

RELIGION IS OFTEN MESSY!

For a long time I have been an avid reader of the English *Tablet* magazine. Over the years I have come to appreciate its consistently excellent editorials, the letters to the editor and the many interesting, provocative guest columnists.

One of the great columnists was a Jewish Rabbi, his name is rather unforgettable it being *Lionel Blue (1930-2016)*. The English *Guardian* newspaper spoke of him after his death in these glowing words; *“he was one of the most respected religious figures in the United Kingdom.”*

I recall this brilliant and insightful reflection of his that he wrote not long before he died; *“Religion is often messy in that it consistently challenges people to join together 2 realities of life that so often don’t seem to fit together. For example, how can any organization function that openly upholds a person’s right to act according to their conscience yet still be bound to a leader’s decision? It is so often easy to cut corners in life so as to make things easy but in doing so it inevitably fails in preventing people finding true holiness.”*

Jesus of Nazareth I’m sure appreciated that any religion including the one he established can be messy and that’s why he was prompted to say to his followers; *“The wind blows where it wills, you can hear its sound yet you don’t know where it comes from, so it’s with those born of the Spirit.”* (John 3, verse 8). *Fr Martin R Maunsell*