherdstown 1984) 135.

[10] John Lingard quoted in Schiefen, *Wiseman* 135.

[11] ibid., 2.

[12] e.g., See R. Challoner, *The Catholic Christian Instructed* (London 1810).

The missionaries had introduced a new atmosphere of brilliant lights and gay processions, which contrasted strongly with the seclusion and shabby surroundings in which Catholic worship had been conducted for generations.[13]

The giving of missions by itinerant missionaries from religious communities such as the Passionists and Redemptorists continued well into the twentieth century and were often repeated annually. The first Redemptorist mission in Middlesbrough for example, was held in 1874 and lasted six weeks. The FCJ sisters who were very involved in parish life recorded that many converts were received and many who 'had given up their religion and its obligations were roused from their evil ways and returned to the Church…a real revival of Catholicity took place.'[14] As with Gentili earlier in the century, the mission took the form of preaching, hearing confessions, visiting homes and celebrating Mass. There was also much use of the hymn written by St Alphonsus himself for use at parish missions. Translated into English in 1863, *O Bread of Heaven* was set to a melody by the Professor of Music at Ushaw College. One of the earliest of popular English Catholic hymns it allowed Catholics to sing with as much passion and fervour as their Methodist neighbours sang the hymns of Charles Wesley, and undoubtedly was used by the Redemptorists as one way of heightening the enthusiasm of their congregations. Mission preaching emphasised both the precariousness of earthly life and the possibility of salvation. What may be termed 'shock tactics' frequently were used to engage the congregation about the reality of sin in their lives. A common Redemptorist ploy was an open coffin containing, the congregation was told, the mortal remains of an unrepentant sinner from the local Mission. Invited to look in the coffin to identify the sinner, each person was faced by themselves reflected in a mirror. The drama of the mission sermon that was carefully choreographed to evoke the extremes of emotion, yet to the listener to appear improvised, lay alongside teaching on ways the individuals could maintain their new-found religious enthusiasm on a day-to-day basis once the missioners had moved on. Often a new Confraternity was set up, such as the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. There was also promotion of popular devotions during the mission, aided by piety stalls that sold appropriate medals, icons, pious books and other devotional articles. Each missionary Order would also propagate its own particular devotion; for example, the Passionists encouraged devotion to the Sacred Heart; the Redemptorists encouraged devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour (OLPS) as from 1865, they had been the guardians of her icon at their headquarters in Rome. [15] The ultimate purpose of the Mission was an attempt to give the consolation of religion to a people, the majority of whom lived in grinding poverty in the slums and rookeries of the industrialised urban England.

C20th Outreach

After the turn of the century Missions changed character and for the most part reached out to the converted rather than others. Catholics had already transformed their worship and where the missions of Gentili and the early Redemptorists were directed at the Catholic population, in particular the lapsed; now they became an attempt to convert

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[13] Gwynn, D., *Fr Luigi Gentili and his Mission 1801-1848* (Dublin 1951) 205

[14] *FCJ Convent Record* 2.

[15] For more on this devotion and its importance in Yorkshire, see Margaret Turnham, 'Richard Lacy, First Bishop of Middlesbrough' *Northern Catholic History* 2010

England back to Catholicism. Prayer played a part in this and in 1898 Pope Leo XIII established the universal 'Arch-Confraternity of Our Lady of Compassion for the return of Great Britain to the Catholic Faith. Members had the daily obligation of reciting one *Hail Mary*, and also were expected to perform good works, in particular 'the diffusion of Catholic literature among both Catholics and non-Catholics.

A few years earlier in 1887 the Guild of Our Lady of Ransom was founded with three specific intentions; the conversion of England, the rescue of apostates and the 'forgotten dead' for whom no-one else prayed.[16] Its members organised annual pilgrimages in honour of the English martyrs, and some members engaged in outdoor preaching, predating the Catholic Evidence Guild by thirty years. York, with its significant historical connection with recusant times as a place of Catholic martyrdom, was an obvious choice for a Northern Pilgrimage and in 1892, the first one was held with over one thousand Catholics attending. It was notable for several reasons; the preacher at Mass Fr Luke Rivington was a convert from Anglicanism, who had previously served at York Minster and following High Mass at St Wilfrid's Church, the Pilgrims processed along the road to the Minster and, with the permission of the Dean and Chapter, assembled in the nave to pray around the tomb of St William of York. The day continued with a street procession to York Tyburn where fifty Catholics had met their death during the penal times. During the procession, which was led by a processional cross and with various banners and statues of Mary being carried, English hymns such as 'Faith of our Fathers' and 'Martyrs of England' were sung.[17] Interest in the English recusant martyrs had a high profile nationally in this era. In 1886, fifty martyrs had been beatified by Pope Leo XIII, including Bishop John Fisher and. Margaret Clitherow had been declared to be Venerable at the same time. Anticipation was high that these causes would be continued and more added to them. Rome also encouraged the development of such local cults and in 1913 the cause of Margaret Clitherow was formally reopened leading to her beatification in 1929 and canonisation in 1970.

In most places where the Guild of our Lady of Ransom organised processions of a religious character, the reaction of local people seemed to be that of curiosity and courtesy rather than hostility.[18] Questions as to their legality and expediency were raised by other Catholics rather than non-Catholics and were answered by Guild members at the National Congress of 1910, who compared their actions with those of the Salvation Army.[19] In 1882, the Salvation Army had successfully established in the High Court, the common law right of all British subjects to hold processions, including religious processions, provided they were not for an unlawful purpose. For a Catholic procession to be unlawful under the terms of the 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act section 26, it required the participation of clergy in 'exercising a rite or ceremony of the Church', in other words a liturgical procession such as a procession of the Blessed Sacrament. Marian and other devotional processions were therefore legal.[20] In addition, the wording of Section 26 only referred to clergy, therefore lay people were free to walk in procession carrying whatever emblems they wished, and non-officiating clergy were also free to walk

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[16] *The Guild of our Lady of Ransom* accessed http://saints.sqpn.com/ncd03771.htm.
[17] *The Antidote Vol. 3* (1892) 199.
[18] *The Antidote Vol.3* 199.
[19] *Ibid*., 469-479.
[20] X Geo. IV, cap XXVI

in such processions provided they wore dress such as cotta and cassock, which lay people could also wear.
At the beginning of Advent 1936, under the leadership of the new Archbishop of Westminster, Arthur Hinsley, a joint pastoral letter was published by the bishops of England and Wales on the subject of the lay Apostolate. It focused on the teaching of two Papal documents, Rerum Novarum issued by Pope Leo XIII in 1891 and Quadragesima Annos issued by Pope Pius XI in 1931 and called for the setting up of Catholic Action in every diocese under the leadership of the bishops. Catholic Action was already present in both Europe and Ireland, but it had never been part of English Catholicism partly because of the lack of a Catholic platform in the political arena, but also due to a fear of an upsurge anti-Catholic feeling. As the bishops stated:

> on social and allied questions we Catholics in England and Wales have not been able to influence to any great extent the economic life of the country and the system on which it runs…we could have done more to change it…had we been less fearful of proclaiming Papal teaching and more anxious to practise it ourselves, even on the limited scale which must necessarily be ours. [21]

New leadership and a fear of communism had finally prompted the bishops to speak out, for 'Anti-God forces are sapping and mining the foundations of society. Never before was the apostolate of the laity so necessary.' Although concerned with the lay apostolate Catholic Action was to be organised through the Hierarchy with the Archbishop of Westminster as its national president and individual diocesan boards with personnel chosen by the bishop. Many groups that would come under the banner of Catholic Action were present already in England, such as the St Vincent de Paul Society and the Catholic Women's League, but the pastoral letter called for increased membership of such groups and a co-ordination of the activities 'so all may collaborate without losing their distinctive characteristics'. Charged with its organisation locally in each diocese were a network of councils ranging from parish councils to district councils and finally to a diocesan council that was responsible to the bishop for the general direction of Catholic Action in a diocese. This web of networks bears out the assertion of Kester Aspden that the role of the laity was that of 'foot-soldiers' with 'independent action not an option'. But this was precisely the role the laity was meant to have in this early dawn of the Lay Apostolate when even its architect, Pius XI wrote that Catholic Action had 'no other purpose than the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy'.
There is general agreement that in English Catholicism, Catholic Action never got beyond the paper stage in most dioceses. There can be little doubt that Catholic Action was intended as a revivalist movement; its object was to 'establish the reign of Christ throughout the world' as well as 'the perfection of its own members' and it did spawn several new organisations which were either established or brought under its banner, the main ones being the Catholic Evidence Guild (hereafter CEG), the Legion of Mary (hereafter LOM) and the Young Christian Workers (hereafter YCW).

The CEG, founded in 1918, to some extent took over part of the work of the Guild of our Lady of Ransom, in having the aim of providing accurate information about Catholicism by trained lay evangelists at outdoor lectures. The first lectures were held in Hyde Park taking advantage of the soap-box oratory of Speakers Corner, and gradually spread to other parts of the country. Each branch had a clerical spiritual director and weekly study

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[21] Hierarchy of England and Wales *Joint Pastoral Letter on the Apostolate of the Laity* (Advent 1936

classes were held to train the catechists in Catholic doctrine, history and practice that for the first time gave a group of laity from all walks of life a theological education that not only increased their personal knowledge, but equipped them to answer with verisimilitude the arguments and questions that came from their listeners and hecklers. That this was a departure from the traditional behaviour of English Catholics cannot be denied, and comparison may also be made with the street evangelists of the Salvation Army. In Middlesbrough, for example, up to four outdoor meetings were held each week, the main one being outside the railway station, which was considered to be the hub of town life at that time. In nearby York, three regular outdoor meetings were held, both in the centre and on a newly built housing estate. As with many initiatives, enthusiasm and opportunities were curtailed by the Second World War and the CEG was no exception, never regaining its vibrancy after the war.

The LOM was founded by Frank Duff in Ireland 1921 as an association of men and women 'banded together under the Standard of Mary, Mediatrix of all graces; in other words an army under the leadership of Mary.' The organisational model of the LOM was the Roman Army, with the praesidium being the lowest unit of between four and twenty members meeting at parish level up to the Senatus which was the national body. Active members were expected to attend weekly meetings of their praesidium and recite daily the Catena Legionis, the prayer of the Legion made up of the Magnificat and several shorter prayers. In addition, they undertook different tasks based upon the needs of the parish, for example visiting the sick or bereaved in a parish. Auxiliary members supported the active members by daily prayer and junior members under the age of eighteen often held their own meeting but were not allowed to make the Legion promise of service. The LOM's founder, Frank Duff was regarded with suspicion by the Irish Bishops, so the organisation had a very slow start, but by the time of the Second World War it had become international and its role within Catholic Action was helping deal with the social problems.

The YCW emerged in 1938 from the Belgian Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne movement founded by Joseph Cardijn in 1925. Essentially it was a movement to bring Christianity into the workplace and to keep young people in touch with God once they had left education

We are all familiar with the dangers which beset our boys and girls when they leave school. They have been sheltered, protected, and guided during their school years. Now the protecting hand has gone, they are no longer safe-guarded; they are for the first time in an atmosphere of perilous freedom. They witness bad example on every side; they listen to their elders voicing opinions which would undermine the sacred edifice of their faith and morality which has been so carefully built up in a catholic school…We see woeful losses in every large town.[22]

Young people were trained to evangelise their fellow young Catholics in the workplace and at the same time increased their own knowledge of their faith in a threefold programme of catechesis based on study of the Gospels, covering the basic tenets of 'See, Judge, Act' as this member illustrated

One day at work I was talking to two friends when one asked me if I was Catholic as my name was Irish. We were talking about different things when one girl said her father was Irish, so I asked her if she was a Catholic and she said she was but didn't go to Mass… We talked about it for a while

[22] Middlesbrough Diocesan Archives Thomas Shine Pastoral Letters Advent 1937

and I then asked her if she would come to Mass with me on Sunday and she consented…and we went together. Since then, she has been a very good Catholic and intends to stay as such. You see, this girl only needed asking and if one only looked around there are many more suffering…just through wrong information…so help us with our work. [23]

Boys and girls who were over the age of fourteen met in segregated parish cells with a priest as chaplain and the YCW as one of the most successful groups in Catholic Action was invaluable in helping young people cope with the transition from school to the workplace, a problem that had concerned the clergy for over one hundred years. There can be little doubt that this was a means of reviving and sustaining the faith of young people after they had left school.

Post War Evangelisation

English Catholics were inspired by a Cross-carrying pilgrimage to Vezelay held in 1946 and a similar Cross-carrying Pilgrimage to the Shrine of our Lady in Walsingham was undertaken with fourteen heavy wooden crosses carried by young men from all parts of the country in July 1948. These then became the Stations of the Cross at the Catholic Shrine. Each cross was identical made of solid oak weighing ninety pounds, eight feet high and six feet across. To keep in with the spirit of the event the pilgrims sang the Divine Office, and hymns and recited the Rosary on their journey towards Walsingham as well as making each day a devotion of Stations of the Cross with breaks every hour to pray an individual station. Overnight stays were in schoolrooms, church halls and private houses rather than hotels and pubs and local Catholics in the areas were encouraged to join the pilgrims for a short evening service, sermon and veneration of the Cross. The following morning there was Mass to which the locals were again invited before the Pilgrims left for their next stop. The final night of the Pilgrimage was spent in an all-night vigil of prayer and penance before the Pilgrims carried the Crosses bare-footed along the final mile to the Slipper chapel, which served as the Catholic Shrine. As one pilgrim reflected to the writer:

On the train [home] I looked out across the passing countryside, England and its freedom that had so recently been threatened. I reflected with much contentment that I'd personally contributed with prayer and penance for world peace.

Another focus of Marian devotion was that of replicating the Holy Family in the Catholic family and this was clearly the message of Fr. Patrick Peyton and his Rosary Crusade of 1952 with its slogan 'the family that prays together stays together'. The primary function of the Crusade was to instil into every Catholic family the habit of reciting the Rosary together and Fr. Peyton had dedicated his life to this objective as thanks for being cured of tuberculosis. An Irish-born American he used a mixture of all the modern means of persuasion and indoctrination that were available to him. These included posters; a Crusade newspaper; school projects; films; special pulpit sermons and most famously large Family Prayer Rallies. Such tactics were also seen in the Evangelical crusades of the Baptist preacher Dr Billy Graham who started his work at a similar time. Alana Harris has provided a detailed study of the two men and concluded that both had

[23] *Hull Catholic Magazine* (September 1939)

an engaging style, athletic good looks, a charismatic personality and a cosmopolitan mentality. Both… were committed to reaching a mass audience with their version of Christian revivalism [24]

Preparations for Fr. Peyton's crusade coincided with the publication of the encyclical letter Ingruentium Malorum urging the keeping of October 1951 as a Rosary Crusade. The diocese of Middlesbrough was the starting point for the 1952 English Crusade and rallies were held in Hull, Scarborough York and Middlesbrough. The editor of the Hull Catholic Magazine described the rally there as 'the most outstanding religious gathering that this City has ever known. ' and a report in the Diocesan Almanac reported that

All possible means were utilised and no effort spared to make the people conscious of the great value of a Family Home Rosary…Rosary sermons explaining and pointing out the beauty and unfailing power of this devotion were constantly preached in all the Churches of the diocese;[notes were provided by the mission team] pastoral Letters were read; Rosary films were shown; all forms of advertising were employed; and all the time the people were being roused to join and take part in the Crusade[25].

The task of going from door to door to 'sell' the Rosary and collect the pledges was considered to be 'a man's job' whilst women, children and the sick prayed for success, and all were invited to attend the large, organised rallies to hear Fr. Peyton speak about the effects of the family Rosary upon the home

the love, the protection, the confidence it gives to a man, his wife and his children…It was comforting and consoling, It gave new hope…It was simple. It was compelling. It was clear. It was as usual lengthy, It could have all been told in ten minutes, but people did not want it that way. They listened with attention and few returned home without feeling this priest had some extra power of reaching down into the soul.[26]

There seems little doubt that the success of the Crusade in part was created by the priests who supported it overwhelmingly; anxious, as were their bishops, to protect Catholic family life at a time when it was facing dilution from a rapid increase in mixed marriages and also family breakdown.

Up until 1963 revivalism and renewal quietly continued through parish missions, the Mass, guilds and the sodalities but the Second Vatican Council was a watershed in that for some people it felt as if everything they held dear had been swept away and for others the Council did not go far enough. The concepts of revivalism and renewal were an intrinsic part of the Council's work but will be examined in a separate article. What this article has demonstrated is that these concepts have been, since the 19th century an integral part of Catholicism in England and Wales as Catholics left behind the quiet contemplation of the 18th century and embraced a church that was concerned to fortify their spiritual lives, reclaim the lapsed and in so doing took its place on the spectrum of Evangelical Christianity.

Dr Margaret Turnham

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[24] Harris and Spence *Disturbing the complacency of Religion* (Twentieth century British History Vol 18:4 2007)

[25] Hull Catholic Magazine (1952)

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