

for gimmickry but a loving zeal for God which must reach out to Him in some manner more sustaining than our present cerebral liturgy. There is no reason why we should fear such physical manifestations of our faith as the Holy Spirit wills to be released for He will not fail to ensure that our need (and His) for dignity and order will also be met.

Yet I felt that something—someone—was still lacking to set free in us the power of re-creation. It is Our Lady. For apart from a token acknowledgement at the bidding prayers, she is hardly mentioned in public today. Can we really come alive in the body or resolve the conflict between male and female which underlies the unisex façade until the Mother of God is restored to her proper place as the perfect creature in the wider concentric activities of devotional practice? Ronald Knox spoke of her as ‘Touchstone of Truth in the ages of controversy’ and the great pioneers of renewal—St Dominic, Newman, Don Orione and countless others—have always taken her as their model and leader, for it is primarily by following the pattern of her response to God’s demands that we shall grow nearer to the Heart of Christ. The development of physical expression in the Mass must surely proceed wisely and well if we commit it and ourselves to Mary’s care. For she gave herself in perfect integrity that God’s Word might be made flesh for us.

# **A View of the Resurrection**

## **by Michael Sharkey**

It was in the future days—I know time tells strange tales—that the idea first came to me. We had discovered long before how to transmit objects by dematerialising them in one place, translating them into the basic energy of their matter, and directing this energy to another place for rematerialisation. You will appreciate that this in itself had given rise to some pretty wild theories about the Resurrection of Christ. However, in working out how to apply this principle across galactic distances, we accidentally discovered a way of tracking the light of past events. As you know, you see a thing when light is reflected from it to your eye. That light never dies but hurtles away, out through space, at the speed of 186,000 miles per second. Somehow, one of our team was able to draw up the formula for finding and reconvening the light of past events, and for showing us these events on the face of our computer.

To put it crudely, this involved a leap ahead of the light, by a short-cut method, encountering the light and bringing its information back, by short-cut, almost instantaneously to our computer which translated it into vision on its face. A few seconds was all the computer needed to intercept and interpret events of thousands of light-years' distance.

Even though we could do this with light only, and not with sound, an extraordinary amount of excitement was generated, and many people used the machine to witness once more the happy events of their childhood, etc. On the whole, though, this shattered too many illusions, and it hurt and embarrassed some very nice people indeed. More caution was used.

The technique developed, and we were able, so to speak, by reaching into outer space with more and more accuracy, to delve further and further into the past. You would laugh if I told you what Cleopatra's nose really looked like. And you would cry at times if you were to compare our history books with what we have viewed on the screen of our invention. Inevitably, restrictions were placed on the use of the machine, and the number of people allowed access to it was strictly regulated.

But to explain my idea: I suggested that we focus our machine on the light from that point of the planet Earth which is known as the city of Jerusalem, and at the time of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. I did not mind which particular part of the Resurrection event we chose: we would not be able, of course, to see what happened inside the tomb as no light from within would have been deflected into space while the stone covered the entrance; but the meeting with Mary Magdalene in the garden, with the disciples on the road to Emmaus, with the apostles at the lake shore, and even with the apostles in the upper room, provided there had been a window to let the light out, and provided we could find and focus on that light to see into that window.

My idea met with approval, and though I was allowed to make it known to everyone, the number of witnesses was to be strictly limited, and they were to be drawn only from the authorised schools of theology throughout the universe.

At last the witnesses were chosen, and the invitations sent out. I must admit that the initial reaction came as a bit of a shock to me. Several professors spontaneously erupted, and their anger pierced every nook and cranny of the inhabited universe; and men began to feel afraid and to think that the end of the world had come. How dare we, said these professors; how dare we put the Lord, our God, to the test! How sacrilegious, vain, despicable, warped, etc., etc. . . . as you can imagine. I am sure that if they had known that it was me they were shouting about they would not have been quite so volatile, but no doubt their basic opinion would have been the same. The

storm blew for a long time, but it did not worry nor unduly concern me.

I was more hurt, however, by another reply. A distinguished professor of theology said that he would not accept our invitation because whatever might be portrayed on our screen would be utterly irrelevant to the Church and to theology. As a man of science, I was astonished to think that there were still men who would not go by the facts, and who would not attend to evidence.

Anyway, we did have our audience, smaller than we had hoped for, but nevertheless prestigious. We assembled them in a large room, and when they had drunk their sherry, said their prayer and were comfortably seated, I started to remind them of the scientific principles involved in our process.

I had not gone very far when I was rather rudely interrupted by a leading Biblical scholar who claimed he could not see properly as there were Systematic theologians in front of him, and he insisted, with a rather rigid logic, that exegesis should have the front row, and that theology should move back a bit. To humour him, we all agreed and places were exchanged. The only other interruption during my talk came as the result of the behaviour of a young genius—he was already a full professor—who kept pinching my young lady assistant's bottom. Fortunately, my senior colleague was able with his customary wisdom and gentleness to put them both at peace. I would not hesitate to say that he, an agnostic, seems to know more about genuine goodness than most professed Christians.

It was this colleague, in fact who controlled SNAP, our highly sophisticated light-intercepting machine. When I had finished my talk, he fed the references to time and space into the computer, and the machine began to scan the depths of space, and pull together the data of the still-scattering sprays of light.

Jerusalem in darkness. It was a sight that filled our expert audience with forboding. A touch of a button, and we scanned the silent city from above, then we drew near to the tombs at the edge of Calvary. But, no soldiers, no Christ, no disciple came before our eyes. After long watching, we did glimpse a man shuffling in the shadows, but when we beamed in close on him, a cry of horror rose from all. None of us had ever seen a leper before. We panned quickly away.

Dawn brought life, and the city began to stir and cough. We watched on, spellbound, and made the occasional adjustment so that the face of the computer might flit from place to place in the hope of settling on something significant.

We found the window of the upper room! A great thrill ran through the bloodstream of our audience. We focused as closely as we could, and by mild alterations of control we could see into the room at every angle, and we could see quite clearly the dissolute apostles, the locked door, the empty wine-skins, and the untidy table.

I will tell you honestly that there was no pleasure for me in watching that wretchedness, that fear, that dry, deep, utter desolation, but that is what we saw.

How can words describe what happened next. No one entered, yet another person was there, standing in their midst. I can only say that at one moment he was not there, and the next he was. He had holes in his hands and his feet, and scratches on his forehead, yet they were not ugly, but were taken up and involved in the very glory that shone from him. Terror and confusion struck his friends, but he reached out to them one by one, and touching them gently by way of greeting, he made them feel at home with him.

I think that it is true to say that terror and confusion also struck our audience. The reaction was electric.

One learned woman stood on her seat, shouting, 'Vindication, vindication, I told you so, my Church was always right'.

An elderly, cautious gentleman kept asking if he might see the sequence again, and he got into a polite disagreement with an old friend of his as to whether they should see that particular sequence again first, or try to track the whole event from the crucifixion to the ascension, or whatever it was that happened.

One fellow grinned at me, and waving the notebook on which he had been writing furiously, he called out, 'When I publish this, they'll take notice. Just you wait and see. It will be a best seller; and there can be no doubt that I shall be asked to move to more important universities'.

Another man stormed out. I don't know why.

And another walked right to the front of the assembly and told us all that we were the victims of a mass hallucination, and that he, in fact, had seen nothing, so there was no need to worry. What is more, he seemed to believe what he was saying.

The upper room was still portrayed on the face of our computer, and the incident played on, uninterrupted by our antics. But it was without sound, and the noise of the theologians was such that I thought it a good idea to turn the machine off for a while. I turned to ask my colleague to do this, and as my eyes found him, I caught my breath. In humble acceptance of what he now saw to be the truth he was on his knees. He was the only one to be so.

The theologians raved on in highly-learned disarray, and the name of them all was Legion.