



TOWARDS
A
NEW
PIETY

Paul Bussan

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TOWARDS A NEW PIETY, X

The challen-
-ge of that t-

-wo-fisted pr-
-ayer, and b-

-arrel-chest-
-ed faith, th-

-e times are
calling for, I

am answe-
-ring.

THE SHREWD STEWARD REPLIES
TO CREELEY'S "AFTER LORCA"

The Church is a
business, and I a-
-m just a busines-
-sman who, what,
both, on his inves-
-tment, short and l-
-ong, the best retu-
-rn, will yield, is a-
-lways lookin-
-g for.

AFTER BAUDELAIRE

“Not my father,
nor my mother,
nor my brother,
nor the sister w-
-ho I never had,
nor the country
of my origin, no-
-r art, nor beau-
-ty, nor skies of
blue, nor those
clouds floating i-
-n them, but this
god in me throu-
-gh whom I do t-
-he one who put
him there,” is wh-
-at to the strang-
-er who, as I wa-
-s walking throu-
-gh the streets o-
-f Paris after Ma-
-ss, asked me w-
-hat, in this wor-
-ld, I loved the m-
-ost, I said.

KIERKEGAARDIAN

I swear,
under

penalty
of

blas-
-phem-
-y,

me,
the whole me,
and nothing but me,

so help me God, to be.

THE UNFORGOTTEN

The face
of ever-
-y person,

whose sins
I have
forgiven,

to
this ver-
-y day,

I can stil-
-l recal-
-l.

EFFOR

I express,
through my thoughts,
and through my words,
and through everything I do,
to everyone,
this god that God
has put in me,
and ask St. Paul,
and each person of the Trinity,
to pray I will continue to.

IMPRIMATUR

After a cross e-
-xamination of
myself that riva-
-lled in intensity
the one that the D-
-auphin, before he
would consent to g-
-ranting her an audi-
-ence, had, at the ha-
-nds of learned theol-
-ogians, Joan of Arc
undergo, I have conc-
-luded that to not pu-
-t all my faith into m-
-y destiny would be
as great a violation
of the Holy Spirit
as they, if he, wit-
-h her, refused t-
-o meet, declare-
-d it would be.

DAILY AFFIRMATION

The godman in me,
3 times before the sun sets,
I will not deny.

BUT ONLY SAY THE WORD, AND

healthier than
that “Too healthy”,

when Bond asks her
if he seems healthy,

Patricia Fearing
says he is,

I am made.

AT MASS, EACH SUNDAY, I'M

a sea
of mind-
-less pi-
-eties,

and faiths
that are un-
-formed,

up to
my ankles, in.

AT A HUMAN PACE

“How can the act of walking
become a religious act?”

—Romano Guardini

As,
on water,

Jesus did,
one step

at a time,
desire paths,

on dry land
I'm making as

I go along.

PROMISES

What a rainbow was to Noah, a tornado is to me.

ALPHA AND OMEGA

An ageless hipster,
Christ, the first, and last, hipster,
liberates in me.

Ω

Until I find the o-
-ne with just the r-
-ight amount of sk-
-in combined with m-
-eat and fat to form a h-
-ealthy cursive line just
asking to be grabbed, I,
from the thin and priss-
-y to the big and roun-
-d, am, at Mass, the,
on every woman th-
-ere, ass, religiou-
-sly checkin-
-g out.

DEVELOPING

“Darkroom work ... never interested me
except as a means to an end; the place
I wanted to be was outside in the light.”

—Robert Adams

From the shadow-
-s of the Mass, I, e-
-ach week, with a, o-
-f my faith, clearer
picture, can't w-
-ait to eme-
-rge.

FAITH MAKES STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

As to why others say it is not the case with them, I haven't got a clue, but anytime Malcom X and Cardinal Newman, are, in me, in the same room, they, instead of any trouble causing, famously, get along.

ALL OR NOTHING

If they, instead o-
-f Yes or No, Mayb-
-e, say, I, the, fro-
-m my feet, dirt
shake, and, th-
-eir fates, lea-
-ve them to.

TRUE HUMILITY

Superior to most;
inferior to none;
a few, my equals.

LINES WRITTEN ON THE FEAST DAY
OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

While o-
-thers, thei-
-r pets,

I, m-
-y anima-
-l spirits,

bring forwa-
-rd to be b-
-lessed.

LIKE CLOCKWORK

Every year, on E-
-aster Sunday, th-
-at, which, the, to
the church, exit, b-
-locks, rock, Christ,
without fail, rolls a-
-way, and, once ag-
-ain, the darkness
I am praying in, a-
-bruptly interr-
-upts.

TOWARDS A NEW PIETY, VI

Not what Christ teaches,
but releases in me,
I put my faith in.

DEAL BREAKER, IV

Any god who's never
experienced betrayal,
is no friend of mine.

CUR ME?

Beca-
-use,

like C-
-hrist for all mankind,

Bond for king a-
-nd country,

I'm the o-
-nly one

who, the job,
can do.

EVEN MORE LINES
INSPIRED BY STEPHEN CRANE

A priest
shook my hand,
and said to me,
“Welcome to the Church”,
and I replied to him,
“Not a member of the Church, but a,
for whom, all the ones, past and present,
that there have ever been, God, gla-
-dly would trade, man of faith, I am.”

THEOTIC TRIAD

While others act like God,
I'm, the godman in me, my,
for playing, motivation, finding.

“Who do you think you are, God?”

“No, just godlike.”

Give me a break:
I'm just a godman who's,
the best he can, doing.

MISSA, V

Not a god nailed to a cross, but that first f-rom, in “Close Enco-unters”, the mother ship, alien to emerge, or better yet, that “c-hi” Plato said anim-ates the universe, he, to me, looks like, and after, on and off, du-ring Mass, looking at him up there, that other “ch’i”, someti-mes, between the “h” and the “i”, spelled with an apostrophe, Confucius says, of f-orce in us, is the sou-rce, when I leave, I’m leaving with inside of me.

NOT AT ALL, BECAUSE,

if it wasn't for those
-e existential elements
-nts that, to this act
of faith, led me, I, just
-ust another, God
help me, Catholic,
-c, would be.

JUST SO IT'S CLEAR,

not celibate,
but sexually self-possessed,
I have vowed to be.

IN A BULLISH MOOD

Not the s-
-acred he-
-art,

but b-
-rain of Je-
-sus, I'm,

e-
-very hum-
-an being

conse-
-crating t-
-o.

SURSUM

While others,
for forgivenes-
-s, still are aski-
-ng, I'm, trans-
-cendence, ba-
-sking in.

TOWARDS A NEW PIETY, III

By, and not
that candle which,

to me, no saint
can hold, my

own lights,
I go.

NUNC ET HIC

If, for only
in the next
life, I, in Ch-
-rist, have h-
-ope, then, o-
-f all men, I,
the most m-
-iserable,
am.

MISSA, XXIV

So I, when I'm, durin-
-g Mass, with (but no-
-t communion) hymn-
-s and sermons, gettin-
-g bored, asleep, don't
fall, I, in Notre Dame, i-
-magine that I am, and,
with the, and the perce-
-ptiveness of Baudela-
-ire, humanity of Chris-
-t, the streets of Paris,
will be, afterwards,
strolling home
through.

DUENDE

Because I know h-
-e isn't evil, I am n-
-ot, unlike Macha-
-do, frightened of m-
-y inner devil, and,
so him, I gladly foll-
-ow, and trusting he
won't steer me wron-
-g, let him lead me to
those beasts that, w-
-hen released, mak-
-e me as strong as
hosts that I recei-
-ve from priests.

POLITESSE

“I agreed to meet with you
because I had been told
you are a man of honor,
but I, to your proposal,
must say no,
and I
shall give to you
my reasons why:
up to now,
my faith,
without
the examples of
the martyrs and the saints,
has been doing
more than fine,
and so,
is,
not only not
in need of them,
but, in my judgement,
without them, better off;
so, once again, I
my gratitude,
express to you
for the generosity
of your offer,
and, provided that it does not,
with mine, conflict,
wish you, in the
practice of
your piety,
well.”

MAGNUM NON-VERBAL

Like Chris-
-t befor-
-e Pilate,

McQ-
-ueen in his b-
-est scenes,

I let m-
-y si-
-lence do

the tal-
-kin-
-g for me.

CENTRAL CASTING

For the, in
my life, le-

-ading rol-
-e, God, f-

-rom the s-
-tart, neve-

-r, anybod-
-y but mys-

-elf, ever h-
-ad in mind.

SOLOVYOV

What Sophia was to him, Savoir Faire is to me.

DISCERNING

The sec-
-ond, on
them, I,

lay my
eyes,
I,

harmless,
friend, or
foe,

in my
heart,
know.

TOWARDS A NEW PIETY, II

Hail Paul,
full of grace,
God is with you.
Blessed are you
among all men,
and so is the fruit
of your mind.

Holy Paul,
Apostle to all,
pray that I,
this calling I,
and only I,
am called to,
will, while I'm very much alive,
realize.

DEAL BREAKER, VIII

Any god who's never
experienced rejection,
is no friend of mine.

UNUM NECESSARIUM

While the pries-
-t is preaching, I,
those lines Mach-
-ado wrote declar-
-ing all Christ said,
can, in one word, b-
-e summed up, but t-
-hat that one isn't l-
-ove, nor charity, n-
-or forgiveness, bu-
-t is truth, over an-
-d over, am, to m-
-yself, reciting.

ON WHY I DO NOT GO
TO GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES

Only those
already dea-
-d attend a f-
-uneral for one
who never wo-
-uld, dead or a-
-live, have le-
-t himself be
caught at o-
-ne.

TOWARDS A NEW PIETY, VII

Through me,
with me,
and in me,
all glory and
honor, after
a manner, is
mine forever.

PROCESS PIETY

For what
they are as-
-suming

that I
have for-
-gotten,

I'm, as if it has
just hap-
-pened,

still
forgiv-
-ing them.

DISCERNING, X

As Jeru-
-salem
to Jesus,

to Mitchell,
Pe-
-arl Harbor,

what oth-
-ers nev-
-er see

com-
-ing, is to
me.

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS,
EASTER SUNDAY, 2014

Do you,
anyone,
no matter who
they are, who,
with what you're
called to do,
attempts to interfere, reject?

I do.

Do you, so
this destiny unique to you,
you, to pursue,
are free,
accept that Christ,
once and for all,
the price, has paid?

I do.

And do you,
if you, in good faith,
act on this,
believe the Holy Spirit,
through forces,
both seen and unseen, will,
to your assistance, come?

I do.

Then go with God.

So be it.

MAYBE IN YOUR THEOLOGY,
THEY DON'T, BUT IN MINE,

immaculate conceptions,
and virgins giving birth, to
what, on the road to Damascus, happened,
take a back seat.

SAVOIR VIVRE, XXXIV

Like James Bond and Christ,
I,

from my enemies, some
times

decide that
for now, it i-

-s best t-
-o hide.

SINCE FAITH CAN MOVE
A MOUNTAIN, I,

unlike Mohammed,
until, and, while do-

-ing so, for, for so l-
-ong, having to, it,

for forgiveness, is,
on its knees, beg-

-ging me, instead
of, to it, go, will, f-

-or it to come to m-
-e, wait.

SECOND NATURE

I've,

and ri-
-sen,

died,

a-
-nd died and
risen,

then di-
-ed again

and r-
-isen again so m-
-any times, that
I,

with one eye
closed,

can,

a-
-t the same
time,

now
do both.

SINGLE ENTRY

No debits,
nor confe-
-ssions,

just communi-
-ons, and m-
-y destiny,

an er-
-ror free rec-
-ord of

my pi-
-et-
-y

keeps.

STRUCTURAL

When I,
from my
faith,

the orna-
-ments, re-
-move,

I see how
it st-
-ands.

THE ORDER OF CHARITY

Not as, but through, this self
of mine Aquinas said it's
nly right and natural, more than
an I do that neighbor who, if I'm,
as Jesus said, to love as much
as I love it, I first must learn
to love, to love, I, my neighbor
love.

THROUGH A GLASS ...

“There is no human being on earth capable of declaring with certitude who he is.”

—Leon Bloy

Even clearer than
-n that face which I,
when I'm, until, as smooth
-mooth as I can get it,
-t, it, to the touch, is,
shaving, in the mirror,
-or, looking at, I'm,
who, and what, I-
-’m called to, and
-d do, be, seeing.

TOILING NOT

As,
while on,

and himself,
cue cards,

just relying,
through his show,

Dino, I,
would watch going,

more and more,
without rehearsing,

smoothly as,
I am growing.

TOWARDS A NEW PIETY, V

Un-
-like Aquin-
-as, sex,

and fi-
-nance that is
high,

enthus-
-iast-
-ic, I

am down-
-right, a-
-bout.

URBAN

As Jesus did on water,
I walk on city sidewalks
made of cured cement.

WITH A CERTAIN FEROCITY

Be-
-tween be-
-ing demon-
driven,

and
the angels
guided
by,

from, what is
coming
to me, get-
-ting,

there is n-
-othing sto-
-pp-
-ing me.

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“Whimsical, thought-provoking, deftly crafted, *This Is Me, Not Robert Creeley, Speaking* clearly showcases Paul Bussan’s genuine flair for deftly crafted, succinct, and memorable free verse. This brief compendium of his work is very highly recommended for personal reading lists.”

—*The Midwest Book Review*, June, 2017

Paul Bussan is the author of two previous books of poetry, *A Rage Of Intelligence* and *This Is Me, Not Robert Creeley, Speaking*. For more information go to: www.amazon.com/author/paulbussan.

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