

# THE BACK OF THE BULLETIN

## The Secret Is Out

Catholicism has a reputation for keeping secrets, which has more than a little to do with the Gunpowder Plot, the greatest single influence on British perceptions of our Faith. The word *Jesuitical* means nefarious and secretive; the negative term *Popish* is seldom heard without its correlative *Plot*; and it is always easy to sell the notion that Catholics are up to something villainous behind closed doors. (Need I mention *Opus Dei*?)

### The Truth Is...

...much worse than that. The vastness and universal reach of the Catholic secret is so far unrealised by the average outsider. The aim is nothing less than the absolute subversion of the power-systems of the whole known world. Among the designs entertained by activists are the evacuation of respect for the principal cohesive force in our society (money), the building up of a powerful group of like-minded persons who are prepared to put every relationship into second place to the Movement, and the creation of cells of activists willing to infiltrate, quietly and unobtrusively, every decent community in every country on earth. Not only do they propose to be unfaithful to truths society holds dear, they also reverse the order of relative values: thus they hold family values above commercial ones, religious values above family values, altruism above self-interest. People have assumed that this nonsense will soon die in the real world as we know it, but so fanatical is the devotion of Catholics that even the full force of market values fails to work on them. Complacency is not appropriate, and our whole culture is under threat.

### I Wish!

If only all that were true. The reality is that even within the Church we don't realise that we are handling dynamite when we listen to the Gospel. Our belief that *Jesus Christ will one day judge the earth* is a ticking time-bomb for the injustice and violence by which the world is run at present. To pray to this Judge is to align ourselves against the world we're living in. But I'm sure we're painfully short of realising the fact. We want to be fully-paid-up members of the Church *and* society. In cultural terms, this is stretching credibility to the extremes of thinness. Not only does "society" not share our Christian values, it cherishes values that militate against them. That's the scenario of

the Apocalypse, the last book of the Bible. Britain has quietly absconded from Christianity, and discreetly accepted the life-denying Godlessness which permits a materialist and acquisitive culture of self; do we think that our religion can take its place as our own personal "selfish" choice, our little bit of individualism? Forget it! Our faith has *never* been a merely personal matter. It's an assertion about ultimate reality. Summoned to the bar in the Last Judgment will be *all the nations*; not just those who made a profession of faith. The reign of Christ, which has already begun, is the Kingship of the Universe. No-one can ignore it, except at the peril of their eternal destiny. Maybe, if it were not so, we could treat the Faith as a bit of irrelevant mumbo-jumbo for a minority on Sunday mornings, an alternative to the lie-in enjoyed by less afflicted souls.

### All, Or Nothing At All

If you listen to the middle reading today, from first Corinthians, you will hear the note of totality which makes our faith what it is. *Life and death*, we call things of ultimate importance; and here they are, treated with the radical terms only proper to God: *When everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all*. The world would call this religious mania, because it's simply incomprehensible to the world that anyone should take God more seriously than they take themselves, or their families, or their job, or their prosperity, or their life. The world wants desperately to have a faith that will fall down and lie still when these "more important" things come into play. It's called living in the real world, and it knows that religion's all very well as long as you don't take it too far. We have been taught that the rewards of this world lead to death, and that the seeking of death is enslavement. We cannot serve two masters. As we read of the Last Judgment, we are urged to make our choice. Our choice now will affect our judgment then.

*Fr Philip*