

Towards the end of his life, Walker Percy, disappointed with the run-of-the-mill interviews he had to endure on a regular basis, decided to publish a self-interview under the title, "Questions They Never Asked Me". It begins: "Q: What kind of Catholic are you?" "A: Bad."

Percy's comic irony was typically nestled within the easy-going manner characteristic of the American Deep South. He could conjure apocalyptic visions of technological disaster and social

To mark our anniversary, we have invited 50 Catholics to choose a person from the past 175 years whose life has been a personal inspiration to them and an example of their faith at its best

breakdown while sipping a good bourbon on his porch.

Percy is often mentioned in the same breath as his fellow Catholic writer, Southern novelist Flannery O'Connor, though he has to some extent suffered the fate of living in her shadow. Both were outsiders in the Protestant South, both were voracious readers of philosophy who had a knack for taking abstract ideas and clothing them in compelling characters.

But the differences between them were also vast. Whereas O'Connor wrote about the back-

woods, Percy saw himself as the chronicler of the shopping malls and golf courses of the New South. O'Connor's muse was Thomas Aquinas; Percy's was Søren Kierkegaard. O'Connor had her aesthetic feet firmly planted in Modernism; Percy was both a practitioner and an acute observer of all things postmodern.

O'Connor once said that ours was "an age that has domesticated despair and learned to live with it happily", but it was Percy's gift to actually trace our contemporary distractions – from moviegoing

to sexual liberation – in a series of satirical novels and non-fiction books, including the hilarious *Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book*.

Percy believed there was hope for the lost. As his protagonist from *The Moviegoer* puts it: "The search is what anyone would undertake if he were not sunk in the everydayness of his own life. To become aware of the possibility of the search is to be on to something. Not to be on to something is to be in despair."

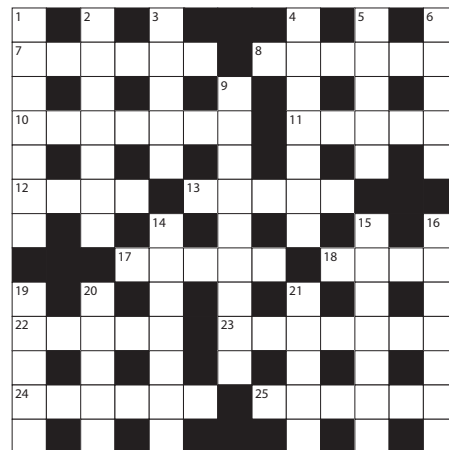
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PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 465 | Alanus

Across

- 7 Aims to reform before mother in unwholesome atmosphere (6)
- 8 Reverse audio-visual in fast time for part of Holy Land (6)
- 10 In state of improved knowledge if included in deed I rewrote (7)
- 11 "Praying hands" artist upset rude king (5)
- 12 Phoenician port where Paul landed giving name to motor part? (4)
- 13 Order foundress evoking name of county? (5)
- 17 Social conduct rules taken from chancellor martyr's example? (5)
- 18 Young fish survived marriage to Henry VIII! (4)
- 22 End letter of Christ's own self-proclamation of his nature (5)
- 23 Plant seeds about new home one way or another (7)
- 24 Inside relic her ubiquitous little angel! (6)
- 25 Born again after cardinal address in city of Judah (6)



Down

- 1 New end of prayer preceding filthy place getting general pardon (7)
- 2 Disraeli losing his head troubled composer (7)
- 3 Lie back with mother inside to send message! (5)
- 4 After drink illustrator Gustave proclaims eucharistic hymn (2,5)
- 5 Infant I found in shed (5)
- 6 & 16 Attack on monks' traditional craft means trouble ahead (5,8)

SUDOKU | Beginner

		6	4	3	8			
	5						2	
4								7
	3	7		4		5	9	
			3		1			
	6	2		8		7	3	
5								2
	2						4	
		4	6		2	1		

- 9 Swede lies about flower song (9)
- 14 Star being alternative suggestion going back to reveal ninth-century pope (7)
- 15 Sieneese saint briefly by Vianney town to reveal mediaeval heretics (7)
- 16 See 6 Down
- 19 English composer an Anglican lad ending up Anglican (5)
- 20 Transfiguration witness not giving name to king of England (5)
- 21 Remnant in a dying fire for special days of fasting (5)

Please send your answers to:

Crossword Competition 20 June

The Tablet, 1 King Street Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W6 0GY.

Please include your full name, telephone number and email address, and a mailing address. A copy of the hardback *Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus* (second edition, RRP £30) will go to the sender of the first correct entry drawn at random on Friday 3 July.

● The answers to this week's puzzles and the crossword winner's name will appear in the 11 July issue.

Solution to the 30 May crossword No. 462

Across: 7 Sligo; 8 Una Voce; 10 Penance; 11 Tarot; 12 Abstinence; 16 Anarchists; 20 Motif; 21 Cantata; 23 Damasus; 24 Vetus.

Down: 1 Asaph; 2 Diana; 3 Joan; 4 Hubert; 5 Martinet; 6 Goering; 9 Esther; 13 Buckfast; 14 Talmud; 15 Wartime; 17 Incest; 18 Dante; 19 Faust; 22 Nave.

Winner: Ena Hollan, Bawtry, Doncaster.

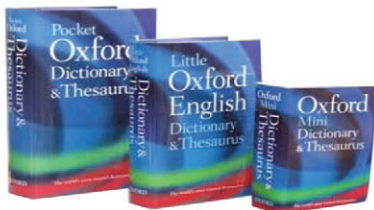
9	8	3	6	1	4	5	2	7
1	5	6	8	7	2	3	4	9
7	4	2	9	3	5	8	1	6
8	6	4	2	9	1	7	5	3
2	7	5	3	6	8	4	9	1
3	9	1	4	5	7	6	8	2
4	1	7	5	2	6	9	3	8
5	2	9	7	8	3	1	6	4
6	3	8	1	4	9	2	7	5

Each 3 x 3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9.

Solution to the 30 May puzzle

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