

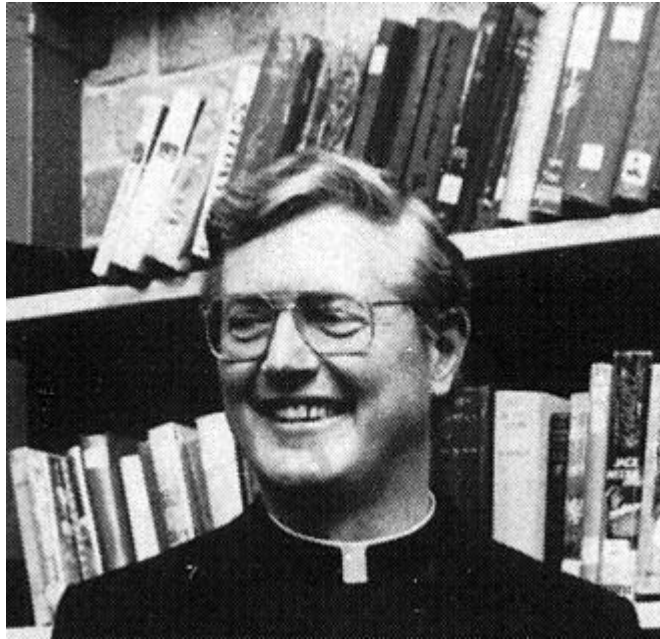


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THE MEANING OF DR. MANNIX

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His books include an edition of Lord Acton's diary at the First Vatican Council and "John Henry Newman: Friends, Allies, Bishops, Catholics". In 1982 his "Rockchoppers: Growing up Catholic in Australia" became a national bestseller and, in 1983, was one of the four books highly commended in the Australian National Book Awards. As editor of "Studies in the Christian Movement" series, he has published some of the most significant works of Australian church history in recent years.

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Archbishop Daniel Mannix
(1864-1963)

St. Brigid's Church, Red Hill, Brisbane, is a potent symbol of Australian Catholicism. Even today, it sits on the brow of its hill, like a recumbent lion, dwarfing the humble weatherboard cottages that surround it and defying the city skyline across the valley. The defiant, aggressive architecture of St. Brigid's was a deliberate choice of those who built the church in 1912-1914. Nancy Underhill in her study of the church (*Art and Australia*, June, 1978) relates that the architect, Robin S. Dods, showed the parish building committee his collection of postcards of various churches and cathedrals overseas. The committee liked what they saw of the cathedral at Albi in the south of France. Built of brick between 1282 and 1390, the Albi cathedral is a massive fortified church with only one (easily defensible) door and high minatory walls that rise many metres above ground level before they are pierced by thin lancet windows. Albi's fortress-cathedral sits on a bluff above the town. Its military architecture was quite deliberate, it was designed to strike fear into the townspeople. For Albi was one of the centres of the Cathar heresy, sometimes called Albigensianism, which opposed official Catholicism in the south of France during the high Middle Ages. Against its corrosive belief that the flesh is evil, the Incarnation an allegory, official Catholicism launched the intellect of Aquinas, the condemnation of councils, preaching missions, a crusade, the Inquisition, architecture and sculpture. Today that is all over – the cathedral at Albi and the carvings at Chartres, which are anti-Cathar in their intent, are all that are left. To understand them we are forced into the libraries.

So why did the parishioners of Red Hill – "generous working folk" as the parish priest, Father McCarthy, described them – choose such an unusual model as Albi for their new church? I think the answer is, that they chose Albi precisely because it was so unusual, so leonine, so aggressive, so affirmatory of a history older than Queensland's. Thus the symbolism of St. Brigid's: it trumpets to the world an unrepentantly flamboyant Catholicism. It is the church of those who believe that there is only one door to salvation. Yet, it seems to me, the symbolism of St. Brigid's does not stop there. The unusualness of the architecture, its clean break with prevailing modes of the British-Australian Gothic revival calls for an explanation. Can this architecture be saying also that there are other ways of doing things than the dominant British-Australian culture seems to know?

To answer that question, it might be useful to step back from the immediate concerns of Red Hill and look at Australian society generally in this period. The federation of the Australian states in 1901 posed an urgent question: what does it mean to be an Australian? Visionaries like Henry Lawson and William Lane thought that Australia was a new chance for mankind under southern skies. Lawson wrote:

When freedom couldn't stand the glare of royalty's regalia
She left the loafers where they were and came out to Australia.

There was republican talk like that at Eureka, too. Asked his goal, the leader, Peter Lalor, an Irish Catholic engineer, replied briskly, "Independence". A generation later, Ned Kelly's relatives used to talk about a republic. What the men of Eureka and the Kelly clan meant by this cannot be sharply defined. It included a rejection of colonial status, querying English hegemony, local pride, love of one's own brown land, hatred of oppression, a desire for freedom, Australian nationalism.

Against this stop-and-start emergence of the Australian national spirit there were opposed those who gave a different answer to the question, what does it mean to be an Australian? These were the British-Australians. They felt that the most profound element of being an Australian was that one was thereby a member of the British Empire. Today, imperialism has become a perjorative word. To the British-Australian, however, it was an affirmation of honour and pride. The Boer War, when at last Australians were enabled to fight in the Empire's battles, gave them a boost. After the war, imperialists in Australia determined to keep alive the feeling that Australians were part of the British family. Empire Day, established in New South Wales in 1905, is an example that lives in memory: the flag of Empire flying from the school flag-standards, the British songs, the stirring addresses, the prayers thanking God for making one a member of this mighty Empire.

Prayers ... Empire Day was a very Protestant day. There were services in Protestant churches; there were Protestant ministers at school assemblies; the British Empire League, the day's chief promotor, was a militantly Protestant body. Such overt Protestantism was one of the reasons why Catholics remained less than enthusiastic about the day. There were, too, deeper, ethnic reasons why Irish-Australians did not easily join in the lauding of the Empire. These reasons were

expressed in a poem by the prominent Vincentian priest, Maurice O'Reilly. It is called, "Ireland and Empire Day":

Shall we rejoice, in whom the Irish blood
Rolls like a lava-torrent as the flood
Of burning memories sweeps o'er the brain?
Shall we rejoice, while our dear motherland,
Dearer to us than any other land,
Wears yet a chain?
By heaven, not so.

Father O'Reilly was foremost in resisting the slogan of the Empire loyalists, "Australia for the Empire". His slogan – and Cardinal Moran's and that of *The Bulletin* – was, "Australia for the Australians". He persuaded the Catholics to celebrate on 24 May, not Empire Day, but Australia Day. Instead of "God Save Our Gracious King", the Catholics sang "Advance Australia Fair" or Father O'Reilly's own hymn, "God bless our lovely morning land, Australia". Preaching in St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, on Australia Day, 1911, O'Reilly asserted: "Australia, not England, is our motherland. The flag of Australia comes first with us". His language is revealing: in his poem "Ireland and Empire Day" the motherland had been Ireland; in his 1911 sermon the motherland is Australia. Thus Maurice O'Reilly testifies in his very language to the cultural transformations taking place within the Irish-Australians. He demonstrates how love of Ireland could be transmuted into love of Australia. Impelling both loves was a distaste for British imperialism, whose religious expression was commonly Protestantism.

This, then, was the background – social, political, cultural, religious, economic – to the building of St. Brigid's Church and why it could be invested with such potent symbolism. During the eighteen months it was being built, there were thirteen other Catholic churches going up in Brisbane and a further eight in the Rockhampton diocese. Yet it was St. Brigid's that dominated the Catholic press, with architect's sketches, lists of donors and opinions of its style being frequently printed. At its consecration, in Exhibition Week, August, 1914, the *Brisbane Courier* said: "The blessing and dedication of St. Brigid's new Catholic Church, Red Hill, yesterday was the most important ceremony that has taken place in Catholic circles in Brisbane since the opening of St. Stephen's Cathedral about forty years ago". If, as I have argued, St. Brigid's was a potent

symbol of Irish-Australian Catholicism in those years, then I should also like to argue that the consecration and opening ceremonies of the church were also charged with symbolism. For in these ceremonies a leading role was played by two men who themselves fleshed out very different answers to such questions as what was the role of the Catholics in Australian society, what it meant to be an Australian Catholic and what were the appropriate modes of episcopal leadership in Australia.

The first of these two men was James Duhig. To date, Queensland has given us the outstanding episcopal biographies in Australian Catholic historiography – I refer, of course, to Sister Yvonne McLay's *Life of James Quinn* (1978) and Sister Frances O'Donoghue's *Life of Polding* (1982). Is there any doubt that Dr. Tom Boland's *Life of James Duhig* will give Brisbane the trifecta? His book is eagerly awaited. What he has published in the meantime allows us to come to terms with Archbishop Duhig's episcopal style. In his nearly sixty years as a bishop, James Duhig was to gain a national reputation as a builder. Throughout Queensland he put Catholic schools and churches on hills where everybody could see them. As Archbishop of Brisbane for fifty years, he oversaw more than four hundred major church buildings. Yet, important as Duhig's architectural statements are – and without them and their like Australian Catholicism is unimaginable – historically they seem to me less significant than his episcopal style. For James Duhig believed in integration, not confrontation. He travelled widely in Queensland as an early and regular passenger of the Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Service (QANTAS); and he offered his expertise to those shaping the State's future development. A lover of art and literature, he took a continuing interest in the cultural life of the State. The infant University of Queensland won his support and he served for many years on its Senate. I can testify personally to the delight he evidenced in showing people from the south round the St. Lucia campus – by contrast to Cardinal Gilroy in Sydney, whom I remember observing at a formal Sydney University function thirty years ago: he looked nervous, threatened and distinctly out of place. Archbishop Duhig's plans for a cathedral in Brisbane had to be abandoned when his oil shares collapsed in the Depression. Yet the abandonment of the cathedral should not obscure the fact that the archbishop saw it as an architectural delight for all Queenslanders, not just the Catholics. For a dozen years he was president of the Brisbane branch of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia. In all

these ways Archbishop Duhig's Australianism was relaxed and uncontrived. In 1959, when he became the first Australian bishop to be knighted, people thought it an appropriate honour for someone who had faithfully served Australia, as well as his own church.

With Archbishop Duhig on that Sunday in August, 1914, at the opening of St. Brigid's Church, was the coadjutor Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr. Daniel Mannix. While Duhig would wait for his biographer, Mannix, I think I am right in saying, would achieve more biographies than any other major figure in Australian history, apart from Ned Kelly. There are personal studies of him by Captain Bryan (1919), E. J. Brady (1934), Frank Murphy (1948 and 1972), Niall Brennan (1964), Walter Ebsworth (1977), B. A. Santamaria's short, weighty, lecture of 1977 and, last year, Michael Gilchrist's *Daniel Mannix, Priest & Patriot*. As well, the Mannix shelf is crammed with books like Michael McKernan's *Australian Churches at War* (1980), Gerard Henderson's *Mr. Santamaria and the Bishops* (1982), Patrick O'Farrell's *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia* (1977), B. A. Santamaria's *Against the Tide* (1981) and Vincent Buckley's *Cutting Green Hay* (1983) - in all of which Archbishop Mannix is a central figure. There is, then, no lack of information about Dr. Mannix. But what does it all mean?

Perhaps, for a clue, one might return to that opening ceremony at St. Brigid's, Red Hill. Dr. Mannix preached the occasional sermon. His text was from John: "I pray that all may be one", his theme was the union of the churches. More and more, he said, earnest men felt it a shame and a scandal that religious bodies should waste their strength in attacking one another. Then, seeming to accept criticism of Catholics on this score, he acknowledged that the Catholic Church stood aloof from all attempts at a union of Christians. He went on: she was always lamenting divisions, we are told, yet she would not allow Catholics to fraternize with those who did not acknowledge her obedience; she would not allow them to enter a Protestant Church and join in prayer and worship to the Common Father of all Christians; she had no regard for the feelings of non-Catholics and hurt them to the quick by her claim that there was no salvation outside the Catholic fold. This was a harsh, cruel, arrogant sentence, he said. Let me pause here and observe that irony translates badly from the spoken to the written word. Yet still today, reading the fading newspaper accounts of Mannix's sermon at St. Brigid's, the irony is devastating, the mocking infectiously funny. And

then, like any deadpan stand-up comedian, the preacher outrageously asserts, "I am not speaking in a controversial spirit". And after the jokes, the serious bit. Christ established on earth one Church, not many Churches; the unity and indestructability of the Church was provided for by setting up within the Church "a real, living, compelling, infallible teaching authority, the same now as it was on the Day of Pentecost, the same yesterday, today and forever." And finally, after that, a word about St. Brigid's Church "so imposing in its massive grandeur, so harmonious in its treatment, so striking in its architecture": "It was not to be the offering of some wealthy citizen. It was something richer, nobler, more precious. It was the offering of many faithful loving hearts".

I have dwelt on this single sermon because it takes one part of the way towards understanding Dr. Mannix. There is the mocking, corrosive, ironic wit, so unsparing of those who are perceived as opponents. There is the balanced music of the prose, still audible in the *oratio obliqua* of the newspaper report. There is the blunt, uncompromising assertion of Catholic exclusivism which will shock a modern reader only if he or she is ignorant of the history of ideas. There is the genial and winning acknowledgement of the importance of the masses, "the many faithful loving hearts".

Have I been describing a bigot or a sectarian? Certainly there were many, many people who called Mannix that in his lifetime. Certainly, too, sectarian animosities rose around him more than around any comparable figure in our history. Yet if a sectarian is one who is so devoted to the furtherance of his own cause that he is wilfully blind to the virtues of another's, then Mannix was no sectarian. If a bigot is one who deliberately misrepresents an opponent's case and will not accord him the liberty of free intellectual enquiry, then Mannix was no bigot. This year the world celebrates the quincentenary of the birth of Martin Luther. It reminds me that seventy years ago in Victoria there were people in the community calling for the forcible closure of the Lutheran schools there. They met their strongest opposition in Dr. Mannix. Some bigot, this Catholic archbishop who defends Lutheran schools! All the same, Archbishop Mannix did take what today would be regarded as an old-fashioned, severe, even discourteous position on relations between Protestants and Catholics. And some may call this sectarianism or bigotry. Talleyrand said treason was a matter of dates. Sectarianism, too, may be a matter of definition: it depends what you mean by sectarianism. In part, what Mannix did flowed from his theology, the ecclesiology of the First

Vatican Council. In part, it also reflected his assessment of the realities of Australian society: questions like shared church services, which seemed to be purely religious, were rarely that; frequently they were also part of another question, the enduring question of our history, what does it mean to be an Australian? The outbreak of war in 1914 brought this question quickly into focus.

British-Australians saw the war as an opportunity to demonstrate loyalty to the Empire in its need. Australia was part of the Empire; therefore Australia should rally to England's cause. Quite early in the war these circles began to speak of the need for universal compulsory war service. They formed the Universal Service League and persuaded Michael Kelly, the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, to become a vicepresident. For these people the war became an opportunity of achieving other social goals. The New South Wales Liquor Referendum of 1916, for instance, which closed the pubs at 6.00 p.m. instead of 11.00 p.m., was a victory for the British-Australians. Their rhetoric was suffused with wartime patriotism. Bishop Long of Bathurst said, "In the name of liberty I say we want to free our country from the German menace and I say that is going to be done far more quickly by closing the bars at 6 o'clock (cheers)". Bishop Radford of Goulburn said that with the money spent in 1915 on drink 27 000 men could have been equipped and sent to the front. He pleaded for 6 o'clock closing that we might have a strong, clean army. Editorially, the *Sydney Morning Herald* weighed in with the thought: "Were the Empire not engaged in a death struggle with the highly organised forces of aggression, this question of the early closing of the hotels might be viewed in a spirit of true moderation". As a background motif to the close-the-pubs campaign, in the *Herald* and elsewhere, there was a puzzlement why the Catholics were holding back from such a worthy cause. Could it be, as a correspondent in the *Herald* averred, that the Church was "behind the liquor party" because "the majority of hotelkeepers were members of the R.C. faith and staunch supporters financially of their Church?" Or were they, perhaps, deficient in their loyalty to the Empire? Didn't they want to win the war?

At the outbreak of war, Catholic spokesmen strongly supported the war effort. Archbishop Spence of Adelaide called it a just war. Archbishop Kelly of Sydney appeared on the platform at recruiting meetings and said he was proud of the way Irishmen had rallied to the British flag.

Maurice O'Reilly reined in his animosity towards England and wrote a pro-war poem, "Right to the End":

Whate'er betide,
Our place is in the van, by Honour's side
Right to the End.

A greater poet, Christopher Brennan, whose brother Philip was a sergeant in a machine-gun unit, published war verse that was quite unlike his usual knotty poetry:

IRISH TO ENGLISH

I am not of your blood;
I never loved your ways:
If e'er your deed was good
I was yet slow to praise.

Irish and rebel both,
And both unto the end –
And here I pledge you troth,
And here I stand your friend.

Those lines were written in the aftermath of the 1916 Easter Rebellion in Dublin. At first, Irish-Australians were inclined to condemn the rebellion; then came the execution of the ringleaders by the British. This soured the Irish-Australians. Their enthusiasm for the Empire's war began to wane.

So one comes to the conscription referenda of October, 1916, and December, 1917 – the most divisive political campaigns in Australian history. The support of the Protestant Churches for the war was based not only on the idea of doing one's duty to the Empire, but also on the hope that war service, even sacrifice, would purify and regenerate the Australian nation. Catholics saw the war in more limited, political, terms and, as for regeneration or purification, Catholics had sacraments for those purposes. When the war began to go badly for the allies and the terrible casualty figures started to sink in, recruiting slowed markedly. The response of Prime Minister William Morris Hughes was to listen to those who had for some time been advocating conscription. He decided to have a referendum. All the important people seemed in favour: the conservative political parties, many of the Labour Party, such as the Premier of New South Wales, W. A. Hohnan, *the Argus*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the heads of all the Protestant Churches and Catholic bishops such as Dr.

Clune of Perth and Dr. Kelly of Sydney. Against the proposal were many in the labour movement, who feared that such power would be used to worsen working conditions. Their spokesman was the Premier of Queensland, T. J. Ryan. Archbishop Mannix of Melbourne spoke twice in opposition to the Hughes proposals, saying that Australia had done her fair share. The referendum was lost, by a small margin. A second referendum, in December, 1917, was also lost, by a somewhat larger margin.

In this second referendum, Mannix was clearly seen as one of the leaders of the "NO" side. In a message to the troops, Hughes had said: "Archbishop Mannix, who has assumed the position of leader of the Government's opponents in this fight, has preached sedition in and out of season". There is some evidence (H. V. Evatt: *Australian Labour Leader*, p.409) to suggest that Hughes deliberately played up Mannix as an opponent in order to capitalize on anti-Catholicism in Australian society. If this is true, it was a wasted effort. The people who supported conscription were "British to their bootstraps". For them, to be British meant to be Protestant. Not to be Protestant was, probably, to be anti-British. "This is a Protestant country", said the Minister of Defence, Mr Bowden, in 1923, "and it is our pride that we have absolute liberty of conscience under the Union Jack. If any man thinks that the flag isn't good enough for him, let him get out". In 1933, the leaders of Melbourne's Protestant Churches affirmed that "our British Sunday is to us a priceless heritage, a day of worship, rest and peace". These quotations from after the war, show that the symbiosis between Protestantism and British imperialism, so evident during the war years, was in fact a normal posture of the British-Australian mind. And it was that mind which Mannix was challenging. His phrase, "Australia first, the Empire second", was as shocking to the British-Australians as it was nourishing to the spirits of Australian nationalists. It was objected against him that he spoke as an Irishman, that he was fighting Ireland's battles in Australia. Of course. He himself said, "I was an Irishman before I was an Archbishop, and I remain an Irishman in spite of the fact that I am an Archbishop". Irishmen, after all, had had centuries of experience of the British Empire. With the long memories of a conquered people, they remembered the stolen land, the dead priests, the broken homes, the evicted farmers, the subjugated minds of a captive people. Oh yes, Mannix could speak of the British Empire. And in speaking of it, was he not claiming only the same citizen rights that other clerics also exercised: "I claim the right, and I mean to exercise

the right, to give my views for what they are worth". It was no use. After Mannix, Catholics became type-cast as seditious, disloyal, traitorous. What "sedition", "disloyalty" or "treason" meant was shown at the end of 1918, when a Sydney priest, Dr. Patrick Tuomey, was fined £30 with costs for having "by word of mouth encouraged disloyalty to the British Empire" in a speech at Paddington Town Hall about the English presence in Ireland. Now begins the period when the security police kept a special eye on Catholics such as A. A. Calwell or Matthew Beovich. Now begins the period of the secret armies, which were pledged to defend Australia's Britishness and repress the Catholic threat.

If Dr. Mannix is seen as a major articulator, at a critical time, of Australian self-consciousness against British imperial consciousness, one should not think that he stood alone. He was part of a long tradition of Australian nationalism that stretched back through the nineteenth century. But Mannix was special in his ability to read the inchoate longings, the unvoiced desires of the inarticulate masses. He was their voice, their flag, their manifesto. As no one else could, he expressed what was in their hearts. He was not, as opponents alleged, the great manipulator. Rather, he depended on and grew from his followers. They were his meaning. It is remarkable how little argument there is in his speeches: argument was not necessary, he only had to be. And because he was, in this real sense, their man, the people loved him. They bought autographed postcards of him, they hung his portrait in their homes, they wore buttons with his picture on them, they crowded round him wherever he went, just to touch him, just to see him. And, of course, he was a bishop - with all the social eminence that entails, the unearned status, the deference, the power, the glory. So if he became a hero to the working class generally because he stood with them in their troubles, to the Catholic working class he was especially so.

And the other Catholic bishops? In a witty paper ("Archbishop Mannix – an aberrant Irishman", Christopher Brennan Society, Sydney, 1982), Michael McKernan has shown how unique was Mannix's address to the political questions. Some writers almost suggest that every one of Mannix's episcopal colleagues was a mitred rabbit. Dr. McKernan does not say that: what he does show is that the other bishops were so engrossed in the everyday routine of being a bishop – "My working hours in the administration of Church affairs", wrote Archbishop Spence, "are from 9

o'clock in the morning until close on midnight" – that they had neither the time nor the inclination for wider questions. So Mannix stood alone. In vain did the other bishops, once they became aware of what he was doing, hope to rein him in; in vain did the Vatican tell him to shut up. The crowd protected him from such interference. At the St. Patrick's Day sports in Sydney in 1917 Archbishop Kelly was given a brutal lesson in the power of the crowd. Kelly had invited the Premier, W. A. Holman, and the Lord Mayor, R. D. Meagher, both conscriptionists, to share the official dais with him and the Apostolic Delegate. Invited to speak, Holman could not make himself heard above the near-riot that broke out when he stood up. Neither Kelly nor the Apostolic Delegate, who thumped the table with his stick, could quell the disturbance. The row went on even during the imparting of the papal blessing – which led officials to say later, disingenuously, that the rowdies could not have been Irish. The next week Kelly received bitter letters from members of his flock urging him to side with the workers and criticizing him for being out of touch with his people. Thereafter he played down his support for the war and for conscription and he praised Mannix as "a valiant champion" of the working class. Not that Mannix got off scot-free. Sometime in 1918, at the Apostolic Delegate's insistence, he appeared before his fellow archbishops to be chastised for his politicking. Before his peers could rebuke him, however, Mannix moved a motion which, in effect, condemned the imprudence of his own public statements. This humiliation, which at the time was kept a close episcopal secret, had only a marginal effect on Mannix, for his subsequent behaviour, as in the 1919 election campaign, seemed unaffected by it - except, that is, for his undying bitterness towards Vatican diplomats, who had arranged his humiliation.

There is a price to be paid for greatness and sometimes it is more subtly exacted than the condemnation of one's envious peers. Mannix was certainly great; just as certainly he paid for it. Part of the price is indicated in a note among Holman's memoirs:

Dr. Mannix, who had not long arrived from Ireland, was the victim of a strange incapacity to "keep his block" when in front of an applauding crowd. The striking infirmity of the oratorical mind, which re-directs his own hypnotic power which he himself creates, was seen in its fullest development in this, in many ways, gifted man ... When on the line which divides boldness from blundering he would always utter the additional phrase which carried him over it. He would work an audience of sympathisers up to an almost frenzied pitch of excitement, and they in turn worked him up to a greater one, in which he gave utterance to sentiments which, it may be presumed, he had no intention of uttering when he mounted the platform.

Holman's judgement is borne out by the latest, and in many ways the best, Mannix biography, Michael Gilchrist's *Daniel Mannix, Priest & Patriot*. It is an everyday fact that successful public speakers are frequently coarsened by their success. Gilchrist makes it clear that this happened to Mannix. The flattering laughter of obsequious audiences led him on and on, until he heard himself saying things he later regretted. Vulgarly was the price the Maynooth scholar paid for being a leader of the people.

Of a piece with this was his intransigence on the matter of worship with non-Catholics. This was not merely a local, Melbourne phenomenon; it had national repercussions because he was Chaplain-General to the armed services. "No matter how many Protestants come to St. Patrick's", he said in 1930, "or how often they come, I am not going to a Protestant service at St. Paul's." In part his intransigence flowed from his ecclesiology. In part – and this was not always realized – it came from his refusal to allow the British-Australian Protestant hegemony to go unchallenged in Australia. Unlike England, there was no established church here; and, he felt, it was unfair of the British-Australians to act as if there were. So Mannix was a rough, hard bargainer on interfaith matters. There were several consequences of this. One was a heightening in the perception by the community at large that he and his Catholics were bigots and sectarians. Another was that the field, as at the annual Anzac Day commemorations, was ceded to a bland sort of community mysticism, in default of a positive Christian service which Catholics could attend. Another was to enlarge the powers of the bishops over their people and strengthen the ghetto feeling among Catholics. "I have sometimes made things difficult for Catholics in Australia", he told a New York audience in 1920, "difficult for the Catholic Church ... But there is a fact that people sometimes forget. Even for them, things must sometimes be made worse in order that they, at long last, be made better". These were the ghetto years, when Catholics were shy of public witness, shy of open society, shy of debate within the Church lest it give offence or scandal in a threatening world. In 1930, the first Catholic Prime Minister, J. H. Scullin, gave an interview to *Osservatore Romano*. In it he made a point of stressing that his cabinet adopted a non-sectarian approach to politics. His biographer writes, "It is impossible to identify a single portion of Scullin's policy which was a product specifically of his religious beliefs."

There were other fees to be paid for greatness. Writers on Mannix, notably Vincent Buckley in *Cutting Green Hay*, have stressed his pluralism, how he was willing to let you have your head even when he disagreed with you. History demands some qualifications of these memories of Mannix as an old man. In his earlier days he appears to the historian to have been intolerant of those within the Church who disagreed with his politics. Thus, Benjamin Hoare, the veteran Catholic journalist who held the papal Cross *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* for services to Catholic writing and to the Catholic Young Men's Federation, found himself dismissed from the executive of the Catholic Truth Society because he opposed the Archbishop's views on conscription. Mr. Vincent Nolan, another Catholic who opposed the Archbishop's politics, felt the lash of Mannix's pen and his sharp refusal to meet a Catholic deputation. Mr. Justice Heydon, who wrote a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald* condemning Mannix's politics, was derided as "a judge of the second or third class of some kind or other" who could not get an audience to fill a lolly shop. In Sydney in 1918, Dr. Mannix, having claimed the right to say in a paddock what other churchmen said in cathedrals, later attacked his Catholic opponents:

I am afraid in New South Wales we have to look long, and search almost in vain, for a Catholic man of standing who has got a university education and who has got into the front rank in politics and public life, and who has not denied the faith he was brought up in.

In each of these cases, it is difficult to see Mannix as simply a citizen speaking in a paddock. Is he not, rather, a political bishop using his episcopal position to crush his political opponents? When the line between politics and religion gets blurred, it is always religion that suffers.

But, of course, in Ireland the line between politics and religion was often blurred. Mr. Santamaria has argued that of the Irish episcopal styles available to him – the "Castle bishops", the nationalists, and the Roman-interest bishops – Mannix chose the second. His model was the nationalist Thomas William Croke of Cashel, founder of the Gaelic Athletic Association, supporter of Parnell and a populist who was attuned to the demotic passions of the oppressed Irish. Croke's pen, like Mannix's tongue, often ran away from him: his writings, for instance, contain support for not paying taxes and for breaking the law "enforced by British bayonets (it) is simply no law at all". There is no doubt that Croke's enthusiasm bubbled out of his close association with the inchoate

desires of the Irish masses. Like Mannix, he spoke the words the people needed to hear. In the same tradition, Mr Santamaria nominates Cardinal Mindszenty and Cardinal Wyszynski and the Archbishop of Braga in Portugal – like Croke, bishops from predominantly Catholic countries, where, unlike Australia, to be a citizen and to be a Catholic is frequently the same thing. To apply such styles to a country where Catholics were, at most, 25% of the population was to carry lead in your saddle bags.

So it may be hazardous to take as your models of episcopal leadership bishops drawn from countries radically different from Australia's pluralist democracy. Instead, if you want a measuring stick, may I suggest that one may profitably look closer to home. Ernest Henry Burgmann was born on the Manning River, New South Wales, in 1885. A farmer's son, he retained all his life a love of the bush, as his autobiography *The Education of an Australian* testifies. He was a timber-getter before he caught up with his education and got ordained in 1912. In 1918, he was appointed as Warden of St. John's Theological College in Armidale, which was transferred to Morpeth outside Newcastle in 1926. In 1934, he became Bishop of Goulburn. His see incorporated Canberra in 1950. When he died in 1967, his successor, Bishop K. J. Clements, said of him:

When in 1934 Ernest Henry Burgmann took his place on the Bench of Bishops, a new species of Australian bishop appeared. Until that time and for a considerable time afterwards the Australian bishops were modelled on their British brothers... He never identified himself with the middle class. Like Amos, he descended upon the city from the wilderness and brought with him freedom of judgement.

And what judgements! At Newcastle during the Depression years Burgmann had stood alongside the victims, whether it was through his involvement in the Unemployed Workers' Movement, his "double the dole" campaign, or his advocacy of those who fought against evictions. He believed in a church whose role was to sensitize the conscience of the nation – his articles in the *Newcastle Morning Herald* and his editorship of the *Morpeth Review* acted out this belief. The fascist secret army, the New Guard, was said to have him as Number One on its black list of people to be dealt with once it came to power. In Canberra-Goulburn, his lively social conscience won him the title of "the Red Bishop". He stood for housing reform, for better wages, for the rights of strikers. He promoted the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union and a sympathetic understanding of the values of communism. He was also something of a prophet, for he wrote in 1947: "Events are driving the Roman Catholics farther and farther to the right, and history may yet record that the

strength of the Australian conservatives, now known as Liberals, will be found in the Roman Catholic of Irish origin". There is, as you know, an older, Biblical meaning of the word prophet: one who speaks God's sentence on a society. Bishop Burgmann was also, and most deeply, a prophet in this sense. What is remarkable, he was able to fulfil this episcopal vocation without incurring a bill of division, rancour or sectarianism. That is what made him a truly great bishop, perhaps the greatest in twentieth century Australia. But there is always a price to be paid for greatness. Ernest Henry Burgmann paid for his greatness by being forgotten.