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ARTICLES

What Is Piety?

by James V. Schall, S. J.

I.

The four dialogues on the trial and death of Socrates—*The Euthyphro*, *The Apology*, *The Crito*, and *The Phaedo*—were not written at once or in the chronological order of the events themselves. Time-wise, the *Euthyphro* comes first. It depicts a rather amusing scene. Socrates, has just been indicted for impiety by the young and arrogant Meletus. On his way to the court, Socrates comes across a younger “prophet” who is also going to court to prosecute his own father. The whole scene is rather delightful and quite playful.

However, the dialogue has serious overtones. It is about “piety.” It is, to follow Leo Strauss, a “what is?” question. Thus, the great questions we ask are “what is good?” “what is true?” Since Socrates has been accused of being impious, he figures to confound the accuser, the annoying and unpleasant young man Meletus, whom we see more of in *The Apology*. Indeed, Meletus is the principal accuser of Socrates in the trial.

It is always important to get some sense of the character of the personages who appear in Plato’s dialogues—what was Glaucon like? what about Adeimantus? Apollodorus? Theages? even Plato himself? It is a fascinating study. No doubt in one or other, we will recognize in these characters something of ourselves or of the man next door.

Socrates wants *Euthyphro* to teach him what “piety” is, so he can defend himself against the accusation of being impious, an accusation, the essence of which Socrates naturally does not understand. So, as he does in *The Apology*, he hastens off find out answers to his questions. Who is better to tell him about this issue than someone, like *Euthyphro*, whose profession is precisely to teach piety. He is a “prophet” and is concerned about the gods. In the end, of course, *Euthyphro* turns out to know very little about what he is talking about. He finally buzzes off on other business rather than continue the conversation of a persistent Socrates about what piety is. It is all quite amusing, really.

There may even be some overtones of *Oedipus* here. Or at least *Euthyphro* is in court to accuse his own father of murder in a very bizarre case. Here, the son accuses the father of murder because he has bound up a slave, who had murdered another slave, and tossed him into the ditch while he went to the authorities to find out what to do with him. The slave, meanwhile,

dies before they can find out. So being a very strict moralist, Euthyphro, to protect his own piety, decides to prosecute his own father. Socrates finds it quite odd that a son's piety towards his own father would allow him to do this.

II.

Initially, it might be useful to spell out the meaning of piety in general, much of which, if we pay attention, will be found in the dialogue. Piety is an aspect of justice. Generally, we speak of two forms of piety—to our parents or ancestors or to the gods. The reason why piety is an “aspect” of justice, and not justice itself (the subject of *The Republic* and the fifth book of *The Ethics*), is because it cannot be requited either proportionally as in distributive or mathematically as in commutative justice. Piety is something of a paradox, something “owed” when nothing specific can be determined about the content of what is indeed owed. Thus we can never adequately “repay” what we owe to our parents or to the gods, what they have given to us in life.

This question of what we “owe” to the gods is related to what is said in the *Symposium* about why the world needs rational creature within it. The world is not complete in its creation if it does not have within it someone with the power to praise it from the side of creation itself. But in what does this praise consist? How do we “calculate” the debt? Or is it even something that can be so calculated? This perplexity is what piety is about.

Within the *Euthyphro*, it is to be noted the number of times that “sacrifice” and “prayers” come up in relation to the debt of piety. Obviously, the gods do not “need” anything or else they would not be gods. They cannot really be “paid back.” In the highest things, there is, strictly speaking, no “need.” This “un-neediness” is the consequence of the abundance within the Godhead. In Christian terms, not yet known to Plato, the Trinity is the only real doctrine that explains satisfactorily this factor of why God does not require anything but Himself. What is not God does not exist because God “needed” it. Neither does it exist as self-caused.

Euthyphro, in his effort to explain what piety is, keeps arguing in circles—is a thing pious because God loves it? Or does God love it because it is pious

already, that is, it possesses something from within itself to be attractive to others? Socrates wants to find something objective that calls forth piety from within him. If we say, however, that a thing is pious because God loves it, then anything can be pious. This alternative implies that there is no objective order. Euthyphro, under grilling, does not want to teach Socrates, as it turns out, because he (Euthyphro) does not himself know what piety is. And of course, typically, neither does Socrates claim to know what it is, even as he is engaged with Euthyphro to find what it is not.

Yet, piety has some exalted status. It is “beyond justice”—what can this mean? In practice, it means what we do to acknowledge the superiority of the gods, even when we can, strictly speaking, “do” nothing for them. Obviously, nothing we can do can really satisfy them. If they are not already satisfied, they are not gods. Likewise, to do nothing does not satisfy them either. What about prayers and sacrifices? In *The Laws*, Plato says that we are to spend our lives “singing, dancing, and sacrificing.” What we are looking for is something that does not imply that we have the power to satisfy the gods. Otherwise, in logic, we would be gods ourselves. This is why philosophy is the “love” of wisdom, not wisdom itself. The gods are wise and need not philosophize. It is perhaps not an accident that Christ did not come as a philosopher, while Socrates appeared precisely as one.

Socrates is accused of impiety, that is, not worshipping the gods of Athens, of the city. He denies the accusation. But he does not exactly worship the Homeric gods of Athens either. He is cautious. He is concerned with spiritual things, as he will say in *The Apology*, and if so with a source of spirit. This emphasis on spirit is why philosophy transcends the civic religion in Plato.

The religion that Plato has available to him can only allow such a solution. Plato does not have revelation; that is, he does not have available an explanation of the inner life of the Godhead that is itself Trinity. Nor does he have a doctrine of Incarnation, wherein God is also revealed as a specific human being, God and man, one God, but two natures. Nor does he have such a thing as Mass, a sacrifice that itself includes the notions of prayer, expiation, and the suffering of God. This latter also recalls Sophocles, that “man learns by suffering.”

III.

Euthyphro wants to be pious by prosecuting his father because of a crime that is not unlike the guilt of Oedipus, that is, unknowing. Meletus says that Socrates is a “maker of gods” (3b). The theme of worshipping false gods is, to recall, at the heart of the relation of Yahweh to Israel. Or to put it positively, the Old Testament revelation deals with exclusiveness, with not worshipping false gods. Strictly speaking, these false gods would also apply to the gods of the Greeks.

What, we wonder, is so terrible about worshipping false gods? And what does one do to perform such worship? The Hebrews made golden calves. Obviously, there is nothing wrong with gold, or calves, for that matter. What is wrong (this is the first commandment, “thou art the Lord God who shall not have strange gods before Him”) with such worship? And why is there a problem with worship anyhow? Is there something about the very nature of the intellect that would see a connection between getting it wrong about God and, as a result, getting it wrong with everything else?

Obviously, in worship, as the Euthyphro states, we cannot give anything to the gods that they do not already have. The relation of man to God is not to be based on the idea that God “needs” something from us that He does not have already. If this is so, what is the problem? It is because there are things beyond need. (This is what my *On the Unseriousness of Human Affairs* is about). A man does not “need” to tell his wife that she is beautiful. But if she is, and all wives are beautiful in their own way, and he does not acknowledge it, it is worse than depriving her of what is best about her. For she is worthy of praise, but only freely. Nor God can “command” piety. A wife cannot “demand” praise. It must arise freely, but about something that she really is. So piety means a response that is “due” without justice, that is, without being able to say exactly what is owed.

In some sense, the ultimate answer to piety has to come from the side of God. We need to be told what is best to do, or what would be the highest way to praise or acknowledge the Godhead, since we really do not know how praise-worthy it is in itself. This is what liturgy is about. The *Euthyphro* itself is filled with notions of gods that have no definite plan

for us—“According to your argument, my good Euthyphro, different gods consider different things to be just, beautiful, ugly, good, and bad, for they would not be at odds with one another unless they differ about these subjects, would they?” (7e). This is why Socrates, in *The Republic*, will have such a time with the Homeric gods. They approve things that the philosophers know to be wrong.

Euthyphro says, “I would certainly say that the pious is what all the gods love and the opposite, what all the gods hate, is the impious” (9e). Is there such a thing that all love and hate among the pagan gods? If not, as some gods praise one thing and others its opposite, Socrates’ view of philosophy as what transcends the gods makes sense.

Socrates says: “Then the god-loved is not the same as the pious, Euthyphro, nor the pious the same as the god-loved, as you say it is, but one differs from the other.” Euthyphro: “How so, Socrates?” Socrates: “Because we agree that the pious is being loved for this reason, that it is pious, but it is not pious because it is being loved.” (10d-e). That is, there must be something in it worth loving in the first place.

Euthyphro continues: “I think, Socrates, that the godly and pious is the part of the just that is concerned with the care of the gods, while that concerned with the care of men is the remaining part of justice.” Socrates: “You seem to me to put that very well, but I still need a bit of information. I do not know yet what you mean by care of, for you do not mean the care of the gods in the same sense as the care of other things, as, for example, we say, don’t we, that not everyone knows how to care for horses, but the horse breeder does.” (12e-13a). The man who cares for horses knows what to do about horses. He has a standard.

Socrates adds, using another example, “Could you tell me to the achievement of what goal service to doctors tends? Is it not, do you think, to achieve health?” (13d). We recall in Aristotle that the doctor is ordained to health as its end or purpose, but the doctor does not have anything to do with what we do when we are healthy. Obviously, our care of the gods cannot be designed to making them healthy, as they are already complete. So what can “care of” the gods mean?

Euthyphro (recall what was cited above from

The Laws) responds: “I say that if a man knows how to say and do what is pleasing to the gods at prayer and sacrifice, those are pious actions such as preserve both private houses and public affairs of state. The opposite of these pleasing actions are impious and overturn and destroy everything.” But to this Socrates replies: “If you had given me an answer, I should now have acquired from you sufficient knowledge of the nature of piety. As it is, the lover of inquiry must follow his beloved wherever it leads him. Once more then, what do you say that piety and the pious are? Are they a knowledge of how to sacrifice and pray?” (14b-c).

Incidentally, I must confess that I love the line, “the lover of inquiry must follow his beloved wherever it leads him.” It is indeed a worthy motto of a philosopher.

The problem, however, is whether the gods need anything from us. Socrates observes: “And to give correctly is to give them what they need from us, for it would not be skillful to bring gifts to anyone that are in no way needed.” (14d-e). Of course, gifts are not given just because what is given is needed, in the sense that the receiver lacks something. That comes closer to justice. A friend of mine, the other day, gave his wife some flowers after they had lunch together on a rare occasion. The flowers were not “needed.”

The “ancestor” of Socrates, Daedalus, the man who is mentioned in book one of *The Politics* as the example of the possibility of eliminating slavery by making statues that could weave, comes up here because of his “flying” ability, that is, arguments with Euthyphro go round and round. Euthyphro never manages to settle the issue about *what piety is*. “Do you they not realize now that you are saying that what is dear to the gods is the pious? Is this not the same as the god-loved?” (15c).

Since Euthyphro cannot define what piety is, he cannot teach Socrates what it is. Finally, at the end of this short dialogue, Euthyphro tells Socrates that

he is in a “hurry” (15e). Socrates tells him that he had hope of an answer to escape the indictment of Meletus that he (Socrates) was impious. He hoped to acquire knowledge of “wisdom in divine matters” from Euthyphro. This wisdom would prevent his “ignorance” to “cause him to be careless and inventive about such things, and that I would be better for the rest of my life.” (16a).

Already here, we find intimations of Socratic wisdom, that he knows that he does not know. He is accused of impiety because he is “careless.” But in his search for what is piety, he has found no teacher in Euthyphro, who is supposed to be the expert. Hence, we are subtly led to believe that Socrates is really more of an expert in piety than Euthyphro. Thus, Meletus can accuse Socrates of impiety because the experts do not themselves know what piety is.

Yet, on concluding the dialogue, we do know something more about piety. We know it is related to justice and involves the perplexing question of what exactly is it that we “owe” to the gods. Socrates does not deny that something is at stake here. From a revelational point of view, we would probably say that the “what is owed” cannot adequately be resolved on the human side by human means. Hence the unended pursuit of Socrates for “what is piety” is justified and opens us to wonder about what is implied here.

Socrates will be accused of being impious and not praising the gods of the city. The irony is that the gods of the city are not worth praise as they do things that are wrong, hence the problem with Homer. Socrates’ impiety, his passing to philosophy to find the answers, thus betrays a kind of logic. “*The lover of inquiry must follow where his beloved leads him.*” We might restate what is at stake in this way. If Socrates did find the adequate answer to “what is piety,” he would have already had to have revelation, as the question cannot, as such, be answered on the human side. This is what the *Euthyphro* is about.



Canonical questions about the Schiavo-Centonze marriage

by Edward N. Peters

Edward N. Peters has doctoral degrees in canon and civil law. A Foundation Member of the FCS since 1982, he currently holds the Edmund Cardinal Szoka Chair at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. Dr. Peters raised canonical marriage concerns in the Schiavo case more than a year before Terri Schiavo died. See his, "Neither shalt thou kill thy spouse: a canonical aspect of the Terri Schiavo case" in This Rock (January 2004) 16-19.

On March 31, 2005, thirteen days after being deprived of all nutrition and hydration, Terri Schiavo died. Her husband Michael, who ignored numerous appeals on behalf of Terri and rejected offers from others to take over her care, had finally outmaneuvered Terri's parents, the Florida legislature, and even the US Congress, in his bid to cut off his disabled wife's food and water with impunity. Terri's final agony—and death by dehydration-starvation is agonizing—dramatically coincided with Pope John Paul II's last days on earth. Even the Vatican issued an extraordinarily direct plea for the young woman's life, to no avail.

Terri's death had several consequences *vis-à-vis* Michael. For example, it gave him the rights to a trust fund established for Terri's long-term care (although Michael had apparently already spent much of the original \$ 750,000 on lawyers). It eliminated any lingering possibilities that Terri herself could someday communicate what happened to her that night in 1990 when Michael says he found his wife on the floor of their home. Finally, Terri's death cleared the way for Michael to marry Jodi Centonze, a divorcée with whom Michael had been living for several years and by whom he had fathered two children.

Or did it?

The Catholic Church, "an expert in humanity" as Pope Paul VI once observed, knows that some

people, perhaps in ironic acknowledgment of Church teaching that marriage lasts until death, will try to kill one spouse in order to take another. But since at least the 13th century, such deadly stratagems have been countered by a canonical impediment against the second marriage. Today, the matrimonial impediment of *crimen* is found in Canon 1090 of the *Code of Canon Law*, the first paragraph of which reads as follows: "Anyone who, with a view to entering marriage with a certain person, has brought about the death of that person's spouse or of one's own spouse invalidly attempts this marriage." It is on the basis of *crimen* that the Schiavo-Centonze marriage, held on January 21, 2006 to the scandal of many, seems open to serious question. This article examines the possible canonical objections to the Schiavo-Centonze marriage.

To be sure, no Christian marriage should lightly be impugned. According to canon law, all marriages enjoy "the favor of law" (c. 1060), meaning that the burden of proof rests upon those who would challenge the validity of a given marriage (cc. 1526, 1608). Catholic weddings, moreover, are to take place only after the pastor verifies "that nothing stands in the way of [a] valid and licit celebration" (cc. 1066, 1070); consequently, any Catholic wedding conducted in accord with canonical form—as the Schiavo-Centonze wedding seems to have been—enjoys the presumption of validity. But that presumption is not absolute; it yields to contrary evidence. If it could be proven that the Schiavo-Centonze marriage is, despite its public celebration, canonically null, the parties to that union would have the right to know how that fact impacts on their status in the Church. For that matter, the wider faith community has a right to know which persons it should regard as married and which ones ought not to enjoy that recognition.

The vast majority of challenges to matrimonial validity (commonly known as annulment cases) are filed by the parties to a marriage, but the right to challenge a marriage is not limited to the couple

themselves. The Church, having established a diocesan officer known as the Promoter of Justice (cc. 1430, 1435), authorizes this trained professional to challenge any marriage when its nullity is, or could be upon investigation, provable in the external forum (c. 1674). In fact, the Promoter of Justice must act in cases concerning the common good and, under canon law, it is well recognized that matrimonial cases, by their very nature, involve the common good. The jurisdictional requirements to adjudicate the canonical status of the Schiavo-Centonze marriage are clearly satisfied by the diocese of St. Petersburg because the wedding took place within its boundaries (c. 1673).

Nevertheless, some factors in the Schiavo case might cause some to wonder whether he has incurred the canonical impediment of *crimen*.

First, some might think that Michael's status as a baptized non-Catholic exempts him from canonical impediments. It is true that non-baptized persons and baptized non-Catholics who marry among themselves are not bound by impediments of purely ecclesiastical law, among which impediments *crimen* is generally classed. But when non-Catholics marry Catholics, canon law applies to both parties (c. 1059). In attempting marriage with a baptized Catholic, Jodi Centonze, Michael made himself subject to the requirements of ecclesiastical law, including the Church's laws on matrimonial impediments. Moreover, ignorance of an impediment is no bar to incurring it (c. 15); even marriages celebrated "in good faith", but under an impediment, are null (cc. 1057, 1073).

Second, some might wonder whether Michael avoids the impediment of *crimen* because his role in Terri's death was indirect. He did not personally cut off his wife's nutrition and hydration; instead, medical personnel acting on his directions and with court authorization did so. But canonical commentators are unanimous that the impediment of *crimen* applies not only to one who directly kills a spouse, but also to the *mandans* behind a spouse's death. One who achieves a spouse's death through intermediaries (e.g., by using hired killers, inciting enemy soldiers during war, or even leading one's spouse to commit suicide) is liable for any canonical consequences arising from that death. Michael, having secured a civil judge's de-

creed in support of actions that were intended to lead to his wife's death, directed medical personnel to deprive Terri of nutrition and hydration until she died. Such conduct, I suggest, qualifies Michael Schiavo as the *mandans* behind his wife's death.

Third, some might think that Michael avoids the impediment of *crimen* because a civil court approved his petition to deprive Terri of nutrition and hydration. The question may be posed thus: If, as far as the state was concerned, Michael committed no crime, can he still be "guilty" of *crimen* under canon law? The answer is Yes. Just as the Church can impose canonical consequences on persons involved in abortion (cc. 1041, 1398) even though abortion is civilly legal, so too the Church can impose canonical consequences on those who commit homicide (cc. 1041, 1090, 1397), even if such killings are not punishable under civil law. This point deserves some elaboration.

While the canonical term *crimen* resembles the English term "crime", canon law does not require that a spousal homicide be recognized as a "criminal" act under civil law in order for the impediment of *crimen* to arise. The impediment of *crimen* can be incurred even if no civil "crime" was committed. The only canonical question is whether the death of one spouse was brought about by the other with the intention of making possible a marriage to a third party. Of course, as the legalization of euthanasia spreads, deaths like the one imposed on Terri Schiavo can and will be procured more frequently under circumstances that are morally and canonically objectionable, but civilly legal. Increasingly, then, persons with a matrimonial motive to eliminate a vulnerable spouse could find an opportunity to do so under civil laws authorizing euthanasia, and at least some of those people will later present themselves for Catholic marriage. The time to confront this aspect of euthanasia has clearly arrived.

Of course, one must not attempt an interpretation of *crimen* that transgresses its terms (cc. 18, 213, 843, 1058). For example, the *crimen* impediment is designed to deter only homicides committed in furtherance of plans to marry another. Therefore, accidental spousal killings are not *crimen* cases, and even deliberate spousal homicides motivated by, say, hatred, desire for profit, or a general wish to be free of the obligations of married life, do not constitute

crimen, although they might well be punishable under civil manslaughter or murder laws. The ecclesiastical consequences of *crimen* arise only if the killing of a spouse was committed with the intention of clearing the other's way to marriage with a specific party. To be sure, some spousal killings might be committed with multiple motives (e.g., insurance money and a new spouse). As long as any of those motives is the furtherance of a plan to marry another, the impediment of *crimen* should apply.

There are, of course, hard cases on the horizon. In Terri Schiavo's case, it will be recalled, nutrition and fluids constituted "ordinary care". Their removal was directly intended to, and did, bring about her death. But what about cases where spousal death follows the refusal or cessation of *extraordinary* care? Assuming full compliance with the Church's criteria for care in close cases, could the canonical impediment of *crimen* be incurred if the decision-making spouse, desirous of entering marriage with someone else and motivated by that bias, declines to approve *extraordinary* care for a stricken spouse? I think not.

Committing a sin and incurring an impediment are related but indisputably distinct things. Moral theology informs the conscience while the reach of the law is generally restricted to observable facts and external behaviors. Declining *extraordinary* care for the satisfaction of seeing a stricken spouse die is morally blameworthy but, at least under the circumstances of this hypothetical, it seems that death would result not from the decision on *extraordinary* care, but rather from underlying pathologies or injuries that one was not morally obligated to treat with *extraordinary* means in the first place. Thus, it seems to me, the lack of a *causal* link between one spouse's conduct and the other spouse's death prevents the impediment of *crimen* from being incurred. I admit that my conclusion here is tentative, and I offer it for more study; at a minimum, as I suggested above, these kinds of questions are only going to become more

common as civil protections for innocent life continue to crumble. In any case, canonical investigation of the Schiavo-Centonze marriage need not await resolution of the more difficult "extraordinary care" questions because, as noted above, Michael deprived his wife Terri of *ordinary* care.

Finally, it should be recalled that the canonical consequences of the *crimen* impediment do not simply "fade away" with time. Indeed, personal repentance of a spousal killing or even obtaining sacramental absolution for any sin related to it would not cancel the canonical impediment. To the contrary, the Holy See has greatly restricted authority to dispense from the impediment of *crimen* (cc. 90, 1078, 1080) and commentators agree that, especially where the fact of spousal responsibility for the killing is widely known, dispensations from *crimen* are so rare as to be non-existent.

In brief, the diocese of St. Petersburg has jurisdiction over the Schiavo-Centonze wedding, there are credible grounds to question its validity under canon law and cogent replies to objections against such a challenge, and hearing this case would not require resolution of moral questions complicated by *extraordinary* care considerations.

The canonical impediment of *crimen* does more than serve as a disincentive to persons seeking to eliminate current spouses in order to marry new ones; it serves notice that consequences for lethal wrongs committed against innocent parties can remain even if others have forgotten the deceased, and specifically asserts that the approbation of a Church wedding will not be extended to those who, in pursuit of that wedding, are responsible for a former spouse's death. But for Canon 1090 to have its salutary effect in the Church and in society, plausible cases of canonical *crimen* must be carefully investigated and accurately decided, and the results appropriately published.

The Task of Lay Persons with Regard to the Propagation and Defense of the Faith

By Leo J. Elders s.v.d.

Ever since the Second Vatican Council lay people in the Church have become more and more conscious of the extent of their responsibilities. On more than one occasion certain groups addressed themselves to Rome, asking the Holy Father to intervene in particular situations in their respective local churches which, in their view, could not be tolerated. A rapid excursion in history shows that in past centuries lay people have frequently carried out such tasks as evangelization of non-Christians and the defense of the Christian faith. At the beginning of the Church this apostolate was quite common. One may recall the contribution of merchants, soldiers, officials and other citizens to the spreading of the gospel message in the Roman Empire, as well as the writings of the apologists of the first centuries. St. Justinus opened a school in Rome where those who had been baptized could perfect their Christian education. While still a layman Origenes directed the catechetical school of Alexandria. Lactantius, Tertulian and Minucius Felix were laymen.

However, as from the time of St. Gregory the Great, the activities of lay people on behalf of the faith lost in importance. A clericalization of the schools of catechetics and of the education in theology set in. The Decree of Gratianus mentions two classes of Christians, clerics and lay people. Nevertheless, many kings and queens were instrumental in promoting conversions, founding churches and monasteries and urging a more solid formation of the clergy, even to such a point that in the tenth and eleventh centuries the organization of the dioceses and the appointing of bishops were to a considerable extent controlled by secular authorities. The reform of Gregory VII (1073-1085) reversed this situation. In order to suppress abuses Gregory decreed that lay persons could not take part in the designation of Church dignitaries. But a less fortunate effect of this reform was the birth of the spirit of laicism, the conflict between

Bonifatius VIII and King Philip Le Beau, the claim that the temporal order is wholly independent from the spiritual.

The Protestant Reformation of Luther is in part a prolongation of this movement toward the radical independence of the temporal order: since all the baptized are priests, what do we need priests for? The Council of Trent replied by defining the distinction between the priesthood of ordained ministers and that of the baptized. In face of the heterodox views of Luther the council fathers defined the faith and re-established to some extent the lost equilibrium. However, the task of lay persons in the field of the instruction in the faith was considerably reduced. In keeping with the praxis of the post-conciliar period, the former Codex of Canon Law limited itself to the statement that lay persons have the right to receive spiritual goods from the clergy. The encyclical *Vehermenter* of 1906 goes so far as to say that the faithful just have the duty to let themselves be guided and to follow its pastors as a docile flock.

The pastors of the Church began to realize that this kind of restriction of the role of lay people in the church *de facto* led to a certain separation of the Church from public life. To change this situation the genial pope Pius XI promoted the idea of the Catholic Action. Yet at the doctrinal level not everything was very clear. Instead of grounding the task of the Christian people on the triple office of Christ, one spoke in this case of a participation in the mission of the hierarchy.

Vatican II revolutionized the theology of the lay people in the Church: the latter have their own task in the Church, sharing as they do in the priestly, prophetic and royal office of Christ. They must testify of Christ and sanctify the temporal order. Their mission is the evangelization of the society and the construction of the temporal order in keeping with the Gospel.

The new Codex formulates this mission of the lay people as follows: lay Christians must be active in order to make the salvation offered by God known

to all so that it is received by all the nations of the world (Canon 225). Canon 229 stipulates that lay Christians in order to be able to live up to the Christian doctrine, to announce it and when necessary to defend it, have the obligation and the right to acquire knowledge of this doctrine¹. Canon 212 states that on certain occasions the faithful can and must inform the pastors of the Church about those things which concern the good of the Church, and may also inform the other Christians. It would seem that this text states the right and the duty to be vigilant with regard to the doctrine and the ecclesiastical order.

I. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

The theological foundation of this mission of lay people is the very nature of Christian life. The baptized partake in the priesthood, prophetic and even the royal office of Christ. They receive the “gift of the Spirit” to announce Him who “replaced darkness by light” (1 Peter 2, 8-9) and “to announce to the nations the great deeds of Jahweh” (Jes. 12, 1-4). The Holy Spirit lives in their hearts in order to give them understanding of the faith and strength to propagate it.

The text of the *Acts of the Apostles* presupposes the participation of the simple faithful in the ministry of the word of God. The rapid spreading of the faith and the presence of Christian communities in numerous cities of the Roman empire can only be explained by the evangelizing work of dynamic laymen. The word *didaskalos*, so often used in the *New Testament* probably denotes well educated Christians, charged by the leaders of the communities to instruct the catechumenes and to initiate them to the Christian doctrine.

St. Thomas Aquinas stresses the threefold mission of Christians², the Church being the *pleroma*, the fullness of Christ. This unction of all Christians is a certain anticipation of the end of time, when the magistry will have fulfilled its task and the sacraments will no longer be administered. St. Augustin reminds us that parents must direct and instruct their children and so to say perform an ecclesial and episcopal function³.

For some people this mission is beset with difficulties. In their view lay people are subordinated to the magistry of the Church, they cannot conceive

how the latter could possibly teach the Christian doctrine. But one must distinguish between a) preaching divine revelation with authority both in public and in private; b) admonishments to convert and to lead a Christian life; c) the study and theological teaching of Christian doctrine. When these three forms of instruction are exercised at the public level, an explicit or implicit mandate by the magistry of the Church is required. In this respect we nowadays speak of the *missio canonica*, but already during the Middle Ages the need of this mandate was acknowledged. One may recall the interventions of the popes with regard to the Waldenses and other lay preachers. But with regard to admonishing people to convert or for instructing the scientific aspects of theology such a mandate seems less necessary.

We must not conceive the magistry as the only depositary of the treasure of Christian doctrine since that belongs to the Church as a whole. The Spirit of God descends on the entire Church and makes it remain faithful to revealed doctrine. As the illustrious theologian Matthias Scheeben wrote, the Tradition, that is the Christian life in its entirety is transmitted by the entire Church⁴. The modernists understood this fact as a reduction of the mission of the magistry which should do no more than express and formulate the opinions prevalent among the faithful⁵. This opinion is also held by some contemporary authors who suggest that bishops should not and cannot prescribe or regulate anything without haven previously consulted the faithful. Some even go so far as to say that bishops must only express the concerns of the faithful⁶ and follow the people rather than direct it.

What is right in this opinion is that the body of the faithful is one of the witnesses of the tradition of what God has revealed and that a consensus of all is the voice of the infallible Church⁷. As Paulinus of Nola said, it is necessary to listen to all the faithful, since the Spirit inspires them. Several of the Fathers made identical statements. It is a fact that prior to the solemn proclamation of the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception of Mary and her Assumption the Popes consulted the faithful. For instance, in the letter *Deiparae Virginis*⁸ the Pope writes “in unison with the clergy and your faithful”.

The duty to consult the faithful does not exclude at all that the faith of the Christians is based on the preaching of the apostles, but means that only the

Magistry of the Church can define what in one way or another is present in the faith of the entire Church. In the article of J.H. Newman which we have just quoted the cardinal explains what is the meaning of this consciousness of the Christian people. Their consensus is a sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit and witnesses to the doctrine of the apostles. It is a sign of a supernatural instinct deep in the heart of the Mystical Body. The faithful are subject to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and await from Him an answer to their prayers. They show zeal to maintain the purity of the faith.

II. LAY PERSONS AND THE DEFENSE OF THE FAITH

In his *Lecture on Anglican Difficulties* Newman illustrates the almost spontaneous rejection by the faithful of certain errors by what a healthy organism does in rejecting what is alien to it. As a matter of fact down through the ages the Christian people have repeatedly chosen the orthodox faith and distanced themselves from false pastors. St. Hippolytus notes that the Holy Spirit grants to those who have the right faith the grace to know how those at the head of the Church must instruct it⁹. Well known are the words of St. Hilary of Poitiers when talking about Arianism: “Sanctiores aures plebis quam corda sacerdotum”¹⁰. In the confusion of those years the divinity of Christ was confessed rather by the *Ecclesia docta* than by the *Ecclesia docens*. The faithful supported St. Athanasius, St. Hillary and Eusebius of Vercelli. The Christians of Alexandria would rather die than subscribe to the heresy of Arianism. St. Basil writes that the lay people with the right faith did not visit the churches presided over by an Arian bishop and which had become schools of impiety¹¹.

One notices something similar in the age of the protestant reformation and after Vatican II, when lay people tried to defend the catholic faith, but not always found support from the side of their bishops. Not the great of this world and the powerful, but the humble conduct the Church to victory. God may use the intervention of lay people to confound the priests. But when we speak about lay people, certain things must be kept in mind: they must be persons who are in quest of a saintly life and have been educated in the correct doctrine. If over a longer period a community

or group has been exposed to an insidious propaganda, it may no longer have a clear vision. It is also possible that a considerable number of Christians abandon the moral doctrine of the gospel and follow the trends predominant in their society. This seems to have happened in the field of sexual life. If Christians refuse to walk on the narrow path of Christ they lose the grace of the holy Spirit and the capacity to judge correctly in matters of the faith. Newman once wrote that the Irish have saved the Church in Ireland, but that the Catholic people in England betrayed it¹².

III. LAY PEOPLE AND EVANGELIZATION

The new Code of Canon Law enumerates among the duties of the lay people the task to spread the gospel. It fills us with joy and gratitude to commemorate that many lay persons from the very beginning of the Church until our days have carried out this task in an admirable way. We pointed out that during the first centuries of the Church soldiers, merchants and officials were very active in the evangelization of the Roman Empire. One may add what the pagan Celsus (second part of the 2nd century A.D.) said about their zeal: when they can round up children or silly women, as devoid of intelligence as they themselves, they begin to explain to them the miracle stories. They go to the shop of the wool comber and of the shoemaker to teach them their wisdom. That is the way Christians try to gain adepts to their cause¹³.

In the beginning of the Church missionary apostolate was hardly organized. Eusebius recounts that many Christians simply sold their belongings in order to preach the gospel in other countries¹⁴. There were also itinerant bishops. In the modern time examples of this zeal are not lacking. Marc Escarbot, a lawyer, worked with great zeal for the evangelization of Canada. Carlo Cuarteron, a ship captain, who in 1850 survived a shipwreck, established a mission in Borneo. A Chinese merchant, Tsen On Nje, converted the coolies who worked in the tin mines of the island of Banka. In this connection one must also mention Pauline Jaricot and Ferdinand de Bertier de Sauvigny, the founder of the Knights of the Faith. The enormous progress mission work made in Korea is due for a great part to the zeal of lay apostles.

If we leave aside the period from the ninth to the

fifteenth century, we see that numerous lay people collaborated in the defense of the faith. Silvio Piccolomini wrote apologetic tracts to defend the faith against deviations at the Council of Basel. Contarini, who at that time was still a lay man, wrote against the errors of Luther. One may also recall the influence of Cha-teaubriand's *Le génie du christianisme*, the works of Joseph de Maistre, of Louis Veuillot, Gilbert Keith Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc and Christopher Dawson¹⁵.

IV INSTRUCTION AND CATECHESIS

Usebius tells us that Origenes' love of Holy Scripture went back to his infancy, when his father Leonidas, taught him a great love of the Word of God. It would seem that many family fathers taught their children religion at home completing the instruction received at the pagan schools¹⁶. The same practice was followed in the family of St. Basil, Macrina and Gregory of Nyssa. St. John Chrysostom elaborated a program for the religious instruction to be given in the families¹⁷. During the third century lay catechists in Rome helped prepare the catechumens. Bishop Demetrios of Alexandria invited Origenes to teach a course of Christian religion. Thus lay persons received an official mission to teach religion classes. However, when the catechumenate got a more liturgical character, it was entrusted more and more to the exclusive care of ordained ministers.

As Michel Sauvage has shown¹⁸, many lay persons performed the functions of professors of religion and theology. They began to teach religion moved by the desire to share the truth they possessed. Many of them had been pagans, knew the weakness of the non-Christian world, but also the objections raised against Christianity. Their culture enabled them to speak the language of their time. But they were able to present the Christian doctrine. But one must also point out the appearance of heterodox lay teachers, even in Rome. The pastors of the Church attempted to keep the situation under control. Teaching Christian religion is not something to be left to the personal views of individual Christians¹⁹.

After the triumph of Christianity there was a rise of apologetic literature by numerous lay authors, such as Arnobius, Lactantius, Firmius Maternus, Victorinus and Prosper of Aquitania (who spread Augustine's doctrine of grace). The idea that the theological stud-

ies must be reserved to clerics found no supporters in the patristic period²⁰. Because of the downfall of the Roman Empire theological studies came *de facto* to be more and more reserved to the bishops and monks²¹. But two laymen deserve to be mentioned who exercised a considerable influence, Boethius and Cassiodorus.

In the period between the sixth and the eleventh centuries religious instruction was reserved almost exclusively to the clergy. Lay people were illiterate, but a cultural renaissance took place in the 12th century, the cities began to develop, lay preachers arose, criticizing unworthy priests and beginning to take their place, but often spreading erroneous doctrines²². As Innocentius III observed, when the priests keep silent lay people replace them but spread errors in many ways²³. In this respect the movement of the Valdenses must be mentioned. They wanted to help the Church, betrayed as it was, they said, by the clergy, but soon refused to submit themselves to the authorities of the Church and wanted to do away with priests and bishops. They had very little theological knowledge²⁴. The word *lay* had the sense of ignorant.

The upshot of our survey is that competence in the field of Christian doctrine is a condition for the ministry of the word, but that a mission by the hierarchy is also required. The Valdenses considered themselves as directly subject to God, refused to submit to the Church and so denied its very structure. One should notice that Innocentius III conceded to repented heretics the privilege of giving instruction in Christian moral doctrine, but they were not allowed to preach in the churches²⁵. Durandus of Huesca received permission to enter into debate with heretics, so that a layman was directly associated with the defense of the faith²⁶. St. Francis of Assisi and his brothers effectively preached but showed total submission to the authority of the Church. For preaching in churches even St. Francis needed a special permission.

In the Middle Ages as well as in classical antiquity the religious instruction of the youth was the task of the parents, who could delegate their task to suitable persons. Certain decrees of Charlemagne and several decisions by councils insisted on this point²⁷. But in many cases this religious instruction was neglected. In the XVIth century a renewal set in²⁸. Francis of Villanova, a wool comber, took the initiative to organize instruction in religion and elementary knowledge

for poor children. This was the origin of the Society of Christian Doctrine, whose members were for the greater part lay people and lived with their respective families but devoted their Sundays to dispense this free education. The Spanish Escolapios (St. Joseph of Calasanz), the Jesuits and many other religious groups began to answer to this need for religious instruction. In France the Brothers of the Christian Schools made a particular valuable contribution to the establishment of schools and to religious education

In this way a network of Christian schools developed in which school brothers and feminine religious were extremely active and still are. After the Second Vatican Council this powerful system began to show cracks because of the lack of vocations. Religious instruction had to be re-organized and the role of the parents became once more very important. Parishes resorted to lay volunteers to provide religious education.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Our rapid historical survey has drawn attention to the irreplaceable role of lay persons in the evangelization and the defense of the faith. Their engagement and influence change with the situation of the society and the Church. It is tempting to think that the tragic decrease of the numbers of candidates to the priesthood and religious life in our time will lead to a good, sc. that the lay people in the Church will more and more assume their role in the field of religious instruction, the defense of the faith and evangelization. But our Christian parents must also look for a solution of the frightening problem of so many of our youngsters drifting away from the faith and convert their families into centers of an intense religious life and of a high cultural level.

But our historical survey has also shown that the lay people did not always fulfill their obligations in this particular field without falling into errors. Sometimes they had insufficient knowledge, fell into heresy, were narrowminded or rejected the hierarchical structure of the Church. The lessons of the past may help us avoid the pitfalls of similar aberrations in our time. By the working of the Holy Spirit the XXIst century might well turn into an age where our catholic lay people will salvage the remnants of what once was Western Christianity and give a new impulse to evangelization and the defense of the faith²⁹.

Footnotes

- ¹ On the background of this canon see *Communicationes Pontificiae Commissio iuris canonici authentice interpretando*, 17 (1985), 178-179.
- ² *Lectura in Epist. ad Hebr.*, c. 1, lesson 4, 3.
- ³ *Epist. Parm.*, 2, 13, 28 : PL 43, 70.
- ⁴ *Dogmatik*, I, 13, n. 170; 15, n. 120.
- ⁵ One may compare the decree *Lamentabili* of 1907 which condemned this view.
- ⁶ Cf. W. Goddijn, *The beheerste Kerk*.
- ⁷ J.H. Newman, *On consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine* (1859), ed. J. Coulson, London 1961, 63.
- ⁸ May 1, 1946.
- ⁹ *Traditio apostolica*, ch. 1.
- ¹⁰ "Contra Auxentium, 6: PL 10, 613.
- ¹¹ *Epistula* 92. Cf. J.H. Newman, *The Arians of the Fourth Century* (1871), 445 ff.
- ¹² See J. Coulson, J.H. Newman. *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*, p. 21
- ¹³ Origenes, *Contra Celsum*, III, 49-55. cf. G. Bardy. "L'apostolat des laïques aux premiers siècles", *Masses ouvrières*, 1945, 5 ff.
- ¹⁴ *Hist. Eccl.*, III, 37, 2-3. See also o.c., V, 5, 10, on Pantenos, the brilliant director of the School of Alexandria, who, in his zeal to preach the gospel, traveled as far as India. Many lay persons wanted to imitate the apostles.
- ¹⁵ Cf. Yves Congar, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*, p. 430.
- ¹⁶ *H. E.*, VI, 2, 7.
- ¹⁷ See H.-I. Marrou, *L'histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité*, p. 565. See also Pope Gelasius, *Epist.* 97, 50: CSEL, 35, 425.
- ¹⁸ *Catéchèse et laïcat*, Paris 1962, 107. This section of our article is indebted to Sauvage's book.
- ¹⁹ Cf. G. Bardy, "Les écoles romaines, au deuxième siècle, in *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 28, (1932), 501-532
- ²⁰ See H.-I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture classique*, Paris 1938, 383.
- ²¹ Y. Congar, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*, pp. 428 ss.
- ²² See P. Riché, "L'instruction des laïcs au XIIe siècle", in *Mélanges Saint Bernard*, Dijon 1954, 219-227.
- ²³ PL 215, 819: "... canibus gregis Dominici latratum non dantibus, latrant et ipsi, non ut insidias lupi repellant, sed potius ut gregem errare faciant et dispergant".
- ²⁴ See A. Dondaine, "Aux origines du valdisme", in *Arch. Fratrum Praedic.* 16 (1946) 192-232.
- ²⁵ *Vetera Humiliatorum Monumenta II*, 133-134 (quoted after M. Sauvage).
- ²⁶ Congar, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat*, 443.
- ²⁷ Cf. PL 97, 247 ff.; PL 138, 3000; PL 151, 1170; Mansi, 14, 62; 541 (references according to M. Sauvage).
- ²⁸ During the occupation of Hungary by the Turks lay people gave religious instruction. Cf. C. Juhasz, "L'apostolat laïc en Hongrie pendant l'occupation turque", in *Nouvelle revue théologique* 77 (1955), 849-859.
- ²⁹ This essay was published in Spanish in *La misión del laico en la Iglesia y en el mundo*, Pamplona 1987, pp. 569-580.

A Note on Neo-Modernism

Reverend Brian Van Hove, S.J.

The term “Neo-Modernism” is polemical and is not in common use among professional historians. Rather, the ideas of the Enlightenment and nineteenth century scientism have never gone away. They continuously incubate beneath the surface of the Western world. It seems that Modernism from time to time tries to recycle itself. The period 1915-1965 saw a dormancy for certain ideas in the Catholic Church due to the disruption of the war years, the Cold War, and for other reasons. One may debate the success or failure of the Oath against Modernism to force ideas underground and to sustain such a dormancy. But the same ideas continually revive and flourish, sometimes in new contexts, including that following the Second Vatican Council.

Yes, Liberal Catholicism “resembled” the Liberal Protestantism of the past. For this, the multi-volume *Concilium* may be consulted. But this time around, heterodox “liberalist” ideas were not confined to the academy. They were popularized by improved means of communication and through periodicals of every type. The technology of the mass media made the difference. Popular culture had already been softened up to absorb these ideas for over three hundred years since the Enlightenment. Future historians will have to give the period a name, perhaps simply that of the “Religious Left” in the second half of the twentieth century and after.

Benedict Groeschel described Liberalism as “faith without content”. Jonathan Robinson in *The Mass and Modernity* showed the deleterious effect of G.W.F. Hegel’s ideas on the reform of the Sacred Liturgy. In 2005 Pope Benedict XVI in his pre-election homily spoke of the need to pursue timeless truths and to avoid the “dictatorship of relativisms”. His doctrinal

congregation’s Declaration “Dominus Jesus: on the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church” (6 August 2000) seems to be anti-Modernist in its intent without using the terminology of Pope St. Pius X.

Perhaps it is best to restrict the term “Modernism” to the period of Pius X and not to broaden it to include just about any heterodoxy in the Catholic Church over the last hundred years.

Religious and clergy (not laypeople) disciplined for heterodoxy in faith or morals after Vatican II (including Hans Küng, Charles E. Curran, Jacques Dupuis, Roger Haight, Leonardo Boff, Antonio Rosmini Serbati, Marciano Vidal, Reinhard Meßner, Robert Nugent, Jeannine Gramick, Anthony De Mello, and Tissa Balasuriya) are generally not referred to either in the secular press or by ecclesiastical authorities as “Neo-Modernists.”

Rosemary Radford Reuther (1936–) dedicated an early work to Alfred Loisy (the true Modernist), and she subtitled another book “Beyond Christolatry”. Since Dr. Reuther is neither clergy nor Religious, the official Church has remained silent about her doctrine and her status as a Catholic. But it seems unwise to label her either a “Modernist” or a “Neo-Modernist”. For the time being, we lack precise and agreed-upon terminology here.

When asked if he was a “Neo-Thomist”, Jacques Maritain was said to have replied, “No! I am a ‘Paleo-Thomist’.” Likewise there is only one “Paleo-Modernism” which has affected one generation differently from another. Lacking evangelical truth and Catholic orthodoxy, it is not destined to build up the Body of Christ, but it does confuse and disorient many members of the Church. It also presses the very young toward an unprocessed and unsynthesized traditionalism in matters of religion.

Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue: *Unitatis Redintegratio, Nostra Aetate*. Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy. New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2005. x + 293. PB \$18.95. ISBN O-8091-4338.

Reviewed by Kenneth D. Whitehead, author, most recently, of One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic: The Early Church Was the Catholic Church (Ignatius Press, 2000). His new book, What Vatican II Did Right: Forty Years after the Council and Counting, is forthcoming from Ignatius Press.

The Paulist Press is publishing an eight-book series, “Rediscovering Vatican II,” in commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the Council. The aim of the series is to educate people about the Council, to review how in the post-conciliar era the Church has treated the sixteen Council documents, and to indicate where the Church may be headed with regard to the subject matter of each document.

The aim of this “Rediscovering Vatican II” series is salutary: to have an available round-up of just where we stand with regard to the Vatican II documents after forty years meets a very important need. As everybody knows, in the years since the Council, these Council documents have too often been misunderstood and misapplied, if not sometimes simply ignored. This outcome has been especially unfortunate in view of the high hopes originally engendered by the Council as well as of the very real and high merit of its actual work. It is therefore worthwhile to re-visit the Council documents with an eye to what they really did say and prescribe, and then take some cognizance of how they have fared since.

However, since the much vaunted “spirit of Vatican II” still commends itself to so many in the current Catholic “knowledge class,” not all of the names of the authors announced for this new Paulist Press series inspire confidence that all of the books in the series will exhibit unalloyed loyalty either to the letter of the Council’s texts or to that of the post-conciliar magisterium of the Church. Rather, like the Paulist Press list generally, while some of the choices of authors seem to be quite good and even excellent,

others belong to the category of those who, in our present period of still widely tolerated dissent in the Church, have not always appeared to let their “yes be yes and [their] no no” (Jas 5:12) in support of the magisterium of the Church, and hence one can only wonder how they will treat the actual teachings of the Council in the volumes they produce.

This is not notably the problem in the present case, however, since the author of this first volume in the series, *Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue*, is none other than the retired Australian Cardinal Edward Cassidy. For a dozen years between 1989 and 2001, Cardinal Cassidy was president both of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) and of the Vatican’s Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews (CRRJ). Thus he was more or less *in charge* of much of the Church’s official ecumenical dialogue as well as of an important part of her official interreligious dialogue during his years in these offices.

During those years, which included such widely reported on developments as the controversial 1998 CRRJ document *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah* (or Nazi holocaust against the Jews), and the epochal 1999 Catholic-Lutheran *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, one formed an impression of Cardinal Cassidy as a solid, level-headed, and competent prelate operating in some pretty difficult if not sometimes treacherous problem areas. He certainly writes with the authority of his experiences in this book; and, by and large, he does do a very creditable job of it—with an exception that will be noted below.

On the whole, the impression of the level-headedness and competence of Cardinal Cassidy seems to be confirmed in reading the book. It is quite a useful volume, covering many areas and events not always widely reported on—and not always well understood even when they happen to get reported on. Nor have ecumenism and interreligious dialogue generally always been at the center of attention or at the top of the priority lists even of knowledgeable commentators on Church affairs. As Cardinal Cassidy’s narrative makes clear, however, they *were* very near the top of the priority lists of both Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II. The same thing appears to be true of the current priority list of Pope Benedict XVI as well.

It is not possible to understand these post-Vatican-II pontificates properly unless it is also understood how thoroughly both of the two Vatican II documents covered in this book changed the Church's approach to those outside her visible boundaries—and how seriously each of the post-Vatican-II popes has tried to follow and implement the new approach to non-Catholics and to non-Christians prescribed by *Unitatis Redintegratio* and *Nostra Aetate*.

Prior to the Council, the Catholic Church had tended to stand apart and aloof from those who were not within her fold. The Church appeared to believe that people generally, except for those in mission territories, were supposed to come to her, not she to them. After all, she possessed the fullness of Christ's truth and of the sacramental means of sanctification and salvation. It was not that she did not attempt to engage the world, or, most especially, to perform works of charity for all indiscriminately, regardless of their Church membership; it was rather that she did not approach non-Catholics and non-Christians as persons of any particular religious persuasion (or, to the extent that she did, she saw them as simply mired in the errors of a *false* religion). Hence, there was little interaction at all on the Church's part with those outside her visible boundaries.

As a result of Vatican II, however, the Church's stance on all this was changed quite significantly. The teaching of *Lumen Gentium* #8 with its teaching that "many elements of sanctification and truth are found outside [the] visible confines" of the Catholic Church. This meant that non-Catholic Christians and Christian bodies therefore enjoyed, in spite of their separation, a special relationship with Christ's Church not clearly recognized or enunciated before. As for the Jews, *Lumen Gentium* #1 brought out the well-known but rarely acknowledged or acted upon fact that "the Church was prepared in marvelous fashion in the history of the people of Israel and in the old Alliance." These basic concepts in turn led to the preparation and promulgation by the Council of both *Unitatis Redintegratio* and *Nostra Aetate*. Henceforth, non-Catholic Christians as well as Jews were to be expressly recognized and cultivated by the Church.

Thus, the two documents covered in Cardinal Cassidy's book, on ecumenism and on non-Christian

religions, spelled out in some detail the Church's new policy of engaging non-Catholics and even non-Christians. Now, forty years later, Cardinal Cassidy examines what each document says, brings out its major points, discusses the implementation of each in the post-conciliar era, and summarizes what he calls "the state of the question" with regard to each one.

Both ecumenism and interreligious dialogue have figured quite prominently in the Church's activities since the Council. *Unitatis Redintegratio* offered the judgment of the Council Fathers that the current state of division among Christians "openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages that most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel to every creature" (UR #1). *Nostra Aetate* was equally emphatic in declaring that "the Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in [other] religions. She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from her own teaching, nevertheless often reflects a ray of that truth which enlightens all men" (NA #2).

And it is certainly true that since the issuance of these documents, the Church's outward relations with many of those not within her communion have been marked with a good will and even a warmth which certainly did not characterize these same relations before the Council. That, with very minor exceptions, no actual cases of Christian reunification have yet resulted—or that, notoriously, all the good will in the world has scarcely removed the obstacles in the way of good relations with, e.g., some Muslims—these undeniable facts do not diminish or nullify the value of the efforts that the Church has sincerely made in the ecumenical and interreligious areas. It is surely fitting that Christ's Church should at least be seeking to live in peace, harmony, and charity with those outside her fold.

Cardinal Cassidy briefly but adequately chronicles the major concrete steps by which the post-conciliar Church has pursued the twin goals of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. He discusses the major agreements, joint statements, and the like, of which there have been quite a number owing to the really extensive formal dialogues which representatives of the Church have conducted in the post-conciliar era with nearly every major element

or organized body in today's divided Christianity. He makes reference to such major occurrences as Pope John Paul II's sometimes dramatic ecumenical visits, especially with the Eastern Orthodox, as he does to the same pontiff's memorable visit to Jerusalem in the year 2000. Similarly covered are contentious issues such as the pope's interreligious Days of Prayer in Assisi in 1986, 1993, and 2002, or the controversies which arose over the foundation of a Carmelite convent near the site of the Auschwitz death camp in the late 1980s. The way in which the Catholic Church has now pretty much *taken over* the leadership of the world ecumenical movement is also chronicled, even if only quite briefly, as is the controversy which broke out following the issuance in the year 2000 of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's *Dominus Iesus*, in which the Catholic Church was widely seen as going back on the promises of Vatican II and re-asserting her "exclusivist" claims in a way which had come to be thought incompatible with the new ecumenism. And these are only a few of the events and developments covered.

There is no doubt that the Second Vatican Council fully intended that the Church should get involved in ecumenical and interreligious activities in the way that the Church has, in fact, gotten involved in them. At the same time, it was never intended that the Church's own teachings and claim to represent God's authentic and definitive revelation to the human race should in any way be weakened or watered down. The Council Fathers were quite worried, in fact, about the dangers of religious indifferentism if the Church's teachings and practices were actually going to be subjected to *debate* in the course of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. They themselves debated long and hard in the course of several Council sessions before finally deciding to launch the Church into the new era of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue in the interests of reaching out and working to end the scandal of division.

At the same time, however, *Unitatis Redintegratio* #11 carefully specified that "nothing is so foreign to the spirit of ecumenism as a false irenicism which harms the unity of Catholic doctrine and obscures its genuine and certain meaning." Catholic truth was to be maintained in its integrity in the midst of all the new ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. For the

most part, as Cardinal Cassidy records, the Church has conscientiously and correctly walked the line in this regard; certainly this is true of the actual documents, agreed statements, joint declarations, and the like which have been produced in the course of the new ecumenical era and to which any Church representative has officially appended a signature.

It has not always been true, however, of some of the *impressions* created by the Church's wholehearted plunge into the new ecumenism. Nor has it been true of every single Catholic commissioned by the Church to engage in ecumenical or interreligious dialogue. In fact, it has sometimes appeared from the words and actions and attitudes of at least some of the Catholics engaged in the new era of good feeling that perhaps the Church *was* prepared after all to modify or even abandon some of her established positions for the sake of ecumenical harmony or possible Christian reunion. Especially with regard to relations with the Jews, in fact, but not only with regard to them, a whole new class of Catholic "experts" and "specialists" emerged in the post-conciliar years who sometimes seemed more eager to urge the typical views of their particular ecumenical constituencies upon Catholics than they were to represent correctly to their constituencies the positions and teachings of the Church.

Again with respect to those involved in interreligious dialogue with the Jews, one could sometimes get the impression from them that practically the main point of Catholic teaching was henceforth that the Catholic Church was *not* anti-semitic. One thinks in this regard of those Catholic voices that so readily joined with the most strident of certain Jewish voices in publicly characterizing Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* as anti-semitic—in a number of cases before they had even seen the film. Some of these same people were employed by Church-sponsored entities engaged in dialogue. Surely their behavior constituted "false irenicism" with a vengeance!

Even Pope John Paul II, no doubt in his eagerness to push forward the Church's new ecumenical and interreligious enterprise, could occasionally create the impression that the Church was perhaps now prepared to cut a few corners in the interests of better relations, where formerly the Church had persisted adamantly in standing fast. There were, again,

the Assisi Days of Prayer for Peace, for example, where acceptance of non-Christian forms of prayer was surely carried beyond previous limits. Perhaps not surprisingly, this scandalized some Catholics. It is true that John Paul II sometimes seemed curiously oblivious to the effect that some gestures of his could have upon the faithful. (Contrary to the allegations of some traditionalists, however, the Assisi Days of Prayer for Peace in no way compromised Catholic teaching; they were, precisely, exercises in joint prayers.)

Similarly, in a 1980 “Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Judaism” delivered to a Jewish group in Mainz, Germany, John Paul II actually made the remark that the old covenant with the Jews had, in fact, “never been revoked by God.” Though both the manner and the substance of this remark were more in the nature of an *obiter dictum* of the pontiff’s rather than the articulation of an official Church teaching, there were those who, almost inevitably, concluded that words such as these coming from the pope himself must, in Cardinal Cassidy’s words, open up “new possibilities of dialogue on the two covenants and their relationship.” However, this was surely to read more significance into the pope’s remark than was warranted. For one thing, God never expressly “revoked” the covenant with Noah either, for that matter, nor the one with Abraham. What God did in each case was to amplify and fulfill the promises entailed in each successive covenant by establishing a *new* covenant (the covenant with Abraham replacing that with Noah, the covenants of Moses and then with David replacing that with Abraham, and the new covenant in the blood of Jesus Christ in turn replacing these).

Nevertheless, there were some who were prone to take such words as those of the pontiff’s reference to the “never revoked” covenant with the Jews to mean considerably more than the teaching of the Church could ever allow. Among these people was none other than Cardinal Cassidy’s successor and current president of both the PCPCU and the CRRJ, Cardinal Walter Kasper. Addressing the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee in New York in May, 2001—and reacting to the furor that had been stirred up in ecumenical and interreligious circles by the issuance of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s *Dominus Iesus* on the Unicity

and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church—Cardinal Kasper said, *inter alia*, that “God’s grace, which is the grace of Jesus Christ according to our faith, is available to all. Therefore, the Church believes that Judaism, i.e., the faithful response of the Jewish people to God’s irrevocable covenant, is *salvific for them*, because God is faithful to his promises” (emphasis added).

Salvific? The use of this word would evidently mean that Judaism had the power to *save* the Jews embracing it. This would surely amount to going way too far in view of the Church’s traditional and firm teaching that salvation is to be found in Jesus Christ alone. It would also directly, and not incidentally, contradict the teaching of *Dominus Iesus* itself, which specifies that:

There is only one salvific economy of the one and triune God, realized in the mystery of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Son of God, actualized with the cooperation of the Holy Spirit and extended in its salvific value to all humanity and to the entire universe. “No one, therefore, can enter into communion with God except through Christ by the working of the Holy Spirit.” (DI #12).

Or, to quote only one of the Church’s more recent pronouncements on this subject, namely, the following passage from Pope John Paul II’s 1990 encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* on the Mission of the Redeemer:

If we go back to the beginnings of the Church, we find a clear affirmation that Christ is the one Savior of all, the only one able to reveal God and lead to God. In reply to the Jewish religious authorities who question the apostles about healing the lame man, Peter says: “By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing before you well. . . . And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:10, 12). This statement, which was made to the Sanhedrin, has universal value, since for all people—Jews and Gentiles alike—salvation can only come from Jesus Christ (RM #5).

Thus, Cardinal Kasper was certainly reaching too far with his notions that Judaism in and of itself could be “salvific”—or that the old covenant could somehow still be in force. Perhaps it was an effort on his part to placate or appease his Jewish interlocutors disturbed, as many were at that time, by the perceived

return to “exclusivism” in the restatement of Church doctrine in *Dominus Iesus*. But it nevertheless was a misplaced effort on the cardinal’s part, and it was surely an example of the very “false irenicism” that Vatican II had striven to exclude.

Nevertheless, there does not seem to have been much of a reaction to Cardinal Kasper’s mis-step—at first. Then, in August, 2002, the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, jointly with the U.S. National Council of Synagogues, issued a paper, “Reflections on Covenant and Mission,” in which Cardinal Kasper’s idea of the salvific nature of Judaism was taken up again and prominently quoted, and a conclusion offered to the effect that:

A deepening Catholic appreciation of the eternal covenant between God and the Jewish people, together with a recognition of a divinely given mission to Jews to witness to God’s faithful love, lead to the conclusion that campaigns that target Jews for conversion to Christianity are no longer theologically acceptable in the Catholic Church.

This rather bald language to the effect that wishing to convert Jews to Christ was “no longer theologically acceptable in the Catholic Church” did get a reaction. A number of critical statements and articles ensued. There was even a bit of a furor. Baltimore’s Cardinal William Keeler, then the U.S. bishops’ moderator for Catholic-Jewish relations, was seemingly obliged to declare that the Covenant and Mission statement that the USCCB Committee had released did not constitute any kind of formal position on the part of the U.S. bishops, but rather merely represented “the state of thought among participants in the dialogue” between Catholics and Jews. Yet to admit that much was still to implicate the American bishops, the official teachers of the faith, in an obviously dubious enterprise causing no little embarrassment to the Church. One also had to wonder *what kind* of participants had been commissioned by them to conduct the dialogue with the Jews.

Subsequently, this unfortunate joint Catholic-Jewish “Reflections on Covenant and Mission” paper seems to have been just quietly withdrawn. It never appeared in the USCCB Publishing catalogue, for example, as well it should not have; and it seems to have simply dropped out of sight.

As for Cardinal Kasper, he too backed off considerably from his original notion that Judaism could in and of itself somehow be “salvific”: in a speech at Boston College delivered in November, 2002, following closely upon the controversy over the Covenant and Mission document, he rather lamely excused himself for his earlier words by saying, “I do not speak for the Vatican... The role of our dicastery [the CRRJ] is to promote dialogue and not to officially guide its development or decide its outcome.” While he did not expressly repudiate his earlier language concerning the supposed “salvific” character of Judaism, he softened it considerably by noting merely that if the Jews “follow their own conscience and believe in God’s promises as they understand them in their religious tradition, they are in line with God’s plan, which for us comes to historical completion in Jesus Christ” (not just “for us,” though!).

In short, what we seem to have had here is a case where the Curia cardinal in charge of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue for the entire universal Church proved himself capable of a bit of “false irenicism” of his own. Perhaps this should not surprise us too much, considering how delicate and complicated the whole ecumenical enterprise can be—and considering how the principles laid down by Vatican II, are still not always definite or concrete enough to guide everyone unerringly in every case. We can only be grateful that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, precisely in *Dominus Iesus*, had meanwhile provided a salutary balance to the tendency simply to take up the principles of *Unitatis Redintegration* and *Nostra Aetate* and run with them in the interests of better relations with those outside the Church.

But how does all this relate to Cardinal Cassidy’s generally good treatment of each of these two documents in this book? Quite simply, Cardinal Cassidy shows himself to be quite uncritical if not actually approving of the “false irenicism” exhibited in the Covenant and Mission document. He himself mentions the document and describes it blandly as having “created great interest among Jews and Catholics involved in dialogue.” He even quotes the same passage from Cardinal Kasper quoted above about how the old covenant is supposedly “salvific” for the Jews. Cardinal Cassidy then elaborates:

Since in Catholic teaching, both the Church and the Jewish people abide in covenant with God, they both therefore have *missions* before God to undertake in the world (emphasis added).

And Cardinal Cassidy even goes on to quote the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger to the effect that “God’s providence...has obviously given Israel a particular mission in *this time of the Gentiles*” (emphasis in the original). But to say that the Jews still have a *mission* in God’s plan is hardly equivalent to establishing that the old covenant is somehow still in force and perhaps even somehow “salvific.” Indeed, it was not “salvific” at the time, as St. Paul was more than once at such pains to emphasize. In his famous words in Romans 11: 28–29, St. Paul merely says that the Jews are still “*beloved* for the sake of their forefathers” (emphasis added) and also that “the gifts and call of God are irrevocable” (not the covenant itself).

Even though the Jews for the most part failed to recognize Christ as the expected Messiah, and hence have carried on in the world as Jews—and while God has not ceased to love them for all of that—the fact remains that “the new and everlasting covenant” of which the liturgy speaks *was* established in Christ’s blood and *is* now the covenant that is operative and normative and definitive for all human beings, including the Jews. The further fact, therefore, is that whatever plan God now has for the Jews necessarily has to be a Plan B. What Jacques Maritain many years ago called “the mystery of Israel,” still existing and persisting—and often oppressed and suffering as well—is indeed a mystery, and one deserving of continued and profound reflection on the part of Catholic theologians.

But to imagine or suggest that the respective “missions” of Christians and Jews in the world today might somehow be equivalent to each other, or close

to it, as the Covenant and Mission document seems to imply—and both Cardinals Cassidy and Kasper appear to have bought off on or at least allowed—is to go off the tracks. It is not a little disconcerting, in fact, that not only the “specialists” and “experts” engaged in dialogue with the Jews, but the very Curia cardinals who have headed the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews over the past more than fifteen years, could have so uncritically climbed on this train inevitably destined for derailment.

Yet both Cardinals Cassidy and Kasper, in most other respects, strike the observer depending only on documents and press reports concerning their efforts and activities, to be in general able and sincere prelates, well chosen for carrying out the delicate and difficult responsibilities confided to them in the fields of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue. They both seem to have fallen down here, but it does not follow that this is true of all of their other efforts and activities. Still, as already noted, it is also a good thing that, all the while, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has also been on the job in bringing out such documents as *Dominus Iesus* just at the point when they seem to have been needed in order to uphold the Church’s true teachings in these important matters.

At the same time, it must be said that, on the whole, this book of Cardinal Cassidy’s remains a valuable and useful volume covering subject matter to which too little attention is being paid today. The very temptation, even, apparently, for some of those in high places, to fall into the “false irenicism” that Vatican II so rightly deplored, itself provides a reason why more people ought to be paying more attention to what is sometimes being done in the name of the Church in the fields of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue.



John Dewey and the Decline of American Education, by Edmonson, Henry T. III. ISI Books, Wilmington, DE, 2006. pp. xiv + 134.

Reviewed by: Jude P. Dougherty, Dean Emeritus, The Catholic University of America

If you are of a certain age, let us say, old enough to be a grandparent, you have seen it happen in your lifetime. You do not need this work to tell you that American public education at all levels has degenerated in the course of the past half century. Edmonson lays the blame on the unfortunate espousal in professional educational circles of John Dewey's theory of education. Dewey's emphasis on experience denigrates the inherited and the necessity to study ancient and foreign languages in order to master the past. For him, the function of education is to challenge the received, to challenge Western civilization in its core beliefs. Dewey's philosophy of education is, of course, only one aspect of his pragmatic naturalism, but more than that it is a political program. Dewey came to that position slowly. If one were to survey only his later atheistic and socialist writings, one would be surprised to find the newly created Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins lecturing to students at the University of Michigan on "Our obligation to know God." That was when Dewey was still a convinced Hegelian and open to the transcendent. As Hegel came under fire by empiricists on both sides of the Atlantic for his failure to adequately account for method as actually practiced in the natural sciences, Dewey abandoned the idealism of his intellectual mentor

in favor of British empiricism. He became a disciple of David Hume, John Stuart Mill, and Karl Marx and subsequently embraced the social determinism of Emil Durkheim.

British empiricism, in its denial of evidence for the existence of God, deprived religion of its rational foundation, leaving religion on intellectual shaky ground, with consequences in the moral and social orders. Dewey believed that many of the values held dear by the religious are worthy of consideration and should not be abandoned, but a proper rationale ought to be sought for those values deemed commendable. Whatever role religion may have played in the past, it is an unreliable source of knowledge, he maintained, and, in spite of contentions to the contrary, even of motivation. The thrust of his critique of religion was not merely to eliminate churches from political life but to reduce their effectiveness in private life. Religion he deemed socially dangerous insofar as it gives practical credence to a divine law and attempts to mold personal and social conduct in conformity with norms that look beyond temporal society. The aim of his educational philosophy could be summed up in the slogan, "The function of education is to challenge, not perpetuate, the inherited."

The implications of Dewey's naturalism are many, but the governing principle of his educational project is found in his desire to use the schools to solve social and political problems. Recognizing that the pursuit of change through politics can be frustratingly slow, Dewey concluded that the use of education to change the world is far more efficient. Edmonson is

convinced that Dewey's primary interest is not the good of the student but the promotion of his socialist agenda. "Thanks in no small part to Dewey," Edmonson writes, "much of what characterizes contemporary education is a revolt against various expressions of authority, a revolt against a canon of learning, a revolt against tradition, a revolt against religious values, a revolt against moral standards, a revolt against logic—even a revolt against grammar and spelling." Concluding that most disputes in education today are far more than technical quarrels, that they are fundamental philosophical disagreements, Edmonson in his final chapter, "Disinheriting Dewey," asks, "What should a good educational philosophy look like?" Although he gives no detailed answer, one can find the answer in the work of some of Dewey's less celebrated contemporaries, who early on saw the danger of a Dewey-inspired progressive education. Mortimer Adler of the University of Chicago wrote a work entitled, "How to Read A Book," a not too subtle attack on Dewey's philosophy of education that called for a mastery of the great books of the Western literary canon that shaped our culture. Mark van Doren's, "The Liberal Education," was essentially a defense of the education that gave us Jefferson, Adams, and Hamilton.

Sadly, the secular outlook embraced by Dewey and his disciples eventually penetrated all levels of the academy, leading to a deterioration of both moral and intellectual standards. Deprived of its anchorage in classical learning and biblical morality and without any discernable moral compass, the educational system in the United States became vulnerable to every passing fad. The current

vogue of multiculturalism and affirmative action have resulted in a “dumbing down” of the curriculum to accommodate all. The depreciation of history and classical languages and the neglect of foreign languages has ill prepared students for advanced studies in the humanities, let alone an understanding of events on the world stage. Useful technical education and education in the sciences have fared no better. Edmonson tells us that in the recently administered Third International Math and Science Study American 12th graders scored near the bottom, placing 19th out of 21 developed nations in math and science and that our advanced students did even worse, scoring last in physics.

Edmonson doesn't draw the conclusion, but one puts this book down with the conviction that unless control of primary and secondary education is wrested from the U.S. educational establishment, corrective measures are not likely to occur.

From Witchery to Sanctity: The Religious Vicissitudes of the Hawthornes by Otto and Katharine Bird. South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2005. \$24.00

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Otto and Katharine Bird's recent contribution to the longstanding conversation about Hawthorne and religion is a unique and pleasantly readable book which addresses a wonderfully complex constellation of issues. How did Hawthorne really feel about organized religion and the Puritan God, and what prompted

his daughters' eventual turn to Anglicanism (in the case of Una) and Catholicism (in the case of Rose)? Did the famous “recluse” of Salem ever escape the ghosts of his Puritan ancestors, (in)famous for tormenting Quakers and presiding over the Salem witch trials of 1692? Is Hawthorne's fiction an indictment of the dangers of religious devotion and fanaticism, or a cathartic resolution (at least for the author if for no one else) of the tensions between the imperfect human body of Christ and its divine source? *From Witchery to Sanctity: The Religious Vicissitudes of the Hawthornes* is a slim volume that does not at all make the pretense of settling such a vast host of important biographical and literary quandaries. It does, however, place these issues remarkably well within the drama of the Hawthorne and American historical and religious legacy. This legacy begins in Catholic merry old England, produces one of the greatest imaginative minds of the American pantheon of poets in the midst of the vastly changing religious landscape of the 19th century, and surprisingly (or perhaps not so surprisingly) returns to Catholicism again in the person of Hawthorne's youngest daughter, Rose Lathrop Hawthorne, who became a nun and founded an order of religious devoted to serving penniless cancer patients.

This volume will occupy a most useful position among books of Hawthorne literary criticism and biographies because it concisely presents the remarkable narrative of the entire Hawthorne clan in all its religious and cultural complexity, including a discussion of how these religious “vicissitudes” impacted Nathaniel's art. *From Witchery to Sanctity* progresses in three sections.

Part I comprises a compact but substantive discussion of the religious and cultural milieu in which Nathaniel's ancestors came to America, and what became of their Puritanical legacy in New England as it lapsed into Unitarianism. In particular, the Birds provide historical sketches of the grave Massachusetts Puritan Major William Hathorne (famous persecutor of Quakers) and his son John Hathorne (who presided with Samuel Sewall and Thomas Danforth at the Salem Witch trials of 1692). Both William and John Hathorne are figures prominent in Nathaniel's familial, regional, and historical consciousness, a fact amply illustrated in his literary art (both William and John are referenced by Hawthorne in the “Custom House Sketch”, his pseudo-autobiographical preface to the *Scarlet Letter*). Part I concludes with a discussion of the final demise of the Puritan religious and cultural hegemony in New England in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and the concomitant rise of liberal Unitarianism, a shift seismic in its dimensions in the way it influenced the religious, cultural, and artistic views of such figures as Hawthorne, Melville, Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman.

Part II of the book, which is more literary criticism than biography, sensitively traces the themes of institutional religion and the great Hawthornesque theme of sin and its consequences in such works as *The Scarlet Letter*, *The House of the Seven Gables*, *The Blithedale Romance*, and *The Marble Faun* (while touching on several short stories as well). In particular the Birds are to be commended for respecting the imaginative license of Hawthorne as a creator of a unique brand of religiously charged fiction: they resist the temptation to

read his fiction as either a blanket indictment of Puritanism's excesses or the work of a neurotically tortured and guilt-ridden descendant of the Puritans. The deep religious and human complexities in Hawthorne's fiction, so obvious to his contemporary, Melville, are given full literary consideration in *From Witchery to Sanctity*.

Part III concludes the study with a sketch of the life and accomplishments of Rose Lathrop Hawthorne, who converted to Catholicism, founded the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, and assumed the name Mother Alphonsa. The Birds convincingly illustrate how Rose's reception into the Catholic Church and ultimate embracing of the religious life (devoted to serving terminal cancer patients) can be seen as an outgrowth of the deep and sincere respect for religion Nathaniel and Sophia Hawthorne cultivated in their home as they raised Rose and her siblings, Una and Julian.

From Witchery to Sanctity is unique blend of biography and literary criticism. While it proffers nothing novel to the rarefied professional specialist in Hawthorne studies, it successfully weaves together into a delightful narrative the complex and paradoxical religious themes so characteristic of the Hawthornes in America. Most Hawthorne biographies and literary analyses explore the Puritan mind in relation to Hawthorne's family history and art, but *From Witchery to Sanctity*, perhaps more than any other work on Hawthorne, illustrates and foregrounds the important role Catholicism played in the drama of the Hawthorne family.

Yours is a Precious Witness: Memoirs of Jews and Catholics in Wartime Italy, by Margherita Marchione. New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997. Pp. 259. Softbound. \$16.95. ISBN 0809140322

Reviewed by Reverend Brian Van Hove, S.J., *White House Retreat Saint Louis, Missouri*

This short volume is dedicated to the memory of Father Robert A. Graham, S.J., who wrote extensively on the subject of Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust. Its focus is somewhat narrow and does not attempt to tell the whole story. Rather, Dr. Marchione, a Religious of the Pontifical Institute of the Religious Teachers Filippini, concentrates on Italy, Rome, and the Vatican. Based on verifiable historical sources, it is an apologetical defense of Pius XII against the claim that he was "silent".

Even the international Jewish relief agencies and the Red Cross were "silent" because no other strategy was possible. Several factors led to the need for this approach. The Nazi betrayal of the pontifical concordat with the German State, Nazi reaction to the encyclical of Pius XI 'Mit brennender Sorge,' and the bitter experience in Holland after the Dutch bishops denounced the Nazi laws imposed there in July, 1942—all taught that the only realistically effective way to deal with Hitler was by quiet action and secrecy.

Marchione goes on to stress that deeds have more importance than words, and the deeds of Pius are still available for the record before the people who survived the War have all passed away. Thus the book is in part necessarily oral and anecdotal, detailing specific families and individuals and their difficulties in evading arrest

by the Gestapo during the Occupation in Italy. She gives particulars and her sources are delightful for the historian looking for the "human dimension" and "the feminine touch" rather than the citation of statistics and figures alone. Her sources are "hard" sources nonetheless, even though of a genre different from the many volumes of the more official *Records and Documents of the Holy See Relating to the Second World War, 1965-1981*. (ref. page 57)

Photographs tells us of these deeds of the Church, the *mitzvoth* of Pius who fed the population in Rome and Castelgandolfo at Vatican expense. There are photographs of Jews disguised as priests living in the Vatican, the dining halls set up to feed refugees, and the works of Religious Orders operating under instruction from Pius through the normal channels of the Holy See. The Brothers of St. John of God ["Fatebenefratelli"] were especially helpful to Jews and other partisans. Nor are the Jesuits forgotten for their efforts when the Generalate at Borgo Santo Spirito was used as a coordinating center for Jews to emigrate out of Europe in 1944. (page 169)

Marchione points the way for further regional and national studies. In an age which too easily says "not enough was done" we need to hear what *was* done under impossible circumstances and at great sacrifice. Prime Minister Golda Meir said it so well in 1958 after Pius died, "When fearful martyrdom came to our people in the decade of Nazi terror, the voice of the pope was raised for its victims." (page 57)

*Italian version of this review first published in *La Civiltà Cattolica* (1/3568 [Febbraio 1999]: 423-424).

Higher education could heal itself by teaching civics—not race, class, and gender.

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What Colleges Forget to Teach

Robert P. George, Department of Political Science, Princeton University

The university is worth fighting for. No other institution can carry the burden of educating our young people. That's why we must redouble our efforts to restore integrity, civility, and rigorous standards in American higher education—particularly in the area of civic education.

I'll be the first to admit that the situation is dire. I sympathize when critics throw up their hands in despair. I sometimes feel that way myself. Darkness often prevails in places where the light of learning should shine. I often trade horror stories with my friend Hadley Arkes, a distinguished scholar of jurisprudence and political theory at Amherst. On one occasion, I explained that the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton was sponsoring a viciously anti-Catholic art exhibit—one that it would never even permit were some favored faith or cause, such as Islam or gay rights, its target. Every year, some outrage along these lines seems to prove that anti-Catholicism really is the anti-Semitism of the intellectuals, though anyone familiar with academic life today knows that anti-Semitism itself is making a run at being the anti-Semitism of the intellectuals.

Professor Arkes listened sympathetically and said, "Things have gotten pretty bad here at Amherst, too: we've granted tenure in political science to a guy promoting a theory explaining the foreign policy of George H. W. Bush by reference to his alleged homoerotic attraction to Ronald Reagan." "Well," I replied, "Princeton has topped that. We've given a distinguished chair in bioethics to a fellow who insists that eating animals is morally wrong, but that killing newborn human infants can be a perfectly moral choice." (This professor has since gone on to say that there would be nothing wrong with a society in which large numbers of children were conceived, born, and then killed in infancy to obtain transplantable organs.)

And so we go back and forth with each other, in a macabre game of one-upmanship.

Still, teaching at Princeton is in many ways a joy. I have the privilege of instructing students who actually know when the Civil War took place. Even before arriving at Princeton, they know that Lee surrendered to Grant, not to Eisenhower, at Appomattox Court House. Most know that Philadelphia, not Washington, D.C., played host to the constitutional convention. Few would list Alexander Hamilton among the most important presidents, because they know that he was never president. Some can identify the cabinet office that he held and even give a decent account of his differences with Thomas Jefferson. Speaking of whom, all my students know that Jefferson owned slaves, but then, everybody seems to know that, even those who know nothing else about him. My students, though,

also know that it was Franklin D. Roosevelt, not his cousin Teddy, or Harry Truman, or JFK, who promised Americans a New Deal. Some can even tell you that the Supreme Court invalidated some early New Deal legislation and that FDR responded with a plan to pack the Court. Yes, my students and students at elite universities around the country come to campus knowing American history pretty well—and wanting to know it a lot better.

Many of these young men and women value historical knowledge not merely for its own sake but because they want to be good citizens. More, they seek to be of genuine service to fellow citizens. Many hope to be legislators, judges, even president. They know that knowledge of American history is vital to effective citizenship and service.

But they also need an understanding of American civics—particularly the principles of the Constitution. For all their academic achievement, students at Princeton and Yale and Stanford and Harvard and other schools that attract America's most talented young people rarely come to campus with a sound grasp of the philosophy of America's constitutional government. How did the Founding Fathers seek, via the institutions that the Constitution created, to build and maintain a regime of ordered liberty? Even some of our best-informed students think something along these lines: the Framers set down a list of basic freedoms in a Bill of Rights, which an independent judiciary, protected from the vicissitudes of politics, would then enforce.

It's the rare student indeed who enters the classroom already aware that the Framers believed

that the true bulwark of liberty was limited government. Few students comprehend the crucial distinction between (on the one hand) the national government as one of delegated and enumerated powers, and (on the other) the states as governments of general jurisdiction, exercising police powers to protect public health, safety, and morals, and to advance the general welfare. If anything, they imagine that it's the other way around. Thus they have no comprehension as to why leading supporters of the Constitution objected to a Bill of Rights, worried that it could compromise the delegated-powers doctrine and thus undermine the true liberty-securing principle of limited government.

Good students these days have heard of federalism, yet they have little appreciation of how it works or why the Founders thought it so vital. They've heard of the separation of powers and often can sketch how the system of checks and balances should work. But if one asks, for example, "Who checks the courts?" they cannot give a satisfactory answer.

The students' lack of awareness flows partly from the conception of the American civic order that they have drunk in, which treats courts as if they aren't really part of the government. Judges, on this view, are "non-political" actors whose job is to keep politicians in line with what elite circles regard as enlightened opinions. Judicial supremacy, of the kind that Jefferson and Lincoln stingingly condemned, thus winds up uncritically assumed to be sound constitutional law. The idea that the courts themselves could violate the Constitution by, for example, usurping authority

that the Constitution vests in other branches of government, is off the radar screen.

Lacking basic knowledge of the American Founders' political philosophy and of the principles that they enshrined in the Constitution, students often fall prey to the notion that ours is a "Living Constitution," whose actual words matter little. On the Living Constitution theory, judges—especially Supreme Court justices—serve as members of a kind of standing constitutional convention whose role is to invalidate legislation that progressive circles regard as antiquated or retrograde, all in the name of adapting the Constitution to keep up with the times.

It doesn't take much to expose the absurdity of this theory. The purpose of enshrining principles in a constitution is to ensure that the nation's fundamental values remain honored even if they fall out of fashion. As for adapting the nation's laws to keep up with the times, legislators can—and should—take care of that task. The proper role of courts when they exercise the power of judicial review is essentially a conserving (you could even say "conservative") one. It is not to change anything but rather to place limits on what one can change.

Does this mean that our Constitution is "dead"? No: the Constitution's principles are "living" in the sense that they can apply validly even to matters that the Founders themselves could not have anticipated. The original understanding of Fourth Amendment principles governing searches and seizures, for example, can reliably extend to cover today's controversies about computer files, cyber-storage, and electronic surveillance. So to reject,

as we should, the Living Constitution and its anticonstitutional doctrine of virtually unlimited judicial power is by no means to treat our Constitution as a dead letter. Rather, it is to treat the Constitution as law—supreme law—binding on, and limiting the power of, every branch of government and agency of the state, including the courts.

What is the source of this educational breakdown? The trouble isn't the students—they're bright and eager to learn. It's that too few teachers are presenting students with the Founders' philosophy, much less introducing them to the great issues, some still with us today, that divided the Founders.

And if teachers aren't teaching the Founding's principles, where will students learn them? They're not likely to get any sense of the distinction between the delegated powers of the national government and the general jurisdiction of the states from any newspapers, national magazines, or television news networks, that's for sure. Have the editors of the *New York Times* and the folks at CBS News even heard of that distinction yet? News travels slowly, true; but it shouldn't take 218 years.

The solution to this educational breakdown is straightforward: we need to make a commitment at every level of schooling and within the public media to promote a deep awareness of the principles of the American Founding. Why educate students into archaism? Some will doubtless object. Surely governing principles set forth in the eighteenth century have little relevance to us in the twenty-first. But American ideals, as embodied preeminently in the Declaration of Independence, are universal and timeless.

They have force wherever there are human beings, fallible (indeed, as the Founders recognized, fallen) creatures, yet images of God in their possession of reason and freedom—beings, as the Declaration says, “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.”

The constitutional scheme that the Founders devised for the lawful governance of human beings and for the preservation of their sacred rights is the world’s greatest triumph of practical political science. Of course, we shouldn’t treat our institutions as if they’re perfect—the Founders provided, after all, for their possible revision by constitutional amendment. True civic education isn’t indoctrination. The Founders themselves weren’t of one mind as to the proper interpretation of their handiwork in every respect. And reasonable people of goodwill, of course, disagree about key matters of constitutional interpretation. We do our students a wonderful service when we invite them into the great historical and contemporary debates about the meaning of our fundamental law in controversial cases. To do that, though, we must equip them with the historical knowledge and the philosophical understanding necessary if they’re to evaluate intelligently the competing arguments.

We needn’t teach that our institutions are uniquely just—that any polity that seeks to respect people’s rights and preserve liberties must copy them precisely. But anyone who sincerely seeks the truth will see that ours are indeed worthy institutions that have served Americans well whenever our people and leaders have shown the wisdom and mustered the fortitude to honor and live by them. The fact is, free-

dom-loving people throughout the world—even in an age darkened by widespread anti-Americanism—draw inspiration from American ideals and look to American institutions as the gold standard of republican government. Even critics of American policy feel that they must pay lip service to our ideals of democracy, limited government, equality before the law, civil liberty, private property, the free economy, and the rule of law.

Madison did not doubt that it would be so: “The free system of government we have established,” he wrote, “is so congenial with reason, with common sense, and with a universal feeling that it must produce approbation and a desire of imitation, as avenues may be found for truth to the knowledge of nations.” In Eastern Europe, much of Latin America, and parts of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, “avenues have been found for truth to the knowledge of nations.” Yet, at the same time, in the U.S. itself, public comprehension of “the free system of government” that Madison and his “founding brothers” bequeathed to us has eroded. We must reverse that trend. Otherwise, the quality of citizenship and statesmanship will inevitably suffer.

Madison famously observed that “only a well-educated people can be permanently a free people.” Yet some today seem to think otherwise. They don’t necessarily doubt that the impoverishment of civic understanding erodes citizenship and statesmanship, but they wonder why we can’t get along perfectly well anyway. We are, after all, the richest, most powerful nation in world history. We’re on top, and despite emerging economic challenges from China, maybe In-

dia, we’re likely to stay there. Isn’t that enough?

To this, a double reply. First, history shows us that basic freedoms are hard-won and easily lost. The institutions that preserve freedom can be crumbling even as they appear strong. Severe economic strains and other fundamental challenges can tempt people to compromise or sacrifice even basic freedoms. As Madison knew, it is conviction born of knowledge—civic understanding—that is our bulwark, our only true security, in the face of such temptations.

Second, as Plato (though no admirer of democracy) observes, the goal of the polis—the political order—isn’t merely to establish security but also to provide the conditions for citizens to live good and decent lives, worthy of human beings as rational and moral creatures. Our founders saw this crucial philosophical point. The purpose of the Declaration of Independence and its principles of civic life, Jefferson wrote shortly before he died, were “not to find out new principles or new arguments never before thought of, nor merely to say things which had never been said before, but to place before mankind the common sense of the subject... All its authority rests on the harmonizing sentiments of the day, whether expressed in conversation, in letters, printed essays, or in the elementary books of public right, as Aristotle, Cicero, Locke, Sydney, etc.”

These “elementary books” inform us that statesmanship and, especially, citizenship, though key means to other ends, possess a value greater than merely instrumental. When we carry out our civic responsibilities in an informed way, we find ourselves ennobled as individuals and as a

community. Even if a nation could remain on top in the global competition for military and economic superiority, and even if its basic political structure could last more or less indefinitely, the people of that nation, if they remain ignorant of the moral foundations of that structure, would be impoverished.

Whatever one thinks of the decision to invade Iraq, one cannot fail to find deeply moving the desire of the vast majority of Iraqis to be democratic citizens—a desire that cannot be accounted for merely by noting the tendency of democracies over time to be prosperous and stable. Rather, Iraqis proudly displaying ink-stained fingers are saying something that we Americans, at some level, still appreciate: that democratic citizenship fulfills an important aspect of our humanity. It is so inherently desirable that Iraqi men and women have risked their lives to exercise the franchise, just as it caused those eighteenth-century Americans who pledged their “lives, fortunes, and sacred honor” to risk the king’s hangman’s noose.

Our posture cannot be—must not be—complacent. We must firmly resolve to make reform and renewal—whatever the obstacles, whatever the costs—our constant endeavor. We must not let the resistance of entrenched interests or recalcitrant ideological forces in the academic establishment, the funding bureaucracies, or anywhere else intimidate us. Let us seize every opportunity, marshaling our resources and deploying our wits to advance the cause of reform wherever we detect an opening, however much the weeds may obscure it. The reform and renewal of civic education in our nation is a noble cause. We must make it an urgent priority.

The Church and the Slaves

reprinted from the *Wall Street Journal* “Letters to the Editor”, March 27, 2006, p. A17

Rev. Michael P. Orsi is a member of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars

In his Mar 17 commentary “Religious Minority” (Houses of Worship, Taste page), David Gibson said that “the Vatican condemned the slave trade only in 1839 ... and it was not until 1888 that the Vatican officially condemned slavery.” The fact of the matter is that in 1537 Pope Paul III issued three decrees against New World slavery. The second of these decrees invoked the penalty of excommunication on anyone who engaged in slavery, regardless of their “dignity, state, condition or grade.” Because these decrees were for the most part ignored regarding the African transatlantic slave trade, Pope Urban VIII in 1639 issued another decree reaffirming Paul III excommunication for those engaged in the practice.

Unfortunately, as is the case with contemporary issues like abortion, not all Catholics obeyed even though the church did teach very early and clearly that slavery was inherently evil.

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If you would like to receive a complimentary copy of one of the books below in order to review it for a future issue, please email your request to Alice Osberger at osberger.1@nd.edu

If there are books you know of that should be reviewed, let Brian Benestad know at benestadj1@scranton.edu

A People and a Nation: A History of the United States, Brief Seventh Edition, Norton, Katzman, Blight, Chudacoff, Logevall, Bailey, Pater-son, Tuttle, Houghton Mifflin Co.: Boston, NY (2007), Paper, 635 pp.

Sex and the Marriage Covenant: A Basis for Morality, John F. Kippley, Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 411 pp., Paper.

The Unchanging Heart of the Priesthood, Fr. Thomas Acklin, O.S.B., Emmaus Road Publishing: Steubenville, OH, (2006), Paper, 228pp.

Envoy of the Apostles: On the Acts of the Apostles 16-28, Stephen Pimentel, Emmaus Road Publishing: Steubenville, OH, (2005), Paper, 85pp.

The Great Life: Essays on Doctrine and Holiness, ed. Michael Aquilina and Kenneth Ogorek, Emmaus Road Publishing: Steubenville, OH, (2006), Paper, 248pp.

John Stone, the founder (in 1993) and the Executive Director of the Canadian Chapter of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, died on February 22 in Toronto at the age of eighty. He was educated at St. Mary's College, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, and the University of Toronto. He contributed several articles to *Journal*, the chapter's publication. He was dedicated to the Church's apostolate, earlier in the Cursillo Movement and then in several other Catholic movements such as Witness and the Toronto Call to Holiness Apostolate, of which he was the Director. He was a man of deep faith, dignity, and integrity. He leaves behind his wife, Rita, and several brothers.

Who Was Paul Horgan?

(1903–1995)

by Reverend Brian Van Hove, S.J.,
White House Retreat, Saint Louis, Missouri

The President of the Catholic Historical Association in 1958, and twice a Pulitzer Prize winner, Paul Horgan was born in Buffalo, New York, 1 August 1903. He adopted the literary name “Paul” early in his career. After 1915, his family lived in New

Mexico, which shaped all his succeeding interest.

He was long associated with Roswell, New Mexico, where he was a cadet at the New Mexico Military Institute from 1919 to 1921 and from 1922 to 1923. He was librarian at that Institute between 1926 and 1942. Roswell is reflected or depicted in numerous short stories in *The Return of the Weed*, *Figures in a Landscape*, and *The Peach Stone*; and in the novels *A Lamp on the Plains*, *Far from Cibola*, and *Whitewater*. The folk opera, *A Tree on the Plains*, is “essentially Roswell”.

A Guggenheim fellowship in 1947 allowed him to devote his full attention to his major work, *Great River: The Rio Grande in North American History*, and the next stage of his career as historian and novelist. His two-volume work *Great River* won the Pulitzer Prize in History in 1955, and his definitive historical biography *Lamy of Santa Fe: His Life and Times* won another Pulitzer in 1977.

Many early distinguished bishops in the United States came from France, and this was the case with the first archbishop of Santa Fe, Jean-Baptiste Lamy. Mr. Horgan spent twenty years of meticulous research to write this biography

which has been described as his “labor of love”. Lamy was the historical character behind the literary figure of Bishop Latour in Willa Cather's 1927 novel *Death Comes for the Archbishop*.

While most of Horgan's professional life was spent as a novelist and artist (thirteen novels, nine other works of fiction, sixteen non-fiction) his place in the life of the Catholic Church in the United States was secured by his serious work of ecclesiastical history on the life of Archbishop Lamy. The University of Notre Dame awarded him the Laetare Medal for it in 1976. It was reprinted in paperback in 1988 by Noonday and again in 2003 by the Wesleyan University Press.

By 1982, Horgan had already been given eighteen honorary degrees from various American universities. His biography was published by *Robert Franklin Gish as Nueva Granada: Paul Horgan and the Southwest* (College Station, TX : Texas A&M University Press, 1994). In 2006 the Loyola Press reprinted Horgan's 1964 novel *Things As They Are*.

Paul Horgan died 8 March 1995 in Middletown, Connecticut.

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A special dinner meeting was held on Sunday, March 12, 2006, in Washington, D.C., at the request of the Committee on Doctrine of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, to begin an exchange with the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars. Those in attendance as members of the Committee, were Auxiliary Bishop Edward W. Clark, Bishop Robert J. McManus, as well as Reverend Thomas G. Weinandy, the Executive Director for the Secretariat for Doctrine and Pastoral Practices at the USCCB. The Chairman of that Committee, Bishop Arthur J. Serratelli, was unable to attend because of illness. FCS members in attendance were Dr. Bernard Dobranski, Dr. Brian Benestad, Reverend Monsignor Stuart Swetland and Reverend Peter F. Ryan. We are encouraged that this meeting will be the first of many as we work together to foster communion within the Universal Church.

Subject: The review of “Evolution and other Fairy Tales”

I was very disappointed in the review of the book *Evolution and other Fairy Tales* by Larry Azar in the Spring 2006 Fellowship Newsletter by Richard Rolwing. I was hoping for an in depth engagement with the contents and a critique both pro and con. Instead, we were treated to an advocacy piece which praised the use of (mis)quotations to “simply use evolutionists to destroy each other.” Since when is a scientific theory critiqued by selective quotation? Where was the data? Where were the experiments? What alternative explanation was proposed? To all three questions the answer is “Nothing.” The use of pre-scientific philosophers—Aristotle in particular—to critique evolutionary theory was also disturbing. Hasn’t anybody learned anything from the Galileo debacle? Apparently the Popes have but not Mr. Azar or Mr. Rolwing.

The piece de resistance is where Mr. Rolwing blames Dar-

win for Communism, Nazism, Eugenics, Genocide, Racism, Secularism, Relativism, sexual license, and human engineering. Never mind that the Communist Manifesto was written in 1848 fully 11 years before *The Origin of Species* was published. Or that in Communist Russia, Darwin was vilified for his emphasis on competition in evolution and the Lamarckian views of Trofim Denisovich Lysenko were forced upon Russian biologists. Or that Racism and Eurocentric chauvism existed long before Darwin was born and that the intellectual underpinnings of Nazism have more to do with German nationalism and outdated theories of race which had their start in Luther’s time. Or that Eugenics was based less on Darwin’s idea of Natural selection (which was phenomenological) and owed far more to teleological ideas that can be traced back to Aristotle. I would ask that in the future, a more objective reviewer be chosen for such works and that the editors be more selective of books to be reviewed.

Art Sippo, M.D., Highland, Indiana



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THE GREATEST NOVEL

I was rereading *War and Peace* for the sixth or seventh and, as I thought, probably the last time, when a new translation of the novel appeared. This makes the third English translation of Tolstoy's major work. It will serve as an excuse for taking up the novel yet again if, *deo volente*, I am here to do it.

In order to read a three volume Victorian novel, one must set aside the hectic pace of the present, enter a world without radio or television or telephones, where thirty miles was a good day's journey and reading aloud in the family circle was high entertainment. Our fiction bears the mark of the age, there is the cinematic influence, of course. The later Henry James puts us off with those dense pages without dialogue, paragraphs going on forever. But Trollope and James and the like are a jog in the park compared with Tolstoy. To read *War and Peace* requires weeks, even months. You will want to take respite from it with other reading, but you are never really free of it.

Napoleon invades Russia after some years of preliminary campaigns, advances on Moscow, wins and loses the battle of Borodino, occupies Moscow, where, ignored by the Tzar, waiting for a delegation to surrender to him, Napoleon sees his troops become lawless pillagers of the occupied city. And then the decision to flee the burning city. The French army melts away as it heads for the border, and so does the pursuing Russian army. The folly of war, the impotence of leaders, the role of Providence, the interlacing of the public and private, of war and peace—the novel has been called the greatest ever written. I agree. Of course, like life itself, the novel annoys as well as pleases. Tolstoy was a great novelist but an uneven thinker. No matter. One more time I want to arrive at Anna Pavlona's party and begin, hear the bored tones of Prince Vasily Kuragin, meet Pierre and Prince Andre.... ✠

Ralph McInerny

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