W. A. L. Elmslie, in his *How Came Our Faith* first published by the Cambridge University Press in 1948 says that “civilisation stands hesitant” to decide “what should be, our religious Faith and moral Ideals?” President Kennedy addressing the American Congress felt the irony of our time that the harsh and repressive communistic system should be able to instill discipline and ardor in its servants—while the blessings of liberty have too often stood for privilege, materialism and a life of ease. Jesus Christ confronts all men—communists and non-communists alike—saying that one is known by his fruits. Such faith comes from eight great men who go back to the first principles of God and Man. Their convictions of God and His righteousness take to ultimate values as pointed out by S. A. Cook in *The Truth of the Bible*. These eight men were called ‘Nabbi’ (pronounced ‘Navee’) meaning ‘prophets’ —Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah and a
Poet-Prophet of the sixth or fifth century B.C. whose name is unknown and whose utterances are recorded in the latter part of the Book of Isaiah. Their religion is known as 'The Prophetic Religion' which led to the moral monotheism of Judaism and the moral-spiritual demands of Jesus Christ, the neglect of which has "be-fogged religion". "The chequered history of the Christian Church is proof enough". All Christian belief derives from "the creative fact: Jesus Christ". Christian belief is not tossed to and fro by every breath of developing new knowledge. It concerns the unalterable experiences of Man's spirit. 'Virtue-and-Vice' is not a haphazard game without rules, in which one opinion is as good as another. They could discriminate between the Right and the Wrong. The Bible is unsparingly honest about human nature: but the best humans "faced the stress of life in the strength of the one principle—God and His righteousness". For the prophets morality and religion were the same. But observing these twenty centuries one feels like asking "How came it to pass that the Church so often, and to so lamentable an extent, has been shockingly unlike its Master?". "Did the Christian forefathers make some tragic mistake concerning the statement or presentation of the Faith?" "But in the lands of historic Christendom only a small fraction of the population profess membership in the several Christian Churches. The masses are repelled by, or indifferent to, the traditional manner of presenting Christian doctrine." "Do we exclude Jesus Himself from our heart and mind? No, really we wish to go 'Back to Christ' as if to forget Christian history. When the scriptures call upon God as Father, there is a religious philosophy involved: it is an excellent way of affirming that ultimate Reality: 'Divine Personality', not an impersonal First cause. In Christ was the full and final
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revelation of Truth: Seeing that knowledge is progressive, in what sense can a single life, lived at one point in time present final Truth? His is not a static attitude to life and knowledge, but a dynamic vitalizing belief. Advancing scientific discoveries could not destroy the Bible’s “inerrancy” based on a “spiritual view of life”. The Bible does not exhibit systematic theology: its grand characters lived and experienced the vicissitudes of history. For them, every trial was an opportunity, and every opportunity spelt responsibility. Though the Son of Man created and strengthened the faith of people through his miracles his followers both inside and outside the Bible live a life that is totally non-miraculous, simple facticity. Their lives are not theological but biological but dominated by spirituality. They have all lived developing in the vicissitudes of history.

The Roman Church’s theological positions have not been subjected to unbiased critical revaluation or assessment for the last 2000 years. But for some minor ripples of reformatory zealots, the Church has unfortunately had a chequered history of total self-satisfaction.

It gloated in its autonomy, believing only in self-evaluation and believing in destroying all external evaluation whenever possible and ignoring external evaluation whenever it was by stronger enemies. One can prove it by the total stoppage of ‘burning at the stake’ after governments became non-religious, political forces with whom the Church could no longer prevail. The first major jolt to it came from Martin Luther but his weapon was, luckily for the Roman Church, religious. The first non-religious philosophical attack came from Carl Marx: But ironically, it (Marxism) too resembles an established religion, particularly the Roman Catholic religion. Marxism has its sacred
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books, it had its prophets, its sects and schisms and excommunications and persecutions along with even its own inquisitions; therefore it had its martyrs too and “most important of all in moral terms” says Bryan Magee in his T. V. discussions with Charles Taylor on the B. B. C. published by B. B. C. in 1978, “its millions of slaughtered heretics”. “Even the spread of it” he says has been like the spreading of a religion, like Christianity. “Marxism is so obviously related to the Messianic tradition” in its “worst dimension of an imposed orthodoxy” says Charles Taylor in the dialogue. But with one difference, it has been constantly revalued and re-assessed to produce the African socialism and the Arab Socialism and it was severely re-examined by Herbert Marcuse through The Frankfort School.

The next jolt came to Catholicism when Martin Heidegger, a Roman Catholic and an ex-seminarian, grew into a ‘godless’ existentialist whose “godlessness is closer to god than philosophical Theism”. Like Kant, he felt that the way to God, as in Greene, is not through rational arguments or proofs. His is not atheism or theism but a thinking towards a new way of being religious.

Then under the chairmanship of Moritz Schlick the Logical Positivists of the Vienna Circle condemned all theology and any notion of there being a transcendent God, biased by their struggle with an Austrian clerical group. Using the verification principle they demolished all metaphysics. Historians of philosophy have all noticed that since the seventeenth century there has been an almost spectacular decline in the prevalence of religious belief, especially in the West and more especially among the educated people: In the minds of millions of people a world view predominantly based on religion
has been replaced by a world view based on science. People started thinking about everything, including, thinking about thinking. Thinking became the central ‘act’ of human existence though an ‘act’ of the mind, internal ‘act’. ‘Truth’ got a new look: before, ‘truth’ was static, concrete, external and objective and unchanging. Kant changed everything: before him, no philosopher doubted that ‘truth’ was correspondence to reality or ‘agreement’ with reality. Reality had an objective existence, and on an objective existence at that. The image was of knowledge as a mirror bearing a copy. But Kant changed all that: he insisted on the co-creativity of man’s mind; the contribution of the thinking mind. The coalescence of the object and the subject, made so much of by the younger romantics; especially by the philosopher-preacher-poet-critic S. T. Coleridge. ‘Truth’ is not all fiction, imagined or created by our mind; neither is it just a copy. It is what there is plus what the thinker makes of it. Einstein came to a similar view—that there is a human contribution, a conceptual contribution, to what we call ‘truth’. Our transaction with the world is not simple perception, a just looking at—it involves interpreting. We half-create what we perceive. Even science, for this reason, was corrigible. Certainty and absolutism are claimed by only some of the religious; scientists totally deny both.

This human contribution is possible only for the elite; it is not possible for all. Most obey orders without reflection because obeying without speculation is easier for the average human being. Such a situation arises not only out of brain-laziness. Though man is called a thinking animal, he very often hesitates to think. But, more than brain-laziness, there are risks involved in thinking when one’s thinking counters the prevailing thoughts of the ruler
and the time and the place. Thinking counter to the prevailing thoughts has resulted in the thinkers being shot, burnt or hanged or getting eliminated in other less obtrusive ways by Idi Amins, Hitlers and Mussolinis and the Church. Therefore fear complex adds to the toll of brain - laziness. History is too full of examples for this.

When one is involved in some kind of dilemma, it is natural for one to shift responsibility from one’s own to some boarder back—state, or Church, or class or some other association to which you claim allegiance—perhaps merely to the general moral code of ordinary, decent people. But these are men who are in visible or invisible uniform. There are some, only some who are ready and bold enough to think the problem through.

In Plato, Socrates declares that an unexamined life is not worth living. But if all begin to examine all presuppositions, none would be able to act at all. But if none is skeptical all our beliefs will get fossilized, truths will degenerate into dogmas. Therefore at proper intervals, proper individuals should indulge in such re-examination on behalf of the society for the welfare of that same society. Jesus Christ did it; Martin Luther also did the same. Gautham Buddha did the same. Trotsky did it outside religion. Scientists do it when they discover something new. They all had the courage to face ostracism and excommunication. This becomes a timely requirement even in open societies; much more so in closed ones like the Roman Catholic Church where all the official theologians are priests who have pledged their faith not to disagree with the official line of thinking. Even the Devil’s Advocate is appointed only by the Church. They can say nothing new on peril of the inquisition.
William Burroughs said "There's no such thing as a great Buddhist novel". Quoting Burroughs, Maxine Hong Kingston notices Akira Kurosawa trying to make a great Buddhist movie *Kagemusha*, which was about, sitting still, as a war strategy. Pauline Kael said that it was impossible even for Kurosawa to make "a good movie about not moving". Maxine Hong Kingston in one of her articles "The Novel's Next Step: From the Novel of the Americas to the Global Novel" that the novel has to forget territories, it has to cross international borders, transcend time barriers and has got to achieve global dimensions and create the new humane being". Carlos Fuentes in his article entitled 'Latin America and the Universality of the Novel' reports to have heard the buzzing words in 1950s that "The novel is dead", killed by the modern means of instant communication, radio and TV. Even if the novel is not dead, the 'old novel' at least is dead.

The Dickensian novel, aiming to reform the society, is no more. Many novels written in Latin America to save the miners or the peasants saved neither them nor literature. Every writer names the world; but naming is not sufficient unto the day. He has also to discover the times. Religion is a negative force; though Tolstoi insisted on "the religious sense" as central to any novel he does not want any 'fossilized' religion. Novel is a Protestant art form: if a great Buddhist novel is impossible, a great Catholic novel too is equally impossible.

But no one can deny that religions and Marxism have proved that philosophical ideas can and do have a direct practical influence on human beings; therefore ideas cannot remain mere academic concerns and remain unconnected with real life. Religion is not merely a private affair; it affects the
public life and political governments and do not remain insular influences only on the spiritual affairs of man’s life. Religions define man’s relation to god and thereby directly affect man’s relation to man and other men. Aristotle preferred a biological model of development and fulfillment. The stoics used physical analogies. But the Judaeo Christian tradition uses the notion of Kinship—of the family: of the relation of a father to his children, and theirs to him and to each other—to explain the relation of God to man and of man to man: Even the prodigal is a son, God is a bridegroom but in the hierarchical family, the father and husband are at the top, sons and women, on lower rungs of the social ladder. Graham Greene jokes about Abraham ready to kill his own son but another “worse ‘scoundrel’ actually killed his only son on the Cross. Greene perhaps is the only novelist to crack such a devastating joke on God. In the seventeenth century England society was knit on legal model—social contract became the base of social bond—on a more egalitarian, lateral placement of social groups—the familial losing all significance.

In this context, it is good to remember the immodest but logical observation of Milan Kundera—about god, Son of God and on the Genesis. If God was almighty, the almighty Stalin was God and his son, son of God. He distinguishes between physical death and metaphysical death. If god had a mouth, He had to eat; and if He ate, he had intestines.

In the second century, the great Gnostic master Valentinus claimed that Jesus “ate and drank but did not defecate”. Thereby making shit a greater theological problem than Evil. In the fourth century, Saint Jerome completely rejected the notion that Adam and Eve had sexual intercourse in
paradise. While Johanes Scotus Erigena, the great ninth century theologian, accepted the idea, he believed that Adam's virile member could be made to rise like an arm or leg as its owner wished. And therefore sexual intercourse could have existed but not sexual excitement. The first chapter of Genesis tells us that the creation of the world was good which implies a "categorical agreement with being". Simultaneously it discounts shit, excitement and such aesthetic ideal is called by Milan Kundera: Kitsch. Kitsch is a German word, Milan Kundera tells us immediately that "Kitsch excludes everything from its preview, which is essentially unacceptable in human existence." W. J. Cash in his Mind of the South, published in 1941, says that from the pulpit of the South American colonies the word went forth that infidelity and a new paganism masking under the name of science were sweeping the world. From pulpit and hustings ran the dark suggestion that the god of the Yankee was not God at all but antichrist loosed at last from the pit. The coming war would be no mere secular contest but Armageddon". What one calls God, is Antichrist for another.

But Catholics—they cannot say anything new; and thereby they cannot produce literature. Any Catholic writing a novel can only be one more Catholic repeating the same stories, as a result, such a novel is pre-doomed. Goldwin Smith writes, in The Canadian Novelists and the Novels edited by Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman published by Borealis Press, Ottawa, Canada, 1981, despairingly of "religious zealots" who use the novel as a means of enlisting imagination, as they think, on the side of 'truth'. Sara Jeannette Duncan notes the pervasiveness of novels with "theological aims to serve" in the British fiction of 1880s. They grow as tiresome as the propa-
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ganda novels from the Marxist USSR press. Only a few escape such boredom and that when they trespass their official ideology and cater to the basic human hungers and urges. Such is the Greenean tetralogy we are analysing now. They are Catholic in both the senses of the word; and therefore they appeal to all categories of readers. Their religious sense is nothing but the human sense that we find in the non-religions, secular novels. In a sense, they do Catholicise the Roman Church. So much so that Greene canonizes the whisky priest without waiting for the sanction of the Church, in such a psycho-spiritual manner that even the Pope tolerated it. Canonization is the sole prerogative of the Church only and the Reformed Churches put a moratorium on it, though the Roman Church is continuing it till today.

Broad social organizations act porously and never do they act rigidly. Law allows criminals to escape, society overlooks immoral people, if they are otherwise useful to the society. In all the societies some kind of commandments, though more or less than Ten are recognized but they get violated equally universally. Rigid societies become unstable and crumble. One cannot put the whole country in uniform! This flexibility humanizes society as rigidity definitely cannot.

Greene paints such healthy deviations of human samples in the four novels under the present study. Such escapees people the present tetralogy under our investigation—Greene's four Catholic novels. These four novels have not been studied as making one bunch, so far. The present study groups them as one tetralogy and uses them to study the evolution of the Greenean Catholic consciousness. It all starts very mildly in Brighton Rock and soars into the communist skies of Mexico in The Power and the Glory and penetrates
into the heart-shaped African continent and crashes into the land of the Don. What starts as a mild discontent climaxes as a protest. This is what the tetralogy reveals of Greene. But what is more revelatory is that the tetralogy marks the end of Greene's creative life; the autumnal *Monsignor Quixote* puts an end to Greene's writing career as though he had nothing more to say. Not only, the Monsignor but also his creator is exhausted. All the rules of the Roman Church stand trespassed but the stand of the Church stands. Stand it should, for all the Roman Catholics cannot be Greene-like or Monsignor-like. The Monsignor and Greene, both are in the minority, the majority of Catholics throw the responsibility on the broad shoulders of the Church as an institution.

Greene carries the responsibility fully on his own shoulders because his speculations have broadened them enough to carry that responsibility and lets the Church perform its rituals.

This is to a large extent the existentialist's responsibility and like existentialism it dignifies the human prerogative to be responsible to others, to one's own actions and the Greenean hero is doing just that: Rose is responsible for Pinkie even to the extent of renouncing her own salvation. This is in his First Catholic novel. His last Catholic novel *Monsignor Quixote* recreates the same situations when an unarmed Moore tries to rape an armed maiden who avoids killing to facilitate the Moore's salvation rather than safeguard her own virginity. The whisky priest climbs the ladders to sanctity when he is bereft of the Papal, Episcopal controls and is responsible for himself and moves about the communist state stealthily, evading the lieutenant. Scobie bites a bit too much of his share of responsibility for more than one woman.
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and breaks down under its weight. He too rises to lay sainthood because he
loves the girlish neighbour thrown to him by god. The Monsignor’s protests
cannot be faulted, for here in the Mexican context the Church is shown to
have failed in its salvific responsibility and earns the deserts of a private
reform.

In all these four novels of this grand Catholic, Greenean tetralogy the life-
giving undercurrent is that the Church takes the back seat; four individuals
of both sexes, lay and clerical take the driver’s seat.

Thus, Greene perhaps becomes the most popular novelist of modern times
whose novels have captured the imagination of their readers in spite of their
being content oriented. He is not a master technician but tells us gripping
human tales: he is not religious but psycho-spiritual. If Shaw could be po-
litical in his Saint Joan and T. S. Eliot spiritual in Murder in the Cathedral
having chosen two saints as their heroine and hero Greene succeeds in being
psycho-spiritual making his tales moving human documents that can grip the
attention of even non- and anti-Catholics. The four novels clearly fall into a
pattern, the first bearing a place name, the second reminding us of god, the
third dragging us into the heart of the problem and the fourth reaching out
to an individual. The movement is clearly towards individualism, which is
an abhorrence to the Roman Catholic Church. Religious titles and religious
themes keep the readers away. David Chisholme in his review of Julia Cather-
ine Hart’s St. Ursula’s Convent (1824), a Canadian novel with the sub-title
Scenes from Real Life says that the novel’s only claim to be recognized is
its being the first novel by a Canadian-born writer. But Greene’s novels, his
Catholic novels in the tetralogy never suffer from this angle because they are
moving human tales of men and women who only happen to be Catholics.

We need not go over again to the circumstances of his conversion; we have said enough of its superficiality. There is no doubt about its causality, either. All the books that maximum influenced Greene—he mentions them in *The Lost Childhood*—were mostly secular and not at all religious; but they share one thing in common with the sacred books: the ecstasy of life. Ballantyne’s *Coral Island* or Captain Gilson’s *The Pirate Aeroplane* or John Buchan’s *Thirty Nine Steps* all glorify men in their secular exploits, but their ecstasy is equal to that from religious experience. While considering the Catholicism of Henry James in his essay ‘Henry James: The Religious Aspect’ he is quick to point out “how superficial is the purely aesthetic appeal of Catholicism” and how the Catholic Church “never hesitated to indulge in the lowest forms of popular art”. James wrote in *A Little Tour in France* that the Catholic Church is “Certainly the most spectacular” but one cannot forget the “sordid little shops of sanctity”. James’s appeal towards Catholicism is more ‘Catholic’ than ‘religious’ and this led to his “passionate distrust in human nature”. But his admirer Greene develops a passionate trust in human nature. For James and Greene, man’s greatness is his equal capacity for salvation and damnation. The “dark backward and abysm” are common to James and Greene but their conclusions are so contrary. Greene saves the worst sinner, sanctifies the most ordinary human. The endings of Greene’s novels are almost oriental in their being spiritual comedies, very clearly avoiding the tragic possibilities as absolutely avoidable. The Devil’s Advocate in Greene gradually dies out before the end of his novels and he comes out successfully as God’s own Advocate. But what one has to notice a little carefully is that
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he always gets the dogmas of the institutionalized Church sidestepped to realize the full Christian life. This is an ardent "individualism" intolerable to the Roman Church but most welcome to Greene. He is more like a uniat accepting the Pope but nothing else even from the Pope. The simple, straightforward Pilgrim's Progress of Bunyan—terminates in the heavenly city but in Greene the heavenly city is only our invisible destination, to be guessed at.

The Roman Church even in its ordinariness believes in luxury, colour and rituals and other eye-catching externals. The Church revels in so much wealth that poverty can be easily defined as that which the Church does not have. Another essential of the earthly Church is its hierarchy and administrative expediencies. These three non-spiritual and therefore non-religious, adventitious attributes of the Church become important for our present consideration for the simple reason that Greene gets rid of all three in all these four novels. There are priests, a bishop, a Monsignor and lay men and women but all are terribly alone, outside their hierarchy. Even the lay are outside their congregations. So much so, they seem abandoned, but in truth, they are the chosen ones. Their solitary distances are elected ones and not imposed ones. All the priests in these novels function alone, if two meet, as at times they do, they do so to differ: as the whisky priest meeting the Lutheran and the Monsignor being locked in by the new parish priest. Miracles too happen. The Lutheran and the Catholic live in amity and the Marxist ex-Mayor plays the angel in freeing the Monsignor as St. Peter was freed from the prison.

Another important thing that Greene does is that he uses his novels to sanctify and canonize characters, which only the Church can do! The
whisky priest is not canonized by the Church; it is Greene who canonizes him. Rose too is elevated to sainthood. Scobie, a police inspector, too is sainted. The suspended priesthood of the Monsignor drives to sainthood in his aged Rocinante.

Greene effectively shunts out the hierarchical structures of the Church using the Marxist purging, as well as the suspension of the parish priest. He equally effectively and completely deprives the priests of all terrestrial and financial power as directors of educational and social service institutions and real estate managers and thereby forcing them into a full spiritual life which cannot happen outside his novels.

But the most important aspect of Greenean protest is that nowhere in his novels can one detect the dogmas in action. Dogmas are totally dismantled and all Greenean priests act in Christian humility and human flexibility. Their humanism becomes their Catholicism.

Like Jean Paul Sartre who was born a nominal Catholic was closer to an austere Calvinism through his maternal grandfather and missionary Albert Schweitzer: Sartre made it clear in his *Existentialism is a Humanism* that man is responsible, solely responsible for what he is and for what he makes of himself. Man is first of all in the world—situated—and only then has he a meaning, he gives himself (his existence) a meaning (an essence); his existence precedes essence. Sartre, like Greene, is fundamentally religious and made it clear that the existentialist faces embarrassment when he finds the absence of god. He also asserted that a writer of bourgeois origin faces the temptation of irresponsibility and like a true, Christian considers it a SIN to be irresponsible: not to act is to act by default. Death is terminal. Closure is
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a theological tragedy. Greene opens it up with his psycho-spirituality. Death is a transcendence. Shakespeare’s tragedies had to end in anti-climax: dead bodies had to be borne away by the not-dead characters as there was no front curtain: All Greene’s novels, especially the four Catholic novels, end in post-mortem meditations. These meditations refute death, suicide and execution. The Church is prescriptive; but Greene is speculative. The artist in Greene competing with the Christian in him: Like Plato, Greene was a deeply religious man and felt, like Plato, that the egoistic or the egotistically, sublime irrational, emotional element of the artistic was damaging to the discipline of religion in man. The novelist ascends the ladder of achievement when his ego or individualism shoots up in a crescendo while the saint’s ascent is the result of the surrender of his ego or individualism in that of God: the will to obey God is the equal and opposite of the will to obey oneself. Obeying God is disobedience to one’s self, as Melville clarifies through Ahab and Ishmael. Incidentally, the Church demands all the obedience that even by its own dogma belongs to God! It believes that God is in the hands of the Church and the Churchmen, not the Church and they, in the hands of God. Burning at the stake is no longer practiced by the Church; not because it has seen that it is unchristian but because it no longer can perform it and also because the states are no longer obedient to the dictates of the Church.

This liberationist zeal of Greene does not only liberate the present day Catholic, thereby incorporating him in the liberationist mission of Jesus Christ from which because of historical reasons and innate depravity the Roman Church has deviated for many centuries; it also liberates the English novel from merely being British in nationality and English in language
but really liberates the English novel into a truly "global novel". Greene impresses us not with his English but with his imagination. His characters undergo trans-national experiences which are foundational for human beings suffering the pushes and pulls of Western modernity: but they, as experiencer are unconscious, unaware and incapable of understanding what they experience, the experiences and throes of the new Catholic, who is in the Church, but not, of the Church. He is truly in the hands of god. It is the reader who has not only the advantages of the experiences of the Greenean characters but also an understanding of those experiences: Pinky is saved because Rose surrenders her salvation. The whisky priest is a drunkard and a biological father of a child but canonized by his own agonies and sincerity but dies of bullets without his Italian Pope even knowing about his existence or his assassination. Scobie dies fully hoping to be damned for his mortal sins as per the rules of the Church but the reader knows that Scobie too has become a lay saint. The Monsignor, through his dream-mass under suspensión a divinis, truly obeys god by disobeying his Bishop and enlarges the Church by the inclusion of the communist ex-Mayor and brings his readers close to the messianic liberationists mission of Jesus Christ uniting Jesus and Marx as agents of protest. Like Maxine Hong Kingston and Carlos Fuentes, Greene forgets his territory, mates and mingles with "exotic peoples" and creates a "new humane being". He does not write about the deviations of the Roman Catholics but about how they have to shed their adjective and become truly Catholic human beings. They shed their Romanism and revive and regain their Catholicism, in all its etymological sense. Greene, in short, creates a new Roman Catholic in defiance of the Roman Catholic Church.
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Thus, the tetralogy becomes a serialized meditation, even a speculation on Christianity, a research into the essentials of the Christian religion without adjectives. They form a Greenean epic in prose in four parts. Greene, obviously is not in sympathy with the disagreements between the identifiable sub-sects of Christianity; he is for the agreements among these sub-sects.

In Brighton Rock a spinster, later, a wife, works for a man’s salvation, against his will. Next in The Power and the Glory an immoral priest with a concubine and illegitimate child works for the salvation of the communinst-ruled Mexico. In the same novel, an unmarried Lutheran priest and his sister carry on the salvivific mission. One more sample is Padre José, a celibate Catholic priest now with a wife becomes a spiritual joke. Scobie in The Heart of the Matter a married man with immoral contacts with a young widow, wins salvation through suicide. In the fourth novel Monsignor Quixote a very highly moral priest is served with suspensión a divinis but says a forbidden mass and gives communion to a communist—linking the Cross and the hammer and sickle—both as symbols of protest. Another significant aspect of the two Catholic priests, the whisky priest and Monsignor Quixote—they are so totally different from the majority of Catholic priests and both have no earthly positions as most of the Catholic priests have. They are Catholic priests because of their differences from the other Catholic priests. Greene’s idea of holy priesthood is an affront to the practices of the priests in the Catholic Church.

What “began as a detective story” ended up as a “Catholic” novel and Greene detests being called a “Catholic writer”. A Protestant writer is only an English writer while a Catholic writer’s religion is recognized first and
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 foremost. Though he became a Catholic in 1926 “by 1937 the time was ripe for (me) to use Catholic characters” but as usual with writers of all imaginative literature he disowns “the ideas of (my) Catholic characters, even their Catholic ideas”. He claims to have compartmentalized his profession and religion separately. But what happened in Mexico and Spain linked up religion and contemporary life. Under these two influences it became imperative for Greene “to examine more closely the effect of faith on action”. None can deny that in spite of politicians claiming not to mix religion with their profession the two have been mutually responsive. Mary Queen of Scots and the Gun Powder plot in England are sufficient evidence for such mutual inroads. “Catholicism was no longer primarily symbolic” it had started affecting the day to day life of its adherents. A detective story like Brighton Rock has no need to pose a distinction between good-and-evil and right-and-wrong and the mystery of “the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God - a mystery that was the subject of three more of (my) novels.” But this Brighton was manufactured by the novelist as Mexico and Indo-China were not. This Brighton becomes an early prototype of the “Strange violent ‘seedy’ region of the mind which they call Greenceland”.

All the three important characters, Ida Arnold, “sixteen”; both Rose and Pinkie “seventeen”, in Brighton Rock are significantly teen-agers: It can be said that they trailed their own clouds of glory after them; something lay about them in their infancy according to their deserts. He needing her: “she was something, which completed him ... what was most evil in him needed her: it couldn’t get along without goodness.” “Perhaps when they Christened (him), holy water didn’t take. He never howled the devil out.” As early as
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Book II of *Brighton Rock* the "vitriol bottle" makes its appearance and gets ready to conclude the last scene to stand as a terrestrial reminder of the flames of hell for Pinkie. They are all "green" and "innocent" not perceiving the mystical significance of Brighton. Soon after the "vitriol bottle" comes the irrelevant question. "You a Roman?" put by the Boy who too is a Roman. They were all Romans in Nelson Place. "There was a real slum called Nelson place. Speculations on the "responsibilities" of being a Roman start here and a simple detective story becomes a meditation on being a Catholic when a dead formalism was taking the place of a living faith. Unlike his creator, Pinkie is not even "formally practicing (his) religion". As a result of Greene’s habit of reading "a good deal of theology" in his spare time there is a good deal of theology in *Brighton Rock*.

Pinkie says "Of course there’s Hell, Flames and damnation", but for Rose there’s "Heaven too".

In Book I, Charles Hale’s body is buried. It is a Roman burial; at the end of a Roman funeral, at which "a man, not a machine, stood up in a black cassock saying ‘Heaven’. The intruder goes on:

Our belief in heaven is not qualified by our disbelief in the old medieval hell. We believe, we believe that this our brother is already at one with the One. He has attained unity. We do not know what that One is with whom (or with which) he is now at one. We do not retain the old medieval belief in glassy seas and golden crowns. Truth is beauty and there is more beauty for us, a truth-loving generation, in the certainty that our brother is at
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this moment reabsorbed in the universal spirit.

This is dealing with life with flippancy. "Papists do this: life wasn't so important perhaps to them as what came after": but to the non-Catholic Ida "death was the end of everything." Death shocked her, life was so important. She wasn't religious. "Lucky" "to be alive at all". Bliss was it to be alive. This is Greene's hint of dissent: "a bare cold secular chapel which could be adapted quietly and conveniently to any creed." All these go ill with a detective novel. But they make a very good beginning of the Greenean Catholic tetralogy. Thus unconsciously starts the momentous epic-featured novel sequence: Hell, heaven, mercy, unshriven death, repentance, hell flames, Our Marys, priests, salvation, damnation, mortal sin, the Eucharist, God, confession, mass—all these are alien to the original detective framework. Brighton is too small for all these things. "Brighton is not big enough" even for Pinkie. Action-oriented detective fiction overtaken by intention-oriented Catholic novel: "It's not what you do", the Boy said, "its' what you think", that matters. This sounds like that there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so. Like in Hamlet "Seems" begins to float up: "Seems to me I'm doing everything." Like Thomas Becket and Saint Joan, Pinkie too is vaguely aware that really it is God who is doing everything. This kind of supernatural awareness is also alien to the detective framework. One character declaring, "I don't believe in what my eyes don't see". But immediately the Greenean counter : "They don't see much then", sounds Catholic. Existence cannot be drained of all its spirituality! One "couldn't let a friend have wrong ideas". Greene puts his Catholic ideas
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across to his readers. It is all motivated communication; not mere expression. It is speculation for him; speculation for his readers also on the lines specified by Greene’s imagination. Peacehaven sounds like a name from Bunyan. The bonnet of the old Morris is turned to Brighton, “towards the cliff”. The final scene also does not belong to a detective novel: one
couldn’t tell what happened: glass — somewhere — broke, he screamed, she saw his face—steam. He screamed and screamed with his hands up to his eyes; he turned and ran ... doubled up in appalling agony; it was as if the flames had literally got him and he shrank—shrank into a schoolboy flying in panic and pain, scrambling over a fence, running on ... he was at the edge, he was over: they couldn’t even hear a flash. It was as if he’d been withdrawn suddenly by a hand out of any existence—past or present, whipped way into zero—nothing.

Throughout the novel characters are repeatedly surprised by being touched by the hand of a friend or a policeman; but in the end it is the “untouchable” touching Pinkie that brings the novel to a momentous, ambiguous end. The priest, the confession appear all of a sudden: Rose at “the stuffy box” at confession: repenting “not going with him”. Repenting not having killed herself. But now she won’t: Somewhere in that obscure countryside of death they might miss each other—mercy operating somehow for one and not for the other. “Perhaps” dominates the priests’ consolations: The Roman Church always decides and decides infallibly. But in Greene, the priests are better than in the Church. They don’t decide. If they decide, they decide only
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their inability to decide. Dogmas disintegrate; possibilities take over. Faith and Hope take over. No one can conceive of the “appalling ... strangeness of the mercy of god”. The “appalling” agony of Pinkie is pitted against the “appaling ... strageness of the mercy of god”. Not even the Church or the priest, the representative of the Church. Priests just “come and go”. Console but not control. They are like Job’s Comforters; they don’t bring any comfort. Rose “carried life” for Pinkie. Her son will pray for Pinkie, his father. Brighton Rock is Greene’s first Catholic novel; even here the note of dissent is heard; the hint of discontent which will mature in due course, in the next three novels.

In Part I of The Power and the Glory, Greene’s next Catholic novel, Miss Coral Fellows, the thirteen year old daughter of Captain Fellows of Central American Banana Company, who lost her faith in god when she was ten, takes the responsibility of saving the whisky priest from the lieutenant even without the knowledge of her mother. “She was ready to accept any responsibility, even that of vengeance, without a second thought” if they killed him. She hopes he escapes. “She was independent of both” her father and her mother. She tells her father that helping the priest is not interfering in their politics”. She claims to “know about politics”. In Part I of The Power and the Glory she asks:

“Mother, do you believe there is a God?”

“I mean the Virgin Birth—and everything.”
“She didn’t wait for any further answer: she knew quite well there would be none—it was always her job to make decisions”.

“I’ve been thinking”, she says. Yes, Greene is thinking, speculating. Speculation has not ended for him: it just starts once again for him in part I of *The Power and the Glory*. This is the existential responsibility that Miss Coral takes upon herself.

Miss Coral Fellows does not believe in god; but she helps a god-man, the whisky priest, through sheer human commitment, sympathy. Her godless affection is highly dignified. The way she prevents the Lieutenant from searching her house is admirable. Her love for the priest, her concern for his safety is Christian in its naturalness. When her father says that the Lieutenant’s hunt for the priest is “politics” and that as foreigners they should not “interfere in their politics” she spontaneously retorts that there is no politics involved in the hunt for the priest and still less is protecting the whisky priest political interference. Her action is prompted neither by religion, nor by politics. It is sheer humanism. Her humanism challenges the Christianity of many of the characters. Her humanism is an unofficial commentary on the inhumanity of the politics practiced against the priest. Even Padre José marrying in obedience to the local Governor’s order against the “inessential” celibacy imposed by the Church on its priests cannot go unnoticed in the novel. The Lutheran debunking of the mass, clerical celibacy and the confession are not in any way condemned by Greene.

Greene and his readers take upon themselves the same responsibility. This is what the Roman Church does not allow its members to do. Greene thinks; Coral thinks. But a Catholic should not think; they should accept
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the Church’s thinking which is framed in the form of its dogmas. The Church is authoritarian; it manufactures saints. It claims the monopoly for making saints. One can be a saint “only when the Holy Father pleases.” In this novel, the bishop was safely in Mexico City. There they are saying benediction. They don’t even know the whisky priest is alive. The devil was ready to assail poor Mexico. He was a bad priest.

“I’m a bad priest”.

“I am a whisky priest”.

He had forgotten the days of abstinence: he had lost the chalice, his breviary was lost. Last to go, was the altar stone; “he was probably liable to suspensión.” But he was not suspended; unlike the later Monsignor Quixote. But in The Heart of the Matter Greene says that “The world has too many spoilt priests of this faith or that”.

But the whole tenor of the novel is that when it comes to its unending end it compels the readers artistically to believe that Greene confers sainthood on the whisky priest; he becomes a martyr to his faith. He cannot renounce his faith; it is “impossible,” “it is out of (his) power like a birthmark.”

In the opening scene itself Mr. Tench asks him, “Are you a Catholic?” “The small man”, “the whisky priest” is compared by Greene to “a black question mark”. He is untidy but the Lieutenant, in contrast, is neat, he has “the dignity of an idea”; “there was something of a priest in his intent observant walk, his own lodging was “as comfortless as a prison or a cell. He “was a mystic and unlike other mystics he didn’t experience god but only godlessness—a vacancy—a complete certainty in the existence of a dying
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cooling world, of human beings who had evolved from animals for no purpose at all.” “The world was “a huge abandonment.” He “himself felt no need of women” contrasted with the whisky priest having a concubine and an illegal daughter.

A similar comparison is forged by Greene with Mr. and Miss Lehr, bachelor brother and spinster sister, both Lutherans, who “don’t hold with your (Catholic) Church”; “too much luxury”, “while the poor starve” making a lot of fuss about inessentials. They accuse the Roman Church that does not like people to read the Bible”. But Greene forges a reconciliation saying “we’re all Christians here” which the Church at best can only say; it cannot really mean it. “What is there is God, not godlessness, no vacancy”. The world is deathless; immortality is its privilege.

The novel gives a new definition for salvation, it comes from outside the structure of the Church. Minus luxury, minus bishop, minus Church-building, minus chalice, minus breviary, minus the altar stone, minus all that stands for the Church ordinarily, the whisky priest stands alone in the presence of God, not as a Roman Catholic but as a Christian, as Bunyan’s pilgrim; and moves towards the heavenly city and, we can say, reaches it too.

While he is awaiting execution in jail, the priest has a tense dialogue with God, in which he offers his soul for damnation in return for the salvation of his illegitimate daughter Brigitta; this is a repeat performance by a Catholic of what Rose did earlier in *Brighton Rock* choosing damnation for saving another soul. This intense human love as described by the priest in *Brighton Rock* as “greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his soul for his friend”. Not his “life”! The humility of the Catholic is that unable to love
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all mankind he chooses to love his near and dear. Luis, another child in *The Power and the Glory* admires the Lieutenant, changes allegiance to welcome the new, nameless priest at the end of the novel. “Priests come and go” but the ministry goes on forever.

But the politics of *The Power and the Glory* too is dominant. The godless Lieutenant fights an idealistic crusade to liberate the oppressed by eradicating social injustice along with “the Church which not only preaches passive acceptance of this injustice but supports it”. The sad part of it is that though the priest is emotionally with the poor he is ideologically the victim of the dogmas of the Church that give preference to spiritual salvation rather than to the economic and political liberation. This is highlighted by Greene in *The Lawless Roads* that the Church has to “relearn the technique of revolution”. 1940 saw the emergence of Liberation Theology; and in his later novels, Greene’s priests assume a new political mission as in *The Comedians*.

More than in any other novel, Greene in this novel, harps on the idea of RESPONSIBILITY, a word totally neglected by the Roman Church. The frequency of the word increases in the next novel, *The Heart of the Matter*, The word disappears in the last novel of the tetralogy, but the sense prevails. The idea of the leap, the Kierkegaardian leap above the Church takes hold here in *The Power and the Glory*. Right and Wrong and Good and Evil clashed in *Brighton Rock* in the persons of Ida and Rose. Communism and Catholicism clash in *The Power and the Glory*. Lutheranism and Catholicism enter into a dialogue in the same novel. If the “inessentials” are missing in *Brighton Rock*, they are
rejected in *The Power and the Glory*. The inessentials amount to everything in the Roman Church. The Church is stripped to its barest minimum and its ancient spiritual glory is totally restored by Greene. The Catholicism of the Church claims precedence over its Romanism. Captain Fellows may feel that “if one doesn’t like the Church, well, we must leave it.” But Greene doesn’t want to abandon the Church to its glorious defects: one can find reasons for staying in the Church; one can reform it from within: Such voluntary excommunications will only preserve and confirm the corruptions in it. Greene’s speculation continues: Pinkie it was in *Brighton Rock*. The nameless priest it is in *The Power and the Glory*. Now it is the turn of Scobie, a full-fledged Catholic lay man in *The Heart of the Matter*. The question is the same, once again. He too breaks the rules of the Church. Can he be saved? The dogma damns him; but Greene’s imagination and art lift him on the wings of salvation.

The external scene of action now is the heart shaped African continent. But the actual scene of action is the hearts of the characters in it. The one point of interest in this third Catholic novel is that the Church is fully in tact. Outwardly, nothing in the Church is dislocated. Pinkie’s is a crime-ridden world; Mexico is a scene of persecution: but Scobie’s is a normal world. Its normality is as convincing as it is upsetting. Once again Greene is narrating a moving tale of a “responsible” man, on whom “responsibility” sits heavily because he is a Catholic. And he breaks under the weight. He loses everything: peace, joy, prosperity but never spirituality. Once again, the Church does only stand by, interpreting, not interfering.

The great question it poses is whether Scobie is damned or saved? There
is no doubt about the answer. But the very answer raises another ques­tion: how far is the Church relevant in his salvation? Is not the dogmatic
Church disposable? How mortal are the mortal sins, if a mortal sinner can
gain immortality? One more Catholic novel telling us the story of one more
Catholic. His soul also shall not perish. Greene quietly ignores the Church
playing god but he does tempt the readers to play St. Peter deciding which
characters are to be sent to heaven. This makes his novels literature and
prevents them from becoming “renegade theology”, as Paul O' Prey puts it.

Like Rose and the whisky priest (and Péguy) Scobie also voluntarily
damns himself for saving others. Paul O' Prey continues his observations
saying that “Greene questions the traditional concept of divine punishment
as well as the role of the Church as an intermediary between man and his
creator, and the Church's moral authority is seen in the novel undermined
by the overriding and anarchic power of love”.

*A Sort of Life* is a kind of partial biography of Greene. As a recent con­vert in 1928, he says in *A Sort of Life* that he consulted a priest about a
personal problem. After finalizing his marriage, he was led to believe that he
was epileptic and so he wished to avoid having children. The priest warned
that contraceptives were not allowed by the Church under any circumstances.
This rigidity horrified him and Greene condemned the text-book moral the­
oLOGY which Unamuno also felt has turned religion “into a kind of police
system” and in many of Greene’s novels there is a categorical forceful defi­
ance of this authority and his characters coming close to a final state of grace
are those who have broken the rules of the Church: Paul O’ Prey lists the
whisky priest in *The Power and the Glory*. Sarah in *The End of the Affair,*
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Father Rivaz in The Honorary Consul and Scobie in The Heart of the Matter. But they never break the demands of human responsibility.

Scobie evolves into the most complex character of Greene and The Heart of the Matter the most problematic novel of the tetralogy. His exaggerated sense of responsibility leads him to try to ensure the happiness of others. His almost superfluous letter to Helen where he records his blasphemous statement—he loved her more than he did his wife or even God and his receiving communion with his wife in a state of mortal sin in order to ensure her happiness, add to the complexity of his character.

The African setting is superfluous; the story could have taken place in any other place. The name of the novel is The Heart of the Matter; and in geography, Africa is always referred to as the heart-shaped continent. Though George Orwell ridicules the churchianity of Scobie, the readers cannot but be touched by the intense Christianity of Scobie which convinces them that he “loved” ... God. But no one can agree that “he certainly loved no one else”. He is under the spell of the anarchic power of love and loves also those humans who are thrown into his life. Loving is taking risk; and he takes a very heavy risk; he loves both God and man. God is love; the converse is also true. That is why his last words were said aloud: “Dear God, I love ...”; he leaves the verb intransitively—the object is irrelevant, inessential and unnecessary.

Scobie, the Just, becomes Scobie, the Unjust, protecting the Portuguese Captain for sentimental reasons: his religion makes him kin.

“He had been corrupted by sentiment” unlike the other officers who “had been corrupted by money”. “Sentiment was the more dangerous, because
“But in human relations kindness and lies are worth a thousand truths”.

“The truth . . . has never been of any real value to any human being—it is a symbol for mathematicians and philosophers to pursue.” He had joined the corrupt officers like Bailey and Crayshaw, he was no longer Just, like Aristides. Rejecting one hundred English pounds of bribe was not enough to be an honest officer. In spiritual matters he was to assert individualism as he asserts his individualism in this official matter. He was no longer “a David among the colonial police.”

Scobie asserts at the very beginning of the novel: “I’m a Catholic too”; it meant “the plaster statues with swords in the bleeding heart, the whisper behind the confessional curtains; the holy coats and the liquefaction of blood. The dark side-chapels and the intricate movements and somewhere behind it all the love of God”. When he knew that the Portuguese captain was a Catholic, he acted against the “strictest orders” and “was exercising his own imperfect judgement.”

He is “tired of (his) religion” and “it’s easy to mistake tiredness for—well, disbelief”. But he also feels “Empty”. This is what happens to Scobie at the confessional on a first Saturday. The priest is Father Rank. He feels pity for his wife and for Helen Rolt—the word “pity” is used as loosely as the word “love”. He wants to arrange the happiness of others. That is the mistake; he cannot be indifferent towards others. That is his tragic flaw. His responsibility is the cause. But he does not know that “no one can arrange another’s happiness”. He is a Catholic and “can’t have two wives,” but can he sleep with two women? He had “mislaid his joy somewhere between the
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Nissen hut and his home”, between Helen and Louise. “An oath at Nissen hut (is) as ineffaceable as the vow by the Ealing altar. He aims at too much; an “impossible aim” and he reaches despair; such despair comes only to a “man of goodwill”, “a corrupt or evil man never” reaches such a despair. The logical next step is suicide—suicide which is “too terrible” even for a non-Catholic: “it puts a man outside God’s mercy” says Father Clay, who “wanted to be of use” but he “wasn’t of any use to a single living soul”. Scobie could not prefer his own happiness to that of another. “One should look after one’s own soul at whatever cost to another, and that’s’ what I can’t do, what I shall never be able to do.” Scobie’s letter to Helen slips under the mat by the door as in Thomas Hardy; but worse, it gets into wrong hands. But has not a chap “got the right to take his own life? Was Christ murdered? How can one kill God? It can be taken as suicide - a voluntary surrender of his life”. Eliot calls Becket’s death “suicide while of unsound mind”. But suicide has been reconsidered by the Second Vatican Council. But earlier he had desecrated God because he loved a woman: “how can one love god at the expense of one of his creations”? But the Church says a created being should not love another creation more than the creator. How can Scobie prefer the invisible god to the visible woman. God can do without him; but the two women cannot do without him.

Can we, as readers say what Helen Rolt says “If there’s one thing I hate its’ your Catholicism”. She means Romanism. Love of human beings, neighbours to him ... is love for God. He squared his anti-Catholic actions with his conscience. “Going to communion the way he did”! But “Dear God, I love. ... The final elevation of the word ‘love’ is to its intransitive glory.
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Scobie broke the rules of the Church; they are similar to the rules of the “cockroach game”; the winner may gain D.D.—“down the drain” or “doctor of divinity”! But Scobie, we can believe was saved by God, if he was doomed by the rules of the Church. The same Church stands by to declare the appalling strangeness of how god’s mercy operates. Martin Luther broke the rules of the Church. Is he in heaven or not? Lutherans say he is in heaven. Scobie leaps above the Church. The hint of discontent hardens here. What happens next? In Monsignor Quixote?

Of all the four novels in the tetralogy, Monsignor Quixote is the only novel easy to analyse because it does not tell us a story. It is an ideological novel in which the ideology (dogmas) is analysed threadbare; it has the appearance of a picaresque novel with significant incidents that are apparently disconnected. Very little narrative is there; it is dominated by a lengthy dialogue sparked off by chance ‘adventures’ in which two ‘contrary’ characters representing two irreconcilable ideologies of the world—viz., Catholicism and Communism (Marxism) are moving towards a reconciliation. This novel has a “palpable” design upon its readers: to make them realize that there is a lot in common between “the religion of Christ as well as the religion of Marx”—“both protests against injustice.” Marxists are condemned by the Church as “materialists” but the Monsignor exposes the materialism’ of the Church and its religious practices and, like Martin Luther against Tetzel, registers his protest in the most unmistakable form by upsetting our Lady’s procession “and Our Lady went crashing to the Earth.” Did somebody hit (him)? “His head was bleeding”. ‘Bloodshed’ is a sign of a ‘revolution’ His love and veneration for Our Lady has made him cause ‘a riot’ ".

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The lengthy dialogue in a moving old car, almost makes us believe that the novel lacks action. Suddenly, towards the end of the novel the verbal dialogue explodes into action, similar to those of Cervantes's Don. The Monsignor announces like the Don:

"We are going into battle, Sancho, I need my armour. Even if it is as absurd as Mambrino's helmet". "I feel more ready now." He arms himself for the battle: "Give me my pechera ... My collar too."

This readiness comes of the earlier minor adventures. The Bishop of Motopo at the opening of the novel says:

"In the Church we have need of men of practical abilities too. In the world of today astucia—in the sense of worldly wisdom—must be allied to prayer".

Heribert Jone's green book of Moral Theology and the red Communist Manifesto easier than Das Kapital to read, both get them ready for this final battle. Their earlier dialogue is apparently light-hearted but actually serious; their earlier preparatory minor adventures have all a comic gloss over them but confront the breakable rules of the Church. Walker Percy noticed "the very comic and even joyous" tenor of these adventures but he does not miss the "bite" in them. The choice of "the symbol of sheep" for Christians and Señor Marquez, the rich and obscene Catholic "a great stickler for the rules of the Church" circumventing the Church's conditions regarding coitus interruptus, all keep the readers involved in their discussion. They ridicule the "natural means" for "It's not the way desire works". Padre Quixote, "a poor priest errant" playing with a contraceptive like a balloon without even
knowing what it is, staying in a ‘brothel’ and calling it a ‘chapel’ or monastery because it saved them from the Guardia, ready to pray even to Judas, who is a saint in the Ethiopian Church; they pray at the massive tomb of Franco! The lighthearted references made to “a girl called Martin” who can be called “(your) Dulcinea”. Finally, we come to know that it is of Sainte Therese they are talking about. They both rewrite the parable of the prodigal son into a partial communist fable. They smuggle a robber in their car. The Trinity, Natural Law, Mortal Sin—all come under their microscope. Father Leopoldo, in the Trappist Monastery at Osera, sometimes praying even to Deseartes, who was a practical man “who had worked on spectacles to find cures for blindness and on wheelchairs to aid cripples”. “One of our great modern philosophers compared Saint Ignatius to Don Quixote. Saint Ignatius was a practical man, a good soldier”.

This great “autumnal novel” is virtually a dissection of the entire Roman Catholic faith in all its absurdities. The Church stands condemned as a rule-maker but Greene assures the readers and the Catholics especially, that even if these “rules” are broken one can hope for salvation. They remind us of Jesus himself who also downplayed the rules. The duo make very immodest remarks about God but they impress us as nothing short of being Godly. They pay their respects to Unamuno, a philosopher with a half-belief. If one has “complete belief” one doesn’t “have to think” for oneself. Religion—“the religion of Christ as well as the religion of Marx”—is basically humanistic; and it is this humanism that reigns supreme above the rigid dogmas and rules that make up that religion. A lavatory converted into a
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confessional liberates the readers' mind from the clutches of dogma and moral theology. After all "moral theology is not the Church". The humanistic core of both Christianity and Marxism, brings these disparate faiths into reconciliation: Father Heribert Jone and Father Lenin are interchangeable; the Green book and the Red book are exchanged. The hammer and sickle and the crude cross both become "protests against injustice". The priest and the mayor keep "strange company". The dream-mass at Osera monastery, said by Monsignor Quixote in defiance of the 'suspensión a divinis' of his Bishop marks the climax of the novel when the priest who had imbibed the Marxian ideology of the Mayor, in reciprocation welcomes him into the Catholic fold by offering him the imaginary, invisible, non-existent Host. Smilingly he calls him 'compañero'. There was no more of a future for Father Quixote. There was not much of a future for Graham Greene either after Monsignor Quixote. With it, the tetralogy was completed and his writing career too concluded.

Greene begins his Monsignor Quixote with "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so" from Shakespeare. This is such a liberal attitude that the Holy Roman Catholic Church cannot tolerate it even for a minute. The adventures of the communist Mayor and Padre Quixote are all of them considered "scandalous" for the Church but the Monsignor himself considers them as enlightening.

This novel is significantly in two parts: Part I narrates the adventures and the Monsignor's interpretations of the moral issues raised by those adventures. Part II presents us with the Church's interpretations and their effects on the Monsignor. The first part shows the Monsignor, an alibi of
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Greene, speculating on the complex problems that man is likely to face in his social life and how they are viewed by a great moral theologian like Heribert Jone. These likely problems are supposedly faced by the Monsignor in his actual wanderings.

The earliest problem that the Monsignor clears is neutrality in spiritual matters. The Monsignor refuses to have dinner at Poncio Pilato because “Pontius Pilate was an evil man. The world has almost canonized him because he was neutral, but one cannot be neutral when it comes to choosing between good and evil”. The Mayor cites Fidel Castro for example and says “he was nonaligned”—“not neutral” but “with a slant in the right direction”.

Then they speculate on the existence of hell—that God should not “govern by fear” as Stalin and Hitler did. And he categorically denies the existence of hell “with the heart” but as a Catholic priest believed in its existence only “from obedience”.

Next they discuss methods of birth control: Heribert Jone’s presumptions regarding coitus interruptus. Señor Marquez obtained a copy of Jone’s Moral Theology in Spanish from the Vincentians with the imprimatur of the Archbishop of Madrid and a Nihil Obstat from the Censor Deputatus. Señor Marquez—had five children and still “enjoyed sex”. He was using coitus interruptus as a birth control method. But the Church doesn’t “allow birth control even in adultery”—leave alone married life. Jone introduces a clever way out: he invents the “arrival of a third person” as “an unforeseen necessity”. Señor Marquez as a Catholic, cleverly uses it as a birth control tool: he appointed a butler to open the door of his bedchamber at a signal from
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him. This is a funny misuse of Heribert Jone, but this is what many Roman Catholics do and they don't care, neither does the Church bother as long as they don't question the dogma. The Church doesn't have the patience or the interest to go into the details which the Bishop calls “quite trivial and irrelevant details”. This fun is then extended to a brothel where the Monsignor plays with a condom as though it were a balloon without even knowing what it is. Killing a human soul is a sin. But “has a sperm a soul?” When a man makes love, he kills a million spermatozoa—minus one. But the Church’s “natural means” usually fail because “desire works” in a different way. But the Monsignor himself felt no need for sex like Jesus himself. And he could recollect only his spiritual love for Sainte Thérèse of Avila. The Monsignor then visits a theatre to watch an “S” movie on a maiden’s prayer for a strong man to give her sexual satisfaction—misled by the title—*A Maiden’s Prayer*.

Next moral adventure of the Monsignor is to hear the confession of the parish undertaker who steals a costly brass handle from the coffin of his own dead parish priest. The confessional is a closed lavatory seat in a lavatory; he was “practicing his profession”!

Soon after they helped a murderer, a man who at least tried to rob and murder, to escape. The Monsignor did not “wish to be an instrument of human justice.” Then they discuss the popular saint in La Mancha who lost her virginity but tried to save the soul of her rapist at the expense of her virginity. Here also, as in the case of the undertaker stealing the brass handles from the coffin of his parish priest to which he has also made his share of contribution, the details are very interesting, showing that generalisations
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lead to misconceptions. To the Bishop, who represents the Church, they may be "deliberate trivialities" but to Jone and Greene, they are very relevant and important.

All these varying adventures, not physical but intellectual, prepare Padre Quixote for his final achievements: tilting at our Lady’s procession. The Mayor stands by in admiration of his companion. Earlier in his dream, he had seen the Monsignor seated on a central pedestal like a saint. The communist had undergone the necessary spiritual preparation to deserve being called the "companiero"; earlier he was not fit to be the ‘companiero’ of Padre Quixote. Now he is fit: and receives the invisible non-existent Host. This signifies his second baptism, second communion and second confirmation into the Church of the Monsignor. Father Leopoldo intrudes with his commentary on “Fact and Fiction” with which the novel started. Don Quixote was a fiction, in the mind of Cervantes; we are all fictions in the mind of God! Without knowing that Father Quixote was dead, the Bishop phoned to say that he should not be allowed to say Mass even in private. The Bishop was particular about the rule of the Church: his suspensión a divinis—ironically, “his order would be obeyed, in future, that is”. By saying “in future” Father Leopoldo accepts Father Quixote’s last mass without bread and wine as a real mass and what the Mayor received was—real “Communion” though he considers himself “a very unworthy recipient” because he was a ‘Communist’. “Perhaps Monsignor Quixote knew (his) state of mind better than (he) did it (himself).”

That is why he addressed the Mayor as 'companiero' for the first time.
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Now, with confidence, the Mayor could “repeat the word” ‘compañero’ “in his turn”. But the Monsignor did not live to hear the word.

“There was no more of a future for Rocinante than for Father Quixote”. They had died within a few hours of each other—but there was no future either for their creator: This was the last significant novel of his; none, equally great, was to follow. The tetralogy was complete. Greene had made his protest. It was his autumn. Next was only the winter. Winter came in 1991.

What started as a hint of discontent has matured into a note of riotous protest made with “the authority of any Catholic to fight blasphemy”. Or, the mighty “protest” in Monsignor Quizote was born as a “hint” in Brighton Rock.