

## **EXAMEN COMMUN D'ENTREE EN PREMIERE ANNEE**

**EPREUVE D'ANGLAIS**

**SAMEDI 24 MAI 2014**

**13h30 à 18h00**

**(durée conseillée : 1h30)**

**coeff. 2**

**Ce sujet est composé de 4 pages**

Il est demandé aux candidats de répondre directement sur leur copie en indiquant clairement les numéros des exercices.

[Aucun document autorisé]

# Yes, the church is bloody angry about these attacks on the poor, and rightly so

Giles Fraser

*The Guardian*, Friday 21 February 2014

## **There is nothing 'moral' about the government's portrayal of the vulnerable as scroungers. It is a national disgrace**

Why are we so angry? By we, I mean the clergy. Because this is what the government has been hearing via our bishops and archbishops over the past few days. So let me explain.

Apparently, benefit cuts are popular with the electorate. The idea has been sold to the public that there is a whole class of scroungers which prefers to lounge around on the sofa all day, watching telly, smoking spliffs and drinking lager. Going out and getting a job makes little economic sense to such people. They are lazy and dissolute. An insult to hard-working families everywhere. And nobody likes to have the piss taken out of them, which is what the sofa-lolling brigade have been doing to the rest of us. The "moral" case for benefit cuts is an attempt to re-establish a culture of personal responsibility. It is an attack on the feckless.

We are angry because this is such a distorted picture, an extrapolation from a tiny number of cases into some sort of general rule. And this rule is now being used to disparage a whole class of vulnerable people whose greatest crime in life is to find themselves struggling to get by in the chill winds of a financial climate that was absolutely not of their making.

Since Christmas, my church has turned itself into a homeless shelter once a week. Volunteers cook large batches of shepherd's pie for hungry people who have been wandering the streets most of the day. We provide a warm bed and a safe place to hang out for the evening. Camp beds are set up in the nave of the church. And bacon rolls and porridge are provided for breakfast. Unfortunately, business is thriving. There is a waiting list for beds. Homelessness has risen 60% in London over the past two years. And half a million people now rely on food banks.

It's not just churches that are volunteering in this way. And many who help out with us are not themselves religious. But given the local nature of the parish system, and given that churches have an outpost in every community in this country, the clergy are uniquely positioned to understand the effect that financial cuts are having on the ground. And what makes many of us so bloody angry is that the reality of what is happening is not being acknowledged by politicians in government. They don't feel the need to face this reality because the war against the scroungers is so popular. So long as the rightwing press keeps stoking our sense of indignation at those who exploit the system, the government has little incentive to admit the much wider reality that austerity is turning pockets of Britain into wastelands of hopelessness. The scrounger tag has become a way to blame the poor for their poverty. How convenient. Those who created this financial crisis have got away scot free, protected by their money and their lobbying power. So now we blame the poor, a much easier target.

David Cameron, in responding to the churches, has insisted that his is a moral vision too. But no moral vision worthy of the name can remain indifferent to the hunger and homelessness of others. This is morality 101. Indeed, far from operating out of a moral instinct, the government has poisoned the wells of public sympathy by amplifying a fear that vulnerable people are actually sniggering cheats.

Nothing about this shameless sleight of hand is moral. In fact, it's right out of the bullying handbook. Maybe – just maybe – he is feeling a little bit guilty about all of this. And we often blame those who make us feel guilty. Or we just ignore them. It's so much easier than admitting our own responsibility for the misery of others. No, Prime Minister: this is not moral – it's a national scandal.

### **I. Comprehension (8 points)**

Answer the following questions using your own words (40-50 words per question maximum)

1. What is making the clergy so angry? (3 points)
2. Why are “the poor a much easier target”? (lines 38-39) (3 points)
3. Explain the following sentence from the article:

“This is morality 101.” (line 42) (2 points)

### **II. Synonyms (4 points)**

For each of the following, find an equivalent word or expression in the article. The words you are looking for appear in the same order as in the list below but perhaps not in the same conjugated form or syntax.

- a. freeloader
- b. good-for-nothing
- c. to cope
- d. station
- e. to feed
- f. reservoir
- g. disrespectful
- h. deceit

### **III. Written Expression (8 points)**

Write an essay of 300 words (+/- 10%) on the following subject:

The sentiment that "welfare" is a luxury we can no longer afford seems to be gaining ground. Drawing on examples from various countries, discuss what is at stake in the debate around the Welfare State.