

FIFTY AND OUT

THIS IS THE last issue of *Compass*. The final year is the fiftieth year of publication.

Compass was founded by Fr Dennis Murphy MSC and Bishop Jim Cuskelly MSC) at the beginning of 1967, just a little over a year after the closure of Vatican II in December 1965.

They were stirring times, with excitement and turmoil throughout the Catholic world as the Church strove to come to terms with what the word *aggiornamento* might mean.

Compass had plunged with eyes wide open into the immediate post-conciliar commotion with the aim of providing a better point of reference and guidance for Catholics than the regularly sensationalised and confusing coverage of journals such as *Time Magazine* and *Newsweek*.

Compass set out to give depth and background to the debates, providing reliable information about trends in theological thinking, about the results of current research and about possible approaches to controversial questions. It wanted to 'open up the inner dynamism of theology, which is not meant to be a pastime for a clique, but an urgent attempt to bring God's Word in its purity and fulness to the world of our time' (first editorial, 1967).

The journal has been a good, helpful and popular resource for many people's faith lives over the years.

Compass has been a platform for many seeking to have their essays published for the first time. This has launched many into ongoing theological writing careers.

We are grateful for the support of all our readers and contributors over the fifty years.

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Christmas is approaching—a special time for rejoicing: 'Joy to the world!'

But we have reason to rejoice every day of our lives. Our God is a God who loves us. At Christmas we ponder and celebrate the mystery of the fact that God has shown that love by becoming one of us—assumed the lowliness of human flesh and opened to us the way of salvation.

We celebrate the love of God: God loved the world so much that became one of us, that He was born to be amongst us. He became an infant baby, lived in a human family, and grew to maturity as a human being like us.

This God we are talking about is a God of ultimate mystery, the mystery of mysteries—utterly other. We can hardly take it in.

Years ago I had the chance to visit the Holy Land, and it left me with lasting memories. I remember walking around shores of the lake of Galilee and reflecting that God Almighty, the ultimate mystery walked here, on this earth, and looked at these hills and shores! It was a mind-blowing experience.!

This is the way the eternal, utterly other God wants it to be. God almighty humbled himself to walk with us, to be God-with-us, so that we can journey with Him. We pray in the liturgy: 'Grant that as he became a man like us he may share with us his Godhead'

We have many reasons to celebrate at Christmas.

—Barry Brundell MSC, Editor