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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Practical Theology and Practical CharityJoseph Koterski, S.J.

EXCHANGE OF LETTERS

An Open Letter to Father Weinandy..... Terrence W. Tilley

ResponseFather Thomas Weinandy

ARTICLES

Lay Ministry, Lay Apostolate, and Vocation.....Russell Shaw

Why Temporal Things Need Ultimate Things .James V. Schall, S.J.

Family Matters..... Jude P. Dougherty

Rejoice in the Lord Always!.....Msgr. Stuart Swetland

Misconception Misconceived?, a Review Article

..... Kenneth D. Whitehead

Anglicans/Episcopalians Looking to Rome: 1570-Present

.....Rev. Msgr. Daniel S. Hamilton

Integrity and Communion: Keys to the Authentic

“Renaissance” of Art.....Rev. Daniel B. Gallagher

BOOK REVIEWS

One-Party Classroom: How Radical Professors at America's Top Colleges

Indoctrinate Students and Undermine Our Democracy

by David Horowitz and Jacob Laksin D. Q. McInerney

Pilgrims to the Northland: The Archdiocese of St. Paul 1840-1962

by Marvin R. O'Connell D. Q. McInerney

*The Line Through the Heart: Natural Law as Fact, Theory,
and Sign of Contradiction*

by J. Budziszewski D. Q. McInerney

Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God

by Sister Elizabeth Johnson, C.S.J. Anne Barbeau Gardiner

*Failing America's Faithful: How Today's Churches Are Mixing God with
Politics and Losing Their Way*

by Kathleen Kennedy Townsend..... Anne Barbeau Gardiner

Montesquieu and the Logic of Liberty

by Paul A. RaheJude P. Dougherty

Answering the New Atheism: Dismantling Dawkins'[s]

Case Against God

by Scott Hahn and Benjamin Wiker..... Marie I. George

Spirit and Life: Essays on Interpreting the Bible in Ordinary Time

by Scott Hahn Janet P. Benestad

AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH: FCS ANNUAL

MEETING 2009 Sister Mary Elizabeth, Sister of Life

NOTICES/OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

EX CATHEDRAJ. Brian Benestad



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CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Practical Theology and Practical Charity2

EXCHANGE OF LETTERS

An Open Letter and Response4

ARTICLES

Lay Ministry, Lay Apostolate, and Vocation.....5

Why Temporal Things Need Ultimate Things..... 10

Family Matters..... 15

Rejoice in the Lord Always! 18

Misconception Misconceived?, a Review Article, 24

Anglicans/Episcopalians Looking to Rome:
1570-Present 32

Integrity and Communion: Keys to the Authentic
'Renaissance' of Art 40

BOOK REVIEWS

One-Party Classroom 44

Pilgrims to the Northland..... 45

The Line Through the Heart 49

Quest for the Living God 51

Failing America's Faithful 52

Montesquieu and the Logic of Liberty 54

Answering the New Atheism 55

Spirit and Life..... 57

AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH 59

NOTICES 60

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 61

EX CATHEDRA 62

Reminder: Membership dues will be mailed out the first of the year and are based on a calendar (not academic) year.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Practical Theology and Practical Charity

by Joseph W. Koterski, S.J.

Recently there have been various conferences and professional societies dedicated to “practical theology.” Should theology be practical? Presumably, it all depends on what one means by “practical theology.” Just as one can speak of good cholesterol and bad cholesterol in our food, so too in practical theology.

The term can rightly designate well-founded efforts to apply theological principles to practical situations. While the name “practical theology” in this sense may be new, its substance—like that of its immediate predecessor, “pastoral theology”—is as old as the Church itself. The frequent instructions that Jesus gave to his apostles for the care of souls (Mt. 10:6ff., Mk, 6:8ff., Luke 9:3ff., and so on) give witness to this domain, as do numerous passages in the pastoral epistles of St. Paul. The writings of the Fathers of the Church, from the apostolic age onward, are filled with pastoral instruction about the need for vigor in practical charity. The term has also been used to name the application of the principles of moral theology to typical problems and cases. In our own times there has been a tremendous flowering of concern in this general area, not only in the various movements that have emerged for the support of marriage and family life and for the defense of the unborn, the aged, the poor, and the underprivileged, but also in the theoretical arena. One need only think of the vast literature in moral theology and other scholarly disciplines that has been produced on the subject of Catholic Social Teaching.

But at the present time a quite different sense of the term seems to be acquiring cachet in the academy: a form of theology that claims to find in one's personal experience the warrant for revising doctrine and dogma that is considered outdated. On the ground, this movement is already pervasive in venues such as those health-care chaplaincies and programs of clinical pastoral counseling where making provision for sacramental confession is frowned upon lest the very mention of sin trigger desolation. Likewise, the movement is flourishing on those many campuses where support groups for same-sex attraction teach none of the asceticism championed by the likes of groups like Courage that are faithful to established Catholic teaching. In parishes,

marriage preparation programs that try to be faithful to authentic Catholic teaching in such matters as natural family planning are outnumbered by the “practical theology” perspective that unquestioningly embraces contraception. In addition to these trends in ordinary life, concern with “practical theology” appears to be growing in academic discussions.

But to acknowledge the healthy (good cholesterol) consultation of the social sciences is not to suppose that reflection on experience provides sufficient warrant for revising doctrine, dogma, or well-tested ecclesial practices on the grounds of some bad cholesterol sense of practical theology. It is absolutely critical that scholars undertake critical examination of the historical record of such phenomena as modern capitalism, republican forms of democracy, and the electronic media. In fact, doing so can help to devise better solutions to real problems and to provide special encouragement to real practical charity, both individual and social. But there is a risk here, the intellectual risk of rationalism—imposing the categories generated by one’s reason on reality. Sound theology must always have its primary source in revelation. Those parts of theology that have special access to reality by way of divine revelation should not be arbitrarily subjected to revision by appeals to subjective experience any more than to reconstruction by appeals to historicism, deconstructionism, or post-modernism.

Prior to a North American appropriation of the term “practical theology” in the 1980s, the practitioners of this approach were largely European and Protestant, inspired largely by Friedrich Schleiermacher. Like Liberation Theology, the movement tends to privilege “praxis” over “belief.” In announcing an upcoming biennial meeting (April 9–11, 2010 at Boston University), the website of the Association of Practical Theology sees “practical theology” as a “bridge discipline” designed to connect “scholarly resources with the concrete lives of faith communities.” What does that mean in practice? It remains to be seen what the papers at the conference will offer, but from the preliminary materials for the conference, it appears that the meeting will give particular focus to “the robust multiplicity of faith identities and practices within churches as well as in the larger culture” (<http://www.practicaltheology.org/>), accessed 28 December 2009). This organization is admittedly, inter-religious and not specifically Catholic, but its attractiveness to Catholic proponents of practical theology can provide an interesting insight into the movement.

A number of texts seems to have become quasi-classic sources for the theoretical foundations of practical theology. Among them, one finds particular frequent citation of Thomas Groome’s “shared praxis method,” found in such texts as *Christian Religious Education* (Harper and Row, 1980), *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Guide to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), and *Horizons and Hopes: The Future of Religious Education* (Paulist Press, 2003). Another of the most regularly cited is Don S. Browning’s *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Fortress Press, 1991). As the standard scholarly apparatus associated with the revisionist forms of practical theology grows more evident, it is clear that the movement is increasingly being framed as a pedagogy for religious instruction and as a conversation in which ecclesial tradition is to be reinterpreted, transformed, and reconstructed by ideas from contemporary culture.

When considering a new movement within academic theology, it is always important to distinguish what is sound from what is dubious. What seems most sound here is what has been the long-standing concern of believers to promote practical forms of genuine charity. If we need further encouragement in this direction, we can readily find it in the three encyclicals issued thus far by Pope Benedict XVI. But in the movement considered in this column, there may be reason to think that whatever is truly sound may be swallowed by something unsound, for the hydra of rationalism that often endangered pre-conciliar theology appears to be growing a new head.

Shortly after the Second Vatican Council, the Belgian theologian George Chaintaine, S.J., published a far-seeing analysis entitled *La vraie et fausse liberté du théologien, un essai* (Desclée, De Brouwer, 1969). In his judgment, the problem of the various dissident authors and movements of that day was not so much the novelty of the ideas as the proclivity of much older and long-standing rationalistic ideas to proceed over various cliffs, blithely ignoring roadblocks that had long been set in place by the Magisterium to prevent such catastrophes prior to the Council. Something of the same judgment may be relevant here. Important as it truly is to consult one’s experience, there is a problem when the experience one consults is taken as adequate grounds for ignoring or repudiating what God has provided to guide the Church. ❧

An Open Letter to Father Weinandy

Dear Tom,

In the fall semester of 1976 we both began our teaching careers at Georgetown University. Then and now we have agreed on some theological issues and disagreed on others, both methodologically and substantially. I have followed your stalwart defense of the doctrine of divine impassibility with interest.

However, I was very disappointed by your essay, “Terrence Tilley’s Christological Impasses: *The Demise of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*.” The main reason is that you fault my presidential address for superficial scholarship. However, your essay never mentions over three decades of my published scholarship that underlies the address and was cited in the notes. This is especially disappointing coming from the Executive Director for the Secretariat of Doctrine of the USCCB and the Convener of the Christology Section of the CTSA.

First, you misrepresent my views. I affirm the doctrine of the Incarnation. See my *The Disciples’ Jesus* (Orbis, 2008) especially 36–37; 224–231. I do not support adoptionism. I never say that the classic councils were “complete failures,” although for reasons stated I do think that the central problem was not resolved.

Second, you misinterpret my

views. I do understand the centuries of discussion and debate that led to the orthodox formulae differently from you. I simply point out the political issues were also involved. I am not a cultural relativist as you suggest (see *Inventing Catholic Tradition* [Orbis, 2000], especially 156–170, and *History, Theology and Faith Dissolving the Modern Problematic* [Orbis, 2004]). Nor do I hold that “the present culture always trumps the content” of the gospel. I do hold—and have argued—that the contemporary use of terms like “nature” do not mean what “phusis” or “natura” meant in the Patristic era and so cannot be used to communicate the tradition accurately today (unless, of course, one expects all believers to have graduate degrees in theology). Your inference that I challenge the authority of the magisterium is inaccurate; I do question how some *magistri* have exercised their authority.

Third, you fault my rhetoric, yet you tar the approach I use by rhetorically associating it with other approaches that lead to positions I never address and that you find abhorrent. In so doing, you at least neglect the maxim “abusus non tollit usum.” This sort of rhetoric implying “guilt by association” is hardly fair, especially from a person of your status.

There are other issues that I find you misread or misinterpret. That contributes to my sadness at the tone and content of your essay. But

they are too many for discussion in a brief note.

I hope that you will begin to emulate the theologian whose name graces the chair that I have agreed to take up in January, 2010. His practice was always to read others’ work thoroughly, interpret it charitably, and report it accurately—especially when he disagreed with them.

Sincerely yours,

Terry

Terrence W. Tilley
Avery Cardinal Dulles Professor of
Catholic Theology (elect) and
Chairperson of the Theology Department
Fordham University

A Response to Professor Terrence Tilley by Father Thomas Weinandy

Dear Terry,

My response to your open letter is quite brief. I would simply ask that all those interested in this academic debate to read your Presidential address and my response to it. After reading both, the reader can make his or her own considered judgment.

Take Care,

Tom



Lay Ministry, Lay Apostolate, and Vocation

by Russell Shaw
Pontifical University of the Holy Cross

People have sometimes said of me that I'm opposed to lay ministries, but that isn't true. I support lay ministries, and I have great admiration for all those wonderful lay people who are involved in ministries of various kinds.

But I do see a problem.

In recent years, there's been a disproportionate emphasis on lay ministries, at the expense of what used to be called lay apostolate or simply "The Apostolate." And that disproportionate emphasis contributes to something very unhealthy in Catholic life.

Let me illustrate that with a true story.

.....

A couple of years ago, I taught an online course about the laity to a class of adult Catholics. Online teaching is different from classroom teaching—the students tend to be older and sometimes more serious, probably because they're there by choice.

Some weeks after the course ended, one of my students sent me an e-mail to share an experience she'd had. She was a woman who'd seemed to welcome what she heard in the course, and this is what she wrote to me:

"Last week I gave a lecture to a group of women, and as an opening exercise I asked them to write on one side of the page all the everyday things they do in the course of a day or two. Then I asked them to write on the other side all the things they do in the same time frame that they consider to be holy.

Without exception, they made up two entirely different lists—on the one hand, daily chores and activities, and on the other hand things associated with what they consider to be 'ministry'—serving as minister of communion or lector, attending Mass, things like that.

Many had only one or two items in that second column. No one simply drew an arrow from the daily activities to the list of 'holy' things.

My lecture was about the apostolate of the laity. If nothing else, I wanted the women to come away from it with a sense of the dignity of our mission as lay people. That includes understanding that everyday activities really are holy when we do them as faithful Christians,

and that in this context we aren't called only to *receive* the sacraments but, in a sense, to *be* sacrament and to live sacramental lives in which Christ's presence can be seen....

When the women took a second look at their lists and reflected on their everyday work as a vehicle for spreading the gospel and acting as Christ's missionaries and apostles, they began to personalize what apostolate meant for them."

I couldn't agree more.

Most practicing Catholics find it easy to think of what they do in church as "holy." But for most, what happens in everyday life is only...what happens in everyday life. In their eyes, all those routine, nitty-gritty things in the first column of activities don't usually have much to do with God and the spiritual life.

.....

But *are* lay people supposed to find God there in the everyday things as well as in church?

Vatican II gave a resounding answer to that. It has two parts.

One part is the council's affirmation of the universal call to holiness. Lay people, just as much as clerics and religious, are "called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love" (LG 40).

The other part of the answer is Vatican II's insistence that for lay people the way to God lies through the commitments and activities of everyday life. And the consequences of ignoring that are pretty grim.

"One of the gravest errors of our time," the council said, "is the dichotomy between the faith which many profess and the practice of their daily lives.... Let there...be no such pernicious opposition between professional and social activity on the one hand and religious life on the other....It is their task [i.e., the task of the Catholic laity] to cultivate a properly informed conscience and to impress the divine law on the affairs of the earthly city" (GS, 43).

That was 44 years ago. Now take a look at all those opinion polls showing a huge gulf between Catholic teaching and the beliefs and practices of millions of American Catholics on matters of personal and public morality, from abortion to social justice. The "dichotomy" between faith and life that Vatican II deplored is alive and well.

.....

Fortunately there's a solution, if we only choose to make use of it. Its name is vocation. Every baptized person has one. But in order to put the solution to work, we need a much clearer understanding of vocation than many, perhaps most, Catholics appear to have.

Obviously the word means different things in different contexts. People speak of all sorts of interests and enthusiasms and activities—some of them serious and some of them not so serious—as vocations. And that's perfectly legitimate.

Also, I think, it is legitimate to speak of what might be called the natural human vocation. This is the calling one shares with all other men and women without exception to achieve a degree of self-fulfillment, in community with others, in respect to the natural goods of human persons—purposes of human choice and action like life, truth, friendship, play, aesthetic experience, marriage, and religion. Natural vocation, you might say, is the universal calling to respect the design built into human beings by their creator, by living their lives according to the natural law.

.....

I take these other meanings of vocation for granted, but I am not speaking about them here. My focus is on our vocations precisely as *Christians*. When I try to explain that idea, I sometimes say that the reality of vocation is something like a set of concentric circles.

1. At the center is the common Christian vocation, which comes to us in baptism and is shared by all members of the Church.

In general terms, the common vocation consists in the commitment of faith and what follows from it—to love and serve God above all things, to love and serve one's neighbor as oneself, and in doing these things to collaborate in continuing the redemptive work of Christ, which is the mission of the Church.

This vocation isn't something assigned to the people of the Church by somebody else, nor is it something optional that they are at liberty to say either yes or no to: Although the specifics must be worked out in each particular case, the right and duty of Catholics, including the laity, to participate in the mission of the Church come to each one of them in baptism.

2. The next vocational circle, spreading out from this central point, is vocation in the sense of a state in life.

The several states in life are generally identified

as these four: the clerical state that comes from holy orders, the consecrated life—the life of the counsels as it is lived by religious and some lay people as well, the state of marriage, and the single lay state in the world.

A state in life is a specification of the common Christian vocation, the baptismal vocation—it makes it more definite and concrete. It is a broad, overarching commitment to a particular, defined lifestyle. In selecting a state in life, a person sets himself or herself on a certain path that will fundamentally shape his or her entire life through the countless choices and actions that will be required in order to travel along it to the end.

3. The outer circle—and the third meaning of Christian vocation—is personal vocation. The raw material of our personal vocations is the unique combination of commitments, relationships, opportunities, disadvantages, weaknesses, and strengths that God asks each one of us to put to work in serving and living out the special role in the mission of the Church to which he calls us, whether as a cleric, a religious, or a lay person.

As for that “special role,” it is the fundamentally unrepeatable part in the fulfillment of his redemptive plan that God intends each of us to have.

.....

Some people find this notion of unique personal vocation a new idea and are not quite sure how to react to it. I assure you, it isn't really a new idea at all. You find it here and there in classical writers like St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis de Sales. Cardinal Newman was well aware of it. Pope John Paul II developed the idea at length in things he wrote both before and after becoming pope.

Usually, of course, when Catholics say “vocation,” they mean vocation only in the second sense—state in life. And usually, in speaking of vocation in this sense, they mean a calling to the priesthood or religious life.

For instance: When we are asked to pray for vocations, ordinarily we are being asked to pray that more people will become priests or religious (and I am always glad to pray for that); a vocations program or vocations office is a program or office that recruits and screens candidates for the seminary or novitiate; a vocations director is someone who does this kind of work.

And very important work it is. In no way do I suggest otherwise.

But I do say that “vocation” has a broader sense. That personal vocation is a constitutive part of the

structure of any true vocation. And that until more people grasp the idea of personal vocation and act on it, the present “vocations crisis”—the shortfall of new candidates for the priesthood and consecrated life—won’t be solved.

.....

Not only that—we also will be inviting continued confusion about their identity and their role in the mission of the Church on the part of Catholic lay people.

That’s hardly a new problem. Flannery O’Connor got to the heart of it years ago. Somebody asked her why she, a Catholic, wrote about Protestants instead of her fellow Catholics. This is what she said in part:

To a lot of Protestants I know, monks and nuns are fanatics, none greater. And to a lot of the monks and nuns I know, my Protestant prophets are fanatics. For my part, I think the only difference between them is that if you are a Catholic and have this intensity of belief you join the convent and are heard from no more; whereas if you are a Protestant and have it, there is no convent for you to join and you go about in the world, getting into all sorts of trouble and drawing the wrath of people who don’t believe anything much at all down on your head.

Now, that was one shrewd remark. Among other things, it delineates with accuracy—as well as with humor—the idea of vocation that she found among her fellow Catholics: “If you are a Catholic and have...intensity of belief you join the convent.” Not a whole lot of encouragement there for a lay person like herself.

.....

The key to clearing up much of this confusion lies in vocational discernment. Let me say just a little about that.

First of all, it is necessary to set aside the false idea that vocational discernment is something done *only* by people exploring the possibility that God is calling them to the priesthood and religious life.

Of course people in that situation need to discern. But so does everyone else. So, specifically, do Catholic lay people who are serious about finding out what God has in mind for *them*.

We also need to set aside the idea that discerning a vocation is a one-time thing. To be sure, some periods in a person’s life are more sensitive than others in vocational terms, but there is no period at which discerning God’s will is no longer necessary. On the contrary, this

is a lifelong necessity. In a remarkable homily on this theme, Cardinal Newman says:

[W]e are not called once only but many times; all through our life Christ is calling us. He called us first in Baptism; but afterwards also; whether we obey His voice or not, He graciously calls us still.... Christ is, as it were, walking among us, and... bidding us follow Him. We do not understand that His call is a thing which takes place now (*Divine Calls*).

And Pope John Paul underlines the need for ongoing, lifelong vocational discernment very clearly when he says: “The fundamental objective of the formation of the lay faithful is an ever-clearer discovery of one’s vocation and the ever-greater willingness to live it so as to fulfill one’s mission” (*Christifideles Laici*, n. 58).

This is not the place for me to say a lot—which I’m not competent to say anyway—about the process of vocational discernment. Here are just a couple of thoughts.

In very general terms, discernment is the process of prayerfully reflecting on our strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, existing commitments and obligations and opportunities that are realistically open options—indeed, all the circumstances of our lives—and comparing these with the needs and possibilities for service in the Church and the world around us, in order to determine the best fit for oneself.

The question discernment seeks to answer is not, “What do *I* want from life?” It is, “What does *God* want from me?”

It isn’t something subjective. The process is guided, and the result is measured, by the teaching and law of the Church and the decisions of legitimate authority. Needless to say, it also is guided by Christian morality. When I mentioned discernment in a talk a couple of years ago, a priest objected that many bad things had been done in the name of “discernment” in recent decades and it might be better to speak of formation of conscience instead.

My answer was that the two things are complementary. Conscience formation comes first. A person with a well formed conscience is equipped to engage in fruitful discernment. But when someone whose conscience is *not* well formed tries it, the result is likely to be self-serving and *not* God’s will.

But that isn’t an argument against discernment. It’s an argument for discerning from the basis of solid formation, and proceeding with the assistance of a trustworthy spiritual guide.

Another important thing to understand about vocational discernment is that it is not a feel-good exercise, and it may not turn out as we would expect and like.

I recall a young man saying to me, “But suppose someone discerns a call to something or other, and he finds all the doors closed in his face—what then?” To which my answer was, “Of course he needs to practice perseverance, but he also needs to be open to the possibility that this experience of disappointment and frustration and even injustice is part of the personal vocation to which God is calling him.” Discerning and living a vocation mean discerning and living what God wants, not what we think we want.

Given that it’s *personal* vocation we are talking about, I am not able to say precisely what participation in the mission of the Church means for any particular individual. But it’s fair to say that, in one way or another, the vocation of every lay person somehow involves participating in the evangelizing work of the Church—spreading the Good News, at least by the example of a good Christian life and very often by the testimony of the spoken or written word as well.

It’s also a fact that the Second Vatican Council and Pope John Paul both stressed that the apostolate of the laity is directed primarily to the secular world. As Vatican II put it: “The laity...are given this special vocation: to make the Church present and fruitful in those places and circumstances where it is only through them that she can become the salt of the earth” (*LG*, 33).

Lay ministries, as they are called—service roles and functions performed by lay people in church settings, especially parishes—undoubtedly do have their place, and an important one. But their place is subordinate to the priority of apostolate carried on in and to the secular order.

It is good for lay people to serve as needed as ministers of communion or lectors or cantors or in other roles in parishes and other church settings. But the primary locus for the laity to participate in the mission of the Church is, or at least should be, in the home, the workplace, the school, the neighborhood, and all the other structures and institutions of the world.

I’m sorry to say that in recent years we seem to have gotten it just the other way around, assigning *de facto* primacy to lay ministries and downgrading lay apostolate. And although the intentions have been good, that is a bad mistake which has contributed a lot to the current problems of the Church.

.....

As I said at the start, I am genuinely sympathetic to lay ministry and lay ministers. But I am not at all sympathetic to some of the exaggerations on this subject that you hear these days.

Consider this remark by a lay professor of theology at a Catholic university sounding a theme that is heard fairly often these days:

“The emergence of lay ecclesial ministry since the council stands out as one of the top three or four ministerial shifts of the past 2,000 years. It ought to be compared to the changes in the Church brought on by the rise of communal forms of monasticism in the fifth century, the birth of mendicant orders in the 13th century, or the explosion of women’s religious communities in the 19th century. It is that kind of history that we have been living through” (Edward P. Hahnenberg, “Lay Ecclesial Ministry Today and the Pastor of Tomorrow,” *Origins*, June 11, 2009).

I know that people who say things like that mean well, but they could hardly be more mistaken.

Note, first of all, that when you speak of lay ecclesial ministry, you are not speaking of the hundreds of thousands of Catholic lay people performing a variety of functions on a volunteer basis in their parishes today. You are talking about—last time I looked—35,000 or so good people who are salaried, full- or part-time employees of parishes and other church institutions. The overwhelming majority of them are women, and the group includes a substantial number of religious sisters who for this purpose are rather oddly counted as lay ministers, which is a canonical truth perhaps but an existential fiction.

Then next to that figure—35,000—set the figure 68 million. That, officially, is the number of Catholics in the United States right now. Yet it’s the 35,000 and the work that they do which the author I quoted and others like him incongruously salute as “one of the top three or four ministerial shifts of the past 2,000 years.”

The significance of lay ecclesial ministry—and it’s real—can only be understood when it is seen as *part* of a larger and vastly more important shift in Church life that began over a century and a half ago and is still going on. It stretches from the emergence of lay apostolate—notably including the Catholic Action movement—in the 19th and 20th centuries, includes the so-called “new movements” of our present post-Vatican II era, and also involves a move in the direction of shared responsibility for decision making in the Church.

Granted, this latter is temporarily on hold just now, but I take much encouragement from the strong encouragement given to it by Pope Benedict in a remarkable talk last May. In it, the Holy Father called for a “change of mentality” on the part of Catholic lay people, which he described as a move away from “considering themselves collaborators of the clergy to recognizing themselves truly as ‘co-responsible’ for the being and action of the Church” (Pope Benedict XVI, “Co-Responsible for the Church’s Being and Action,” address to pastoral conference of the Diocese of Rome, May 26, 2009).

I repeat: lay ecclesial ministry can reasonably be seen as *one part* of this larger picture. But to speak of lay ministry as if it were the very apex of it, the peak of the pyramid, so to speak, is an instance of the tail wagging the dog—that is to say, it’s a painfully narrow-minded view of a much larger development in Catholic life extending over the last century and a half and still taking place.

.....

Pardon the digression. Let me bring these remarks to a conclusion by saying a bit more about personal vocation.

Many important things of a practical nature follow from the vision I’ve been sketching. I’m not going to try to cover all of them now. But I do want to underline the obvious point that we need to make our homes, our parishes, our church institutions and organizations and programs of all kinds into true schools of vocational discernment.

This is something parents definitely need to do, but with all the help they can get from other sources. Central to the formation they give their children should be formation in and for discerning what God has in mind for them.

I have an idea, by the way, about all this relates to the sacrament of confirmation—a sacrament in crisis if ever there was one. The problem with confirmation is basically that nobody really knows what it is. Consequently it has been called a sacrament in need of a theology. And consequently, too—as a result of this confusion about the meaning and relevance of confirmation—as many as half a million age-eligible Catholic children and young people every year do not receive this sacrament. Most, I suppose, *never do* receive it. My idea, which I believe is both theologically and pastorally valid, is to present confirmation as a sacrament of vocational discernment. God willing, perhaps I’ll write a book about that some day.

Note that the objective of any effort in respect to vocational discernment, whether organized or not, should indeed be discernment, not recruitment, and certainly not coercion or pressure. Frankly, I cringe every time I hear someone speak of “vocational recruitment” for the priesthood and religious life, as if the challenge lay in rounding up warm bodies. And hardly less offensive, to my way of thinking, are efforts to recruit people as lay ministers.

People should be invited to think and pray seriously about what God is asking of them. The thinking and praying should start from the fundamental fact that every member of the Church is called to the apostolate in some way. And with the laity, there’s nothing wrong in suggesting that lay ministry might also be part of God’s call, not in place of but in addition to the apostolate.

But remember—vocational discernment means finding out what God has in mind, not trying to impose one’s own ideas and preferences on somebody else.

That could be the subject of a whole other talk, though. In concluding this one, I want to call attention to an obvious conclusion that flows from what I’ve been saying: *There is no shortage of vocations in the Catholic Church*—either in the Church as a whole or the Church in the United States or any place else.

As a matter of fact, a true shortage of vocations is an absolute impossibility, since every baptized individual has a vocation.

What we have instead is a shortage of vocational discernment. And although that also is a problem, and a serious one, it’s a problem of a different sort.

In a way, too, it’s good news.

You see, if there were a shortage of vocations—which isn’t possible, but let’s suppose for a moment that it was—then the shortage of vocations would be from God. And in that case, there would be nothing we could do about it except ask God to send the vocations he’d been withholding.

But because what we have is a shortage of vocational discernment, we can be quite sure that the shortage of vocations of whatever kind comes from us. Prayer is still needed, of course, but there are a lot of other things that we can and should be doing.

And the first and most important of them is to educate every Catholic to the fact that he or she has a vocation, and that the most important thing he or she will ever do is to discern what that vocation is, accept it, and then continue discerning it and living it for the rest of his or her life. ✠

Why Temporal Things Need Ultimate Things: On the Purpose of the World

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William J. Young Lecture, University of St. Thomas

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“That’s the way it is, my comrade,’ I said. ‘If you discover a life better than ruling for those who are going to rule, it is possible that your well-governed city will come into being. For there alone will the really rich rule, rich not in gold but in those riches required by the happy man, rich in a good and prudent life.’”

— Plato, *Republic*, VII, 520e–21a.

“Belonging to God has nothing to do with destruction or non-being: it is rather a way of being. It means emerging from the state of separation, of apparent autonomy, or existing only for oneself and in oneself. . . . That is why St. Augustine could say that the true ‘sacrifice’ is the *civitas Dei*, that is, love-transformed mankind, the divinization of creation and the surrender of all things to God. . . . *That is the purpose of the world.* That is the essence of sacrifice and worship.”

— Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*.¹

“Be just to your subjects, swinging neither to right or left, but holding the line of justice. Always side with the poor rather than with the rich, until you are certain of the truth. See that all your subjects live in justice and peace, but especially those who have ecclesiastical rank and who belong to religious orders.”

— St. Louis, King of France, Letter to His Son, d. 1270.²

I.

William J. Young, C.S.B., was a Canadian by birth. He was president of this institution, a man concerned with social and economic conditions, particularly in this area. He was a priest and scholar who understood that organization also requires thought and learning as well as action. He knew that not every proposed

action, even if made with good intentions, worked to better things, but it was important to seek better things.

In Father Young’s honor, let me explore a proposition based in both philosophy and theology. The proposition can be summed up in a phrase from Benedict, namely, that politics is an ethics, not an eschatology.³ That is to say, temporal things, the human actions designated as artistic, ethical, and political, are themselves to be judged in reference to the ultimate order in which the rational being reaches the transcendent end for which he exists. Temporal things are not seen for what they are if the ultimate things toward which man is directed are not likewise comprehended. Man, in other words, does not make what it is to be man. This fact is a blessing and a gift, not a curse.

We can perhaps get a glimmer of my meaning if we reflect on the following sequence. Linus and Lucy are sitting on a sofa each staring ahead at the television. She asks Linus: “If someone close to you noticed that you had some faults would you want them pointed out?” Innocently, Linus replies: “Well, sure, I guess so.” In the next scene, Lucy pounces on a deflated Linus: “Then, here we go!” In the third scene, Linus has the blanket and is sucking his thumb. Lucy is looking at him quizzically. Looking straight ahead he asks: “Why are you always so anxious to criticize me?” Lucy brightens up in explanation: “I just think I have a knack for seeing other people’s faults.” In the final scene, Linus is enraged. He throws up his arm, and yells: “What about your own faults?” Calmly and logically, Lucy replies: “I have a knack for overlooking them.”⁴

From this charming sequence, I recognize that the “overlooking” of our faults is quite possible and quite deliberate. We do it all the time. But the order of things demands that they not be overlooked. In themselves they need to be acknowledged to restore order, then forgiven, or, if not acknowledged, punished. Faults, sins, and crimes happen every day, no doubt. But our mind rebels at the thought that they are reduced solely to inadvertence, accident or chance rather than to responsible human agency, the real cause.

In this university, even in the very beginning of these considerations, it seems fitting to cite something

from Aquinas that speaks to my meaning. This passage is from the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. It reads:

The complete perfection of the universe demands that there should be created natures which return to God, not only according to the likeness of their being, but also through their actions. This can only be through the acts of the reason and will, because God himself has no other way of acting toward himself. Hence, for the final perfection of the universe, it is necessary that there should be intellectual beings (II, 46).

I take this passage to mean that our temporal affairs, which involve our practical intellects in deeds of reason and will, are also ways to God. They indicate reason by which we know God through the “likeness of our being” to His. The universe itself exists that the rational beings within it achieve their end, which end is not the universe itself. The universe attains its end only when the rational beings found within it, each in his own person, freely achieve their end, which transcends this same universe.

Eschatology, a word that simply means the study of the last things that concern us, arises as a consequence of exercised human freedom which is manifested in our thoughts and deeds. As Gilson put it in the *Unity of Philosophical Experience*, history, as such, is historicist, that is, what happened is not going to change, is not going to happen again.⁵ The intelligibility of the world, as both Plato and the Pope recognize, requires that the deeds put forth in freedom be designated in their moral dimension as good or evil. The what they are in their essence, good or evil, includes the freedom that produced them. Understanding their reality includes this freedom.

We can only pass on human life itself, with its institutions and traditions, from one generation or age to another, through freedom exercised by individual persons. No corporate passing on is possible. On account of this freedom, we cannot guarantee that any future will be better or worse than the one in which we currently dwell. All future must pass through the souls of free beings. The past consists of what they in fact freely chose to do. Politics and ethics refer to the arena in which these free choices, that constitute our ultimate status, are made. These are themes that Joseph Ratzinger has meditated on all of his life, as we see in the “Regensburg Lecture” and in *Spe Salvi*.

II.

Looking over the October schedule of events here, I noticed that, at this very hour, the University of St. Thomas’ Fine and Performing Arts Department is putting on “The Robber Bridegroom.” You will be relieved to learn that Schall is not the star of this production. The original “Robber Barron” was a Grimm fairy tale. Later, it was a southern novel of Eudora Welty; finally it became a 1976 musical by Alfred Uhry, evidently based on Welty.

My theme this evening, in some round about way, does deal with bridegrooms and robbers, with what goes on in this world and whether anything we do has any reach beyond itself. In the beginning, I cited Plato just to remind us that these themes are ancient, that is, perennial, things that the human mind cannot avoid considering in its quest to know all the things *that are*. Nor can we avoid pondering them if we wish to understand what we are about in this world, if we want to know, to use the Ratzinger inspired sub-title, “the purpose of the world.”

In his latest encyclical, Benedict XVI makes certain that all our efforts in the area of justice and charity also take place under the aegis of truth. Hence, the title is precisely *Caritas in veritate*, charity in truth. With Strauss and Voegelin, we might even argue, as the Pope himself seems to do, that the most dangerous aberrations of the modern world are rooted in misplaced virtues, natural and supernatural. They almost always propose a better world through imposing humanly made biological, economic, or political standards on the nature of already existing things, including human things.

The difference between the classic utopias and the modern ones, whatever their similarities, is that the classic “noble lies” were in fact based in truth, while the modern ones push ideological untruths onto the truths contained in the being of existing things. Compassion, sympathy, charity, kindness, benevolence, justice, and friendship without truth are among the world’s most dangerous realities. Indeed, one can sum up the whole intellectual structure of modern ideology by saying that it is misplaced charity and misplaced justice without political philosophy to ground it in the being *that is*.

The advice of King St. Louis of France gave to his son stuck me. The saintly king told him to work for the poor rather than with the rich, “until you are certain of the truth.” Many institutions and ideas that are said to “work” for the poor or sick, on examination and with

experience, only make things worse for them. Good will does not replace good sense. Moreover, the poor as well as the rich can be sinners and tyrants. They can opt for policies or enthusiasms that in fact do not correspond to justice or charity.

We are wont often to maintain that all disorder is rooted outside of ourselves, in institutions or structures. But it is not so. Ultimately, if we be Platonists, we know that disorders in cities originate in our own souls. Cities are but configurations of what souls choose so that they can live the way they want, which is seldom the way they ought to live. The Fall, as Chesterton said, is a matter of observation. But the central purpose of the creation of human persons goes on no matter what the form of polity or external order may exist, be it the best, the worst, or something in between, as most regimes are.

The title of my lecture this evening, “Why Temporal Things Need Eternal Things,” is rooted in both Aristotle and Scripture. We are told in Scripture that there are things of God and things of Caesar. We read in Aristotle that the practical order, though good in itself, is ordained to the theoretical order. The political order exists that we might live well, but the living well is not itself politics or ethics. If we elevate our ethics or politics to the highest science, they become, as Aristotle implied, a substitute for metaphysics. The integrity of politics depends on the theoretical order because without recognizing the primacy of the latter, we think ourselves free to make any world we want just because we want it.

The phrases that I used in the title, “temporal things” and “ultimate things,” imply that one is not the other, that temporal things are not ultimate things. But it also implies that temporal things are not nothing. Things only are what they are when they are properly related to what they are not. Creation has a “purpose.” That purpose is not ultimately creation itself. The cosmos as we know it could not and did not cause itself. It itself needs an explanation of its own existence that is other than itself.

Joseph Ratzinger uses the words “separation” and “alienation” to describe a world that does not indicate something other than itself. The purpose of creation is that what is not God and what is God be joined together, each remaining what it is. Each finite thing is what it is. It did not cause itself to be. In this sense, the primary characteristic of finite being is not “that it is just that it exists” but that it is “grateful” that it is. Gift is a higher category, ultimately, than justice, which itself is a gift.

The famous saint who was also the King of France in fact died on the Crusades in Carthage, the place of ancient Rome’s most dangerous enemy. He said to his son that we should favor the poor and weak “until you are certain of the truth.” The ultimate division of the world is not between rich and poor, conservative and liberal, but between those who speak and live the truth and those who do not. Only on this basis can we begin to unify justice and charity in the same world. We insist that both act in the truth of things, particularly divine and human things.

III.

The title of this lecture is, again: “Why temporal things need ultimate things?” I should perhaps use the scriptural term “things of Caesar” rather than politics or state. One might also use “eternal life” or “eternal things” rather than the more neutral “ultimate things.” In the beginning passage cited from the *Republic*, Plato relates the “well-governed” city to “well-governed” souls. If souls are ill-governed, their cities will reflect the souls of the citizens. How we live becomes our public.

This observation about souls and cities leads to the classification of regimes into good and bad, into best, worst, and in-between. Our terms democracy, republic, oligarchy, and tyranny derive from efforts to describe different kinds of regime resulting from choices about how we live. All choice stems from selecting means to our chosen end. Laws and institutions of rule are artfully designed to achieve this implicit end. Thus, while it may be better to be ruled by law than men, as Aristotle already said, it does not follow that laws and institutions do not reflect the ends they are chosen to accomplish. This is why the philosopher must ask whether there is a “law” by which all regimes themselves are to be judged, a law not dependent on human choice for its content, even if it depends on it for its implementation. “Go forth, teach all nations” implies this law.

Not by accident did political philosophy begin with reflection on the fact that Socrates, the philosopher, was killed in Athens, the philosophical city. Its political form was democratic, the rule of the many “free” over the many. Here the term “free” did not refer to the power of free will but to an internal condition of soul that denies any standard of right or wrong in one’s choice. This fact was why democracy was classified as a bad regime. Aristotle implied that it was the best of

the worst regimes. Socrates lived in such a regime for seventy years, largely because, in a democratic regime, truth is considered to be just another dubious opinion, interesting perhaps, but of no force in itself.

Plato finally wanted to know whether any regime existed in which the philosopher would not be killed. In other words, was there an intrinsic conflict between politics and philosophy? Socrates himself said that he had to live a private life in Athens lest he be killed sooner than he was. The Socratic dialogues are often designed to show what happens to the souls of eager young men who want to become rulers. They are attracted by riches, honors, and power, but not by virtue. Socrates admits that a ruler has little time to attend to higher things. His is a busy life. All through the Socratic life we are presented with the question of “busy” for what? Socrates was constantly speaking but he was seldom busy, which is why he was not a good provider for his family. The philosopher did not need many things. His criterion of judgment was not primarily political.

The very word “busy,” in its Latin and Greek origins, meant the life of business, the life of constant activity for ends of keeping alive or pleasure. It meant the opposite of leisure. The highest kind of life, to be sure, needed the city. We could not have a city with only philosophers in it. Who would do the chores? Socrates did not accept exile to Thrace, to a barbarian kingdom, because, had he gone there with much show and riches, he would have had no one to talk with about the highest things. And philosophy, Socrates knew, meant the life of conversation and persuasion, not force and drudgery. His best service to the city, as he thought, was as a “gad-fly,” as someone who woke the citizens up to the fact that more important things are found than just living. He did this arousing by asking questions and seeking answers. He wanted them to justify their ways of life.

All though Greek thought we sense the bright shadow of the contemplative life hovering over the political life. Even when it is not a cave as in Plato, it is not man’s highest end, as Aristotle, who acknowledges the city as natural, tells us. Plato looks for a city in which the philosopher could live in peace. It only existed in speech he thought.

Aristotle distinguishes the city and philosophy. He maintains that philosophy needs to be freed of the temptation to become something else but what it is. We are not to listen to those who tell us to spend our lives on mortal and human things. Plato said these things human affairs were not of much importance. They were, as I like to call them, “unserious.” Aristotle recognized

that a disordered moral or political life would deflect us from the life of contemplation, a life that was not politics, but it needed politics so that it was free to do what was intrinsic to our mind, to know the highest things.

This shadow of contemplation reappears in Christianity. We are not to attend to the things of “this world.” We are to have our priorities right. The rich young man told Christ that he observed the commandments from his youth. But he was surprisingly told that this was not enough. He was not to accumulate more goods so he could help the poor. He was told to go, sell what he had, give it to the poor, then follow Christ, who evidently was about other things. We have to wonder what would have happened to the poor had the rich young man given them his goods? Would he have helped them or corrupted them? It could go either way for the same reason that Socrates warned. If our souls are not in order, what we do possess probably will not be used wisely. In this sense, Greek philosophy and Scripture seem to teach the same thing. There is no attention to temporal things that will save temporal things to be what they are unless first, as scripture says, we seek “the Kingdom of heaven.” “Man does not live by bread alone.”

IV.

Benedict’s Encyclical, *Spe Salvi*, is designed to rehabilitate, that is, to rethink, the centrality of the *eschaton*, the four last things. He argues essentially, as have other modern thinkers, that modern thought, at bottom, far from being pagan or atheist, is an attempt to achieve ends put into the human soul from Christian sources. This is why Strauss, for example, can, with some plausibility, maintain that we have not given up the idea of “charity” in modern thought. We have rather kept that idea of a complete openness to the poor and weak but insisted that they be aided primarily by human, not graced, means. This move, Strauss thought, raised expectations in politics so high that it now, in effect, maintained a divine purpose through its own methods.

Benedict carefully traces such movements through modern biology, medicine, economics, and politics. They wish to remove or control death. They wish to punish those who cause evil. They wish to provide a perfect city on earth. Needless to say, in the process, they end up sacrificing one generation to another, eliminating those who are judged unworthy of human life in the city. But the zeal behind these movements is

clearly of Platonic and Christian origins, as Nietzsche implied. *Spe Salvi* thus is designed precisely to save politics to be itself. It is an ethics of how to live, not an eschatology, a social movement about producing the best regime in this world.

Politics, thus, must be saved from immanentized eschatology, as Voegelin put it. On the other hand, as Benedict remarks in his first encyclical, there are things politics cannot do. Bureaucracy, however well intentioned, cannot replace personal love. The effort to eliminate poverty or sickness by scientific means ends up alienating man from himself. No one deals with him as a person. This is particularly poignant when the family is reduced to an arbitrary organization that no longer knows its purpose in relation to real children. The production of children outside of the context of a stable, permanent marriage is in fact the root of the modern disorder. Critics of Plato long ago suspected that we could not save the polity if we eliminated the family. This is something that Plato himself may have wanted us to see in the fifth book of the *Republic*, where he proposes the communality of wives, children, and property. It is rather uncanny how ideology so frequently returns to these proposals as outlines for the cures of human ills.

In conclusion, let me restate the issue. Temporal things need ultimate things. Temporal things provide an arena in which each human person decides what he is ultimately, eternally, to be. The operative doctrines are the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul, the first Christian and second Greek. If a perfect and happy life in this world were the end of what it is to be human, then the past existence of billions and billions of existing persons has been simply “in vain,” as Aristotle would have had it. But if the purpose of creation is achieved in the life and death of every existing human person, no matter in what the time or place in which he lived, then we can see that something higher is always going on in every existing polity, no matter what its configuration, however tyrannical or aristocratic.

This something higher is how this person lived, as both Socrates and Christ implied in the cities in which they died. In his October 5, 2009 address to the Synod of Bishops for Africa, Benedict XVI said: “If we do not see that they are rooted in the Mystery of God, worldly things go wrong because the relationship with God is not properly in order. And if the first, basic relation-

ship with God is off course, all the other relationships, however good they may be, fundamentally do not function.”⁶ We pay a price for disorders of both mind and soul. We really do need to know what “worldly things,” what “temporal things” are. But we will not know this unless we know the relation of all things to God.

Does this mean that we need have no interest in the lot of our fellow men or in the kinds of regime in which they live? Revelation is given not to replace the natural order, but to complete it. This completion does not eliminate our temporal existence or what happens in it. Indeed, in telling us that every human life from the moment of conception is created for eternal, not temporal, life, it allows us properly to understand what we do in this world. The dignity of politics, if you will, is not that it “saves” us. It cannot do that. But it does provide an arena in which we are allowed to ennoble our own lives precisely by the charity and justice that are the ordering principles of our concern for one another. We can have many differing kinds of good regimes, as Aristotle told us, but in none of them will the actual drama of what goes on ultimately be other than the citizens in their living and dying deciding how they stand to the origin of their personal being.

We do not lessen creation and the human life within it by understanding that more is given than we might ever expect in knowing just ourselves. In this sense, the ultimate things do not lessen the temporal things, but explain why they exist in the first place. They exist that we might exist. And we exist to accept or reject the gift that was freely offered to us in creation. This gift was the choice to live in the Trinitarian life of the Godhead not just in this world, but through it in eternity. Compared to this purpose, all other utopias, I think, are paltry. ✠

ENDNOTES

1. Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 28.
2. From Roman Breviary, Fest, August 25, Second Reading.
3. See Joseph Ratzinger, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 59.
4. Charles Schulz, *Being a Dog Is a Full-Time Job* (Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel, 1994), 50.
5. Etienne Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, [1937] 1999), 257.
6. *L'Osservatore Romano*, English, October 7, 2009, 10.

Family Matters

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[Lecture presented to the National Organization for
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If you are of a certain age, let us say, old enough to be a grandparent, you probably took a number of things for granted. Although your sentiments may have been similar, you might not have said, as did the sister of a newly ordained friend, “I believe in God, my country, and J. Edgar Hoover.” Her generation, my generation, took for granted the Church, its teaching, and its sacramental life and rituals. That generation counted on the benefits of a stable government, and without much thought an impartial criminal justice system. I was a part of that generation that understood the value of a stable family life. The divorced tended to be regarded as moral failures and were viewed with suspicion. The wife of Charles de Gaulle, for example, apart from what was required of her in her official life, would not permit a divorced person in her home, so strong was her feeling for the sanctity of marriage. Social policy in my youth was determined by “what is good for the kinder.” It was common teaching in my college years that there are two indispensable communities, sometimes called “perfect communities” because they were thought to be self contained. I am speaking of the state and the family. Both of course required their unity to preserve their very being. That unity was generated by and dependent upon the acknowledgment of a common purpose. The primary purpose of marriage, it was universally recognized, is the procreation and rearing of children. Vatican II changed all that when it unleashed on the Catholic populace a host of ill-trained Catholic theologians who proclaimed a reordering. The primary purpose of marriage, they taught, is self-fulfillment, as if the first precluded the second. Those same theologians were among the first to denounce Paul VI for *Humane Vitae*. And lo and behold, some sought self-fulfillment outside the priesthood. Some were undoubtedly involved in the suppression of the old liturgy which Stuart Reid has called, “The greatest act of vandalism in history.”

The benefits of family most of us know. A three-

generation family is a blessing. I have from childhood delightful memories of Grandpa Schneider and Grandpa Franke. They were not my grandfathers, but that was how they were known in our extended family circle. Grandpa Schneider of German lineage was a member of the family by virtue of the fact that his daughter married one of my uncles; Grandpa Franke of French lineage, by virtue of the fact that his daughter was a high school classmate of my aunt. In memory, I can envisage both as they leaned back in their leather chairs, a cigar in one hand, a glass of brandy in another---well I assume it was brandy, the glass had the shape that I later came to associate with brandy. Children were welcome in both households but advised not to disturb grandfather especially when he was reading his newspaper. Both died in their late eighties; my own grandmother, their contemporary died at age ninety.

To be sure, experience and wisdom come with age, and in a closely knit family members often benefit by deference to the judgment of the elders. But the benefits of family do not await advanced age or even years; they follow closely upon marriage. Within an extended family, surely someone is likely to know about real estate, inheritance, and other taxes, have a pick-up truck, a radial saw, an extension ladder, or other useful tool. That is all masculine stuff, I acknowledge; ladies, on the other hand, have been known to exchange things other than recipes. One or more members of a family are likely to be adept at a musical instrument and can add to the joy of a festive occasion. These are material benefits.

There is also a moral dimension to a family. I once tried to illustrate this in answer to the question, “How do you shield your children from the common culture?” I said something like, keeping television out of the home and added a family slogan, proclaiming in the presence of a distinguished colleague, “Doughertys are different.” He held his nose, as if to suggest “they don’t bathe.” The moral dimension is not reducible to prim and proper behavior, neatness, or even regular attendance at Mass and frequent confession. It may go something like this, “What would your Uncle Henry think if you did something like that,” or “Do you think your grandmother would approve,” or “Don’t disgrace the family,” or, simply, “I don’t like what I’m seeing.”

The importance of what I am calling, “family

sanction” was recognized by Bishop Otto von Kettler of Mainz, when in the nineteenth century the effects of the industrial revolution were beginning to be felt throughout Europe. Von Kettler, I must explain, is acknowledged to be one of the great social theorists of that day, and his influence on Leo XIII can be discerned in the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. He was convinced that the businessmen of his native Rhineland, unlike the English, paid a just wage and provided safe working conditions. Marx’s theory was inappropriate for Germany. What concerned the Bishop of Mainz was the moral situation that the youth who fled to the cities in search of factory employment were likely to experience. They would be emancipated from the sanctioning or stewarding guidance of their families. An analogous situation today may consist in sending a student off to college.

While still in first or second gear when I leave for work in the morning, I am often delighted in my neighborhood by the sight of parents gathered with their children at one or more of the school bus stops on my usual route. If I am running a bit late, I find many of the moms still there, chatting away. Children help to create a sense of community. The dog walkers are a different breed; they seem a lonely class. I may be reading too much into what I see, but it is undeniable; kids bring people together and often bond them to each other. Think of all those baseball games, soccer games, and transportation hurdles that you endured with other suffering parents; you may find that the empathy created under those circumstances often holds for years.

From the standpoint of social philosophy, the family is viewed as an indispensable instrument for the transmission of morals, tastes, and knowledge; a lawyer might call it “intellectual property.” For family traditions to be maintained, it is of vital importance that there is possibility of transmitting property from one generation to another, personal property to be sure, but what I have in mind is primarily real estate. This was once graphically illustrated for me when in Jerusalem I visited the home of a ninth-generation rabbi. He had the books to prove it; his library, assembled no doubt over those nine generations, extended throughout a rather large house.

Confronted as we are with always newer forms of taking on the part of government, the transmission of material property is always in need of defense. Intellectual inheritance, continuity of standards, and the external forms of civility, are achieved only where it is possible to transmit material advantages from one generation to another. Many of the spiritual goods to which I have alluded, are anchored in the material. The family’s abil-

ity to pass on standards and traditions is closely tied to the possibility of transmitting real estate and other assets. Some argue that each generation should start anew. But it is difficult to see how the true interest of society would consist in limiting gain to one generation. Where inheritance of property does not exist as in communist countries, men look for other ways of providing for their offspring, such as placing them in positions which might bring them income and prestige that a fortune otherwise would have brought. Inheritance and other taxes can interfere with the cultural transmission of which I am speaking. There is an egalitarian-leveling spirit which ignores this fact. Contrary to the positions of some contemporary philosophers there is no injustice if some people are born to wealthy parents, or are born to kind and intelligent parents. In fact, community is enhanced if some children can start with the advantage that a wealthy home is likely to offer. The same is true if some children inherit greater intelligence than others or are taught better than others at home. Inheritance undeniably confers unmerited advantages on some children, in the sense of inequality. One can concede that liberty may not demand unlimited freedom of bequest. Our point here is that families ought to be free to pass on to their children or to others such possessions as will cause substantial inequality.

There are other issues that in the name of the family we are forced to confront in a secular environment vigorously hostile to the moral teaching of the church. I take it that we are of similar mind in recognizing the evil of contraception, abortion, divorce, stem-cell manipulation, the use of fetal tissue in cosmetics, and the sanctioning of so-called “homosexual marriage,” among other issues. We are familiar with the “personally opposed” Catholic politician who declines to defend the Church’s teaching on a given subject. Even a well-known, highly regarded prelate capitulated in the days of *Griswold v. Connecticut*. He noted that previous Catholic leaders had opposed any effort to alter laws prohibiting contraception. “But my thinking,” he said, “has changed on the matter for the simple reason that I do not see where I have an obligation to impose my religious beliefs on people who just do not accept the same faith as I do.” T.S. Eliot would beg to disagree.

The renowned English poet, in an admirable essay first delivered as a broadcast address in February 1937, spoke of the Church’s business to interfere in the world. He forcefully opposed the principle of “live and let live.” “Some assume,” he wrote, “that if the state leaves the Church alone, and to some extent protects it from

molestation, then the Church has no right to interfere with the organization of society, or with the conduct of those who deny its beliefs.” Addressing the claim that any such interference would be the oppression of the majority by a minority, he reminded his listeners that the Church is not merely for the elect. Whether people say that the Church ought to interfere or whether it ought to mind its own business, depends mostly on whether they agree or disagree with its attitude or judgment upon the issue of the moment. The Church is acclaimed when it supports any cause that is already assured a good deal of secular support. It is attacked, quite naturally, when it opposes anything that people think they want. When there is an occasion for the Church to resist any innovation—either in legislation or in social practice—which is contrary to Christian principles, the Church, says Eliot, must speak. The Church may not always be strong enough to resist successfully, but Eliot insists, “it can never accept as a permanent settlement, one law for itself and another for the world.” The Church should not be in any political sense conservative, or liberal, or revolutionary. Conservatism is too often conservation of the wrong things; liberalism always entails a relaxation of discipline, and revolution is a denial of the permanent things. It is much more the business of the Church to say what is wrong—that is, what is inconsistent with Christian doctrine—than to propose particular schemes for improvement. That is the distinctive role of the Church, to say what is always and everywhere wrong. We know from the teaching of Christ that there will always be a tension between church and state, and from our reading of history that a certain tension is desirable. And Eliot makes the point, “When Church and State fall out completely, it is ill with the commonwealth; and when the church and state get along too well there is something wrong with the church.”

T.S. Eliot followed his broadcast address with a

series of lectures delivered at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, lectures that were subsequently published as *The Idea of a Christian Society* (Farber and Farber, 1939). Those lectures were premised on a thesis that ran something like this: the current terms in which we discuss international affairs and political theory tend to conceal from us the real issues of contemporary civilization. Eliot was not alone in addressing the oft-forgotten, Christian basis of Western civilization. The cultural historian Christopher Dawson and the French philosopher Jacques Maritain, his contemporaries, were doing so as well. As a matter of fact, Eliot knew their work and acknowledged a debt to both. In common they and many others were disheartened by the secularization of Western civilization, and in common they sensed the tragedy that was about to befall Europe. Within the same year, 1939, Eliot published *The Idea of a Christian Society*, Dawson published *Beyond Politics*, and Maritain submitted to the publisher the manuscript for *Religion and Culture*. In a somewhat different vein, Pius XI promulgated *Casti Connubi*, translated as, “On the Nature and Dignity of Christian Marriage,” and Jacques Leclercq, a professor of philosophy at the University of Louvain, Belgium, published *Marriage and the Family*. Whereas Eliot, Dawson, and Maritain in speaking of culture necessarily used large brush strokes appropriate to the cultural historian, the discourse of Pius XI was by contrast “earthy” as he spoke of the family as the on-the-ground bearer of the culture. In antiquity, Aristotle recognized that good states and good households are interconnected.

Since you did not bring your notebooks this evening, I have spared you a fifty-minute professorial lecture. Yet I would be remiss if I did not recommend Pius’s magisterial encyclical as well as Jacques Leclercq’s in-depth treatise, a work which I do not believe has been surpassed in the eighty years since it was published. Both are worth revisiting. ✠



“Rejoice in the Lord Always!”¹

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This article is adapted from the keynote address at the Envoy Institute Conference at Belmont Abbey on “The New Atheism.” Reprinted with permission from *Envoy Magazine*.”

What is the best antidote to the new atheism? I believe it is to live and radiate gospel joy. In fact, I believe that one of the major reasons that many do not take the claims of Christianity as seriously as they should is because they fail to find in Christians the joy that ought to be there.

One of my favorite saints, St. Teresa of Avila, understood this. You see, some of her sisters thought that the sorrow we experience for our sinfulness should lead to habitual somberness. These sisters mistakenly associated joy with the joviality expressed by those surrendering to illicit pleasures. They confused a gloomy attitude for piety. St. Teresa would chide these sour faced companions by exclaiming “Lord, deliver me from these joyless saints.”

This is illustrated wonderfully in the movie *Amistad*. As you probably recall, *Amistad* tells the story of African slaves who took control by force of the ship *Amistad* that was illegally bringing them to slavery in America. Tricked by the crew, they sailed to America rather than back to Africa, where their fate had to be decided in court. Caught up in the politics of the day, the Africans had to await the disposition of their case in a New England prison. While there, the good Puritans of that locale came to “minister” to them in prison. These Puritans would arrive at the prison to sing and preach to the Africans, who, of course, did not speak English. The Africans had no idea who these people were or what they were doing. They begin to argue with each other: “It’s some sort of dance” one says. But another says, and all agree, “It cannot be, they look too miserable to be dancing.” In fact, from then on, the Africans refer to these “missionaries” as “those miserable ones.”

All too often, Christians do seem to give the impression that our faith is stern, harsh, and reactionary—that the fundamental stance of faith is to be opposed to anything that smacks of enjoyment. Our most effective

critics pounce upon the opportunities that we often give them to denounce Christianity. One thinks of the great social commentator H.L. Mencken who defined Puritanism as “the haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy.” Mencken said that “the problem with Christianity is Christians” and believed that a basic Christian attitude was that somewhere, someone is having a good time... and something ought to be done about it.

We find this depiction of Christianity everywhere in our culture, usually coupled with a subtle (or not too subtle) allusion to hypocrisy to boot. From mean, uncaring nuns who beat their students to the hypocritical “moral majority” politicians who do not live what they want to impose on others and everything in between; movies, books, television and radio are often depicting Christians and Christianity in this negative light.

And often, we have no one to blame but ourselves. We Christians have not always radiated the peace and joy that we are called to live. However, authentic Christianity—a robust Catholicism—must always be steeped in peace and joy.

Joy in the Bible

The scriptures, the liturgy and the lives of the saints give witness to this calling. Authentic Catholic faith is something that brings us into a relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ which is lived out in and with the community which is His Church. Through Jesus we enter into a personal and passionate relationship with God and all others through God. This relationship allows us to experience what St. Paul calls the “peace of God which surpasses all understanding” (Phil 4:7). This peace is a gift from God and God gives peace not as the world does. It is this experience of a deep and abiding peace that allows (or should allow) us to radiate joy to the entire world.

We find this teaching frequently in Sacred Scripture. For example in St. Paul’s letter to the Church at Philippi we read:

Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with

thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.

Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Phil 4:4-7).

You can hear Paul's emphasis on the need to rejoice as he repeats it: "I say again rejoice."

While this teaching is given a new emphasis in Christianity, the Old Testament also gives witness to the call to live joyfully. One example is Psalm 100:

Shout joyfully to the Lord, all you lands; worship the Lord with cries of gladness; come before him with joyful song. Know that the Lord is God, our maker to whom we belong, whose people we are, God's well-tended flock. Enter the temple gates with praise, its courts with thanksgiving. Give thanks to God, bless his name; good indeed is the Lord, Whose love endures forever, whose faithfulness lasts through every age.

Here the psalmist calls us to make a "joyful noise" in thanksgiving for all the Lord has done for us. This means even those who cannot sing (like me who became a basketball player only because I was kicked out of the band and choir in elementary school for being absolutely tone deaf) are to make a "joyful noise unto the Lord."

The centrality of joy to the gospel message is clearly seen in the teaching of Jesus. For example, in John's gospel Jesus speaks of the fullness of joy with his disciples at the last supper:

*As the Father loves me, so I also love you.
Remain in my love.*

*If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love,
just as I have kept my Father's commandments
and remain in his love.*

*"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you
and your joy may be complete.*

*This is my commandment: love one another as I love you
(Jn 15:9-12).*

Jesus came that "we may have life and have it to the full (John 10:10). And fullness of life means a life where we experience the complete joy of Jesus.

Joy in the Liturgy

These are readings that every Christian knows. They are not unpopular or hidden texts. They are central teachings of the faith. What is more, the Catholic liturgical tradition emphasizes the idea of joy several times in each

liturgical year. We are called to be joyful always but we are also reminded of the various aspects of joy throughout our seasons of grace.

For example, during Advent we celebrate *Gaudete* Sunday (the Third Sunday in Advent). This is the Sunday when we light the *rose* color candle and the priest wears *rose* color vestments (I emphasize the word "rose" because the color is rose not pink. Priests ought never to wear pink).

Gaudete is Latin for the imperative—Rejoice! *Gaudete* Sunday is given as a short pause during Advent's preparation for Christmas. It celebrates the joy of anticipation. *Gaudete* Sunday reminds us of the joy with which the faithful children of Israel awaited the birth of the Messiah. And it is a celebration of the joy of our anticipation of the celebration of the Christmas Season. One thinks of the joy that children experience during this time of year.

But there is another aspect to this celebration of joy. The Advent season prepares us to more worthily celebrate Christmas and the first coming of Jesus into our world where what was begun in the Annunciation (celebrated March 25th) is made manifest to some of Israel (the shepherds) and later some gentiles (the Magi). But Advent also looks to the Second Coming of Jesus at the end of time to end time. Christians are also joyfully awaiting the Parousia when Christ will come, escorted by all the heavenly hosts, to fully and completely usher in the Kingdom of mercy, peace and justice. During Advent we are reminded of that ancient prayer of Christians which we should repeat often: "Maranatha!"—"Come, Lord Jesus!"

During the Lenten season we also celebrate a Sunday dedicated to joy—*Laetare* Sunday. *Laetare* is also an imperative to rejoice but here the understanding of joy is the joy of a respite—a rest or recess period. Occurring in the middle of Lent, *Laetare* Sunday (rose vestments again are worn) is a time to celebrate the hard work begun via our Lenten spiritual practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Flowers are allowed on the altar and there is a slight relaxation of our Lenten discipline. The joy associated with this kind of respite is the joy of finding an oasis in the middle of the desert, the joy of a well-earned break while working on an arduous task or the joy of a small retreat or vacation away from everyday concerns.

The joy of anticipation and the joy of rest are two aspects of joy. We can also speak of the Christmas season as a joyous time of celebrating the manifestation of the Incarnation. But the highpoint of our liturgical year,

and the season when joy is particularly celebrated, is the Easter season. In the Easter season we celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead. We rejoice in His victory over sin, Satan and death, the ancient enemies of humankind. We renew our baptismal vows (or receive the sacrament of baptism) celebrating our participation in Jesus' life, death and resurrection. His victory becomes our victory.

Thus, the Easter season is marked with joy as seen as *jubilare*—jubilation. This is the joy of victory, the joy of triumph. We experience this joy naturally in childbirth or at a graduation or a wedding or ordination. Sports champions know a taste of this type of joy. In Christ and his victory we celebrate completion and fulfillment and our hope is strengthened that one day we can and will, by the grace of God, participate completely in His victory in Heaven even as Our Lady already does.

While our English language does not have the same richness as romance languages do to capture the various aspects and nuance of joy; we recognize in our liturgy how rich and subtle and vital joy is. As Catholics we know the rule: *lex orandi, lex credendi* (the law of prayer is the law of belief). Thus the liturgical calendar points to the importance of joy. But joy is not something left just to one season or a handful of Sundays. We celebrate the festival of Christ, the King only one Sunday each year. But Christ is our King now and always. Similarly, while there are Sundays and Seasons dedicated to various aspects of joy, joy is something we should experience, celebrate and radiate constantly. Every time we celebrate mass we recall and participate in Christ's life, his victory over death. We pray "in joyful hope" for his coming again. We join in the triumphant hymn of heaven: "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might." Joy is (or at least ought to be) the natural condition for Christians.

Joy or "Don't worry, be happy"?

Thus, Christianity should be synonymous with joyfulness. However, in many people's minds the two are considered almost opposed. This is partly due, as mentioned above, to the fact that we Christians sometimes do not live life joyfully. But there is something more, something deeper going on here that must be addressed. There is a tragic misunderstanding about the nature of joy in modernity. At least in the Anglo-Saxon world,

there has been much confusion about joy as it often has been used interchangeably with the term "happiness." And in turn, the meaning of happiness has undergone several changes over the years.

This must be explained. The term "happiness" and "happy" are rooted in the Old English word "hap." Hap meant "chance" or "fortune." We see this meaning clearly in other terms rooted in "hap": haphazard, happenstance, happens, etc. These have the connotation of something external to the human person that impacts upon him or her. Things *happen* to you. It is more a matter of chance, fortune, fate or luck. Thus the first two definitions of happy in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) are "1. Coming or happening by chance; fortuitous, chance... 2. Having good 'hap' or fortune; lucky; fortunate; favored by lot, position, or other external circumstance." Happiness means first of all (according to the OED): "Good fortune or luck in life or in a particular affair; success, prosperity." Thus we find in Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (I:i:14) "Wish me partaker in thy happiness, When thou do'st meet good hap."

The idea here is that happiness is more something of fate or chance. It is about what happens to you. Later it began also to mean "the state of pleasurable content of mind which result from success or the attainment of what is considered good." Still later it becomes a rule for utilitarian philosophers who put forward the incoherent "happiness principle" beginning with Francis Hutcheson in 1725: "The greatest happiness of the greatest number."

However, almost at the same time as the utilitarians are proposing the "happiness principle," English translations of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas were attempting to render the concept behind the Greek term *eudaimonia* into English. Many chose the word happiness to describe what humans pursue as a natural end according to Aristotle. But here the term happiness meant human flourishing or fulfillment. The Oxford scholar Jonathon Barnes comments on this translation of *eudaimonia* in his translation in the Penguin Classics version of Aristotle's *Ethics*:

The stock translation, "happiness," is by no means wholly absurd: it makes sense in most contexts of its occurrence, and it receives some degree of support on general semantic grounds. Yet it is far from adequate as a precise rendering of Aristotle's term. That is quickly shown in an abstract way: happiness, as the term is used in ordinary English, is sort of a mental or emotional state or condition; to call a man happy is (to put it very vaguely indeed) to say something about his

state of mind. Eudaimonia... is not simply a mental state... for it has been pretty well defined as a sort of well living (euзоia) and well-acting (eupraxia).

In the ethics of Aristotle and St. Thomas, the happy person is the person who lives and acts well (i.e. in accordance with right reason).

I believe this is what was meant by our Founding Fathers when they spoke in the *Declaration of Independence* of a right to the pursuit of happiness. As Dr. Carol V. Hamilton of George Mason University has shown, Thomas Jefferson's most likely source for the phrase was John Locke's essay *Concerning Human Understanding* where Locke wrote:

The necessity of pursuing happiness [is] the foundation of liberty. As therefore the highest perfection of intellectual nature lies in a careful and constant pursuit of true and solid happiness; so the care of ourselves, that we mistake not imaginary for real happiness, is the necessary foundation of our liberty. The stronger ties we have to an unalterable pursuit of happiness in general, which is our greatest good, and which, as such, our desires always follow, the more are we free from any necessary determination of our will to any particular action, and from a necessary compliance with our desire, set upon any particular, and then appearing preferable good, till we have duly examined whether it has a tendency to, or be inconsistent with, our real happiness: and therefore, till we are as much informed upon this inquiry as the weight of the matter, and the nature of the case demands, we are, by the necessity of preferring and pursuing true happiness as our greatest good, obliged to suspend the satisfaction of our desires in particular cases.

As Dr. Hamilton wrote, this notion of the pursuit of happiness "...is not merely sensual or hedonistic, but engages the intellect, requiring the careful discrimination of imaginary happiness from 'true and solid' happiness. It is the 'foundation of liberty' because it frees us from enslavement to particular desires" (<http://hnn.us/articles/46460.html>).

For many years, the idea that happiness meant living well in accord with right reason dominated thinking among Christians and non-Christians alike in America. However, there was another view about happiness and reason. This view came from another British philosopher: David Hume. In his *Treatise on Human Nature* Hume wrote: "Reason is and ought to be the

slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them." To Hume, and many moderns who knowingly or unknowingly follow his views, humans are like other animals with passions and desires. The difference is that evolution has given us reason as our tool to fulfill our desires. To a Human, there are no real objective standards by which you can measure if a desire is illicit or not (whether in fact this was Hume's intent might be argued, but the influence of his approach has been felt nonetheless). Society becomes a place of license where everyone negotiates a way to coexist while pursuing their particular desires. There are no real objective virtues or set ways for humans to flourish.

Thus happiness in this view is much more an emotional reality, something that comes and goes and depends on fulfillment of desires or one's circumstances. It is back to something akin to chance, fortune or fate. Happiness depends on the ebb and flow of the tides of life—what happens to us—either that or the fulfillment of our desires, whatever they may be.

This view of human nature cannot see the human as *Imago Dei*—in the image and likeness of God. Man is reduced to just another animal and a phrase like "don't worry, be happy" can replace the pursuit of genuine human flourishing.

Joy is something different. It is a gift from God. But since "grace perfects nature" this gift flourishes in the person striving (not without God's help) to live a full and reasonable life—a life in accordance with the will of God. St. Thomas says that as a gift of the Holy Spirit, "Joy is not a virtue distinct from charity, but an act or effect of charity." Thus, love leads towards joy and joy in turn leads to more love. In fact, as pointed out in *The Catholic Encyclopedia Dictionary*, Pope Benedict XIV in the 18th century made "expansive joy" one of the four criteria that would be considered in a candidate's cause for canonization.

There should be an underlying current of joy in our lives even amidst pain and suffering. Fr. Karl Rahner is not too far off when he states that joy is the experience of ordered harmony—experience that ultimately means "joy in God and his salvation." Each dimension of joy ought to be present—the joy of expectation and anticipation as we long and work for a more perfect union with God and each other; the joy of rest and relaxation, especially in a daily time of prayer and meditation, play and friendship; and the joy of completion and achievement as we celebrate with each other what God has accomplished for us and through us for the world.

What of Peace?

When St. Paul wrote about joy he also spoke of the gift of peace. They do seem to go together. Someone who radiates joy will be at peace and someone at peace will radiate joy.

This is the main point of a relatively recent book by Father Jacques Philippe. Father Philippe, a French priest working in Rome, has written one of those little treatises that quickly becomes a spiritual classic. Like *Abandonment to Divine Providence* by Jean-Pierre de Caussade and *The Soul of the Apostolate* by Don Jean-Baptiste Chautard, Father Philippe's book, *Searching for and Maintaining Peace* (Alba House, New York, 2002), is the type of essay one can return to again and again for solace and motivation.

In this work, Father Phillippe boldly proclaims, "The reasons why we lose our peace are always bad reasons." This is because God gives His peace as a gift to those who entrust themselves to Him. As Jesus told his disciples: "Peace I leave with you, My own peace I give you; a peace the world cannot give, this is My gift to you. Let not your hearts be troubled or afraid ..." (John 14:27). This peace is no superficial freedom from conflicts or difficulties, but a deep abiding inner-peace that comes from union with and confidence in God.

Since peace is God's gift we ought not let anything disturb it. As St. Paul wrote: "If God is for us, who can be against us? ... Who could ever separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom 8:31). However, Christians know (at least *this* Christian knows) how easy it is to lose one's sense of peace.

It is directly to counter this reality that Father Philippe wrote his book. *Any reason that causes us to lose our peace is a bad reason.* What are these "bad reasons"? Father Philippe highlights four in particular:

— *The troubles of life and the fear of being without:* How often this can disturb our peace. But, we must remember God's Providence. God always provides! "Stop worrying over questions like 'what are we to eat?' or 'what are we to wear?'" The unbelievers are always running after these things. Your heavenly Father knows all that you need. Seek first his kingship over you, his way of holiness, and all these things will be given you besides" (Matthew 6:31-33).

— *Other peoples' faults and shortcomings:* Oh, how we let others' actions affect us!

Someone cuts in line or in traffic, looks at us funny

or says something we disagree with and our peace is gone. But, if we let others agitate us so, we give away our freedom and self-control to them. We empower them to determine how we are. This denies one of God's greatest gifts to us - free will. Our peace should not depend on others.

— *Our own faults and shortcomings:* My favorite bumper sticker is the one that reads, "Be patient with me, God isn't through yet." One of the most difficult spiritual traits to acquire is patience. We need patience with ourselves and with others. After all, we are to imitate God who is patient with us. "Be patient, therefore, my brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer awaits the precious yield of the soil" (James 5:7).

— *The fear of suffering:* Perhaps this is the largest obstacle to seeking and maintaining inner peace. Yes, to love in this imperfect world full of sin means that one will suffer. But, suffering is inevitable. To love is to suffer, but to choose not to love entails an even greater suffering. What we must remember is that God will never test us beyond our means to respond. As my mother always taught me, "The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you." Paul reminded the Romans of the infallibility of God's providence for those who love and follow God when he wrote, "All things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to his purpose" (Rom 8:28).

Father Philippe's book is a great challenge and solace. Its truth is borne out in scripture and in the prayers of the Mass. In every Mass we pray right after the "Our Father" for the gift of peace and protection "from *all* anxiety." I believe it was this gift of perfect peace that St. Teresa of Avila was praying for in her famous poem written in her prayer book:

Let nothing disturb thee,

Nothing affright thee;
All things are passing;
God never changeth;
Patient endurance
Attaineth to all things;
Who God possesseth
In nothing is wanting;
Alone God Sufficeth.

Thus our prayer should be: May the Peace of God that surpasses all understanding reign in our hearts and in our minds (cf. Phil 4:7).

The Saints—Living Embodiments of Joy and Peace

There are a lot of reasons to be joyful. The saints knew and know that. But some think this is too naïve in a world darkened by sin, injustice, inhumanity, and daily destruction of the innocent. How is joy preserved or even recommended amidst the darkness of evil?

Jesus and His victory is the answer to that challenge. Because of the triumph of the Cross (it was and is a triumph!) sin and Satan and even death has been vanquished. We can now live in joy and with a profound sense of peace.

The saints show us how to follow Christ. Here I am highly indebted to my friend, Ronda Chervin for her wonderful work “Quotable Saints.” The examples I will give are referenced in her chapter entitled “Sadness to Joy.” The Church asks her children to imitate the saints as they imitated Christ. Think of St. Pio—Padre Pio. Can anyone of us imagine what it must be like to live with the wounds of Christ in our body? As I get older I must deal with the diminishment that come with age. All of us, as Fr. Basil Pennington, O.C.S.O. taught, must learn to “sanctify our diminishment.” But Padre Pio each and every day experienced some of what the passion entailed. Even more, he was often misunderstood by his confreres, sometimes placed under suspicion by his superiors and had his work and efforts interrupted by these suspicions. Yet throughout it all he maintained a deep and abiding sense of peace. While there were times when Padre Pio was stern with people (he felt he had to be for their own good and salvation), anyone reading his life cannot help noticing how he maintained a profound sense of peace and joy throughout his priesthood.

St. Francis of Assisi is another great example of joy. He too suffered the stigmata. St. Francis had to suffer the indignity of being voted out of leadership of the order *which he founded!* Yet it was St. Francis who wrote, “Let the brothers ever avoid appearing gloomy, sad, and clouded like the hypocrites: but let one ever be found joyous in the Lord.”

Francis’ spiritual sister in the Lord, St. Clare of Assisi recognized the danger of melancholy to true devotion. This woman, who had to defend her cloister from armed invasion, wrote: “Melancholy is the poison of devotion. When one is in tribulation, it is necessary to be more joyful because one is nearer to God.” St. Clare

understood that if we united ourselves with Jesus when we are suffering, we are more identified with him and become like him.

Other saints teach these truths as well. St. John of the Cross was imprisoned and tortured by his own order. Denied the possibility of praying the office or saying mass, confined to an extremely small cell, beaten on a regular basis, St. John was still able to find consolation in the presence of the Crucified One in his prayer. Much of his spiritual writing was either composed or inspired while he was in prison. St. John of the Cross wrote: “The soul of the one who loves God always swims in joy, always keeps holiday, and is always in the mood for singing.”

St. Thomas Aquinas gave practical advice for overcoming sorrow. He wrote that, “sorrow can be alleviated by a good sleep, a bath and a glass of wine.” Authentic Christianity is not puritanical. Jesus’ first miracle was to turn six large vessels of water (15–25 gallons each) into wine. He knew the goodness of a wedding banquet well provided for in matters of food and drink. Heaven is likened to such a banquet (cf. Matt. 22, Rev. 19). Catholics are in fact a “party people” because we recognize the goodness of God’s creation and his desire for us to enjoy the good things he has provided for us (all within appropriate moderation). G.K. Chesterton among other recognized the “common sense” of the Catholic position and it contributed to his conversion.

Living Gospel Joy and the New Evangelization

When John Paul II wrote his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* (on the “Mission of the Redeemer”) he reminded all of us that we carry on the mission of Jesus Christ. That mission is to reveal to the world the merciful love of the Father. Our world is in desperate need of this mission. So many do not know that they are loved by God and called to a glorious vocation in him. It is part of our vocation to help others to come to know who they are and why they are in Christ. We do this by our love, service and witness.

But often the biggest obstacle to this life of witness can be the lack of gospel joy among Christians. What can we do to kindle the flame of joy? The best weapon at our disposal is prayer. Joy and Peace are gifts from God. They flow from our love relationship with God. The more we recognize and strengthen the bonds

of love in prayer the easier it will be to radiate peace and joy. Second, as St. Paul teaches in Rom. 12:2, transformation in Christ begins with “the renewal of the mind.” Christians must renew our commitment to seek integral human fulfillment in accordance with right reason rather than any ephemeral or false notion that might pass for “happiness.” As Catholics we know that power, wealth, glory and pleasure are not bad things in themselves. But we also recognize that they are not appropriate ends to be sought for their own sake. Any power or wealth we may have is a byproduct of fulfilling our vocation in Christ and is meant to be used to build up the kingdom. True power means the ability to “serve the rest” (cf. Matt 20:25–28). Wealth is held in stewardship and must serve the common good. Glory is fleeting and should only be a byproduct of virtuous living. All glory ultimately should be directed to God who “crown his own gifts” when he receives a saint

into heaven. Pleasure cannot be an end in itself but can be a good side consequence of upright living. Neither is pain to always be avoided for often we must endure suffering to fulfill our vocation and serve others.

No fleeting emotion or passing sentiment will satisfy us. We humans always want that which is eternal and that which is infinite. The human person—each and every man, woman, and child—yearns for the joy and peace that only God can give. God wishes so much for us his children, to flourish on every level of our being. No superficial contentment based on the fulfillment of subjective passions can ultimately satisfy. We were made for more—and God is always more. ✠

ENDNOTES

1. This article originally appeared in *Envoy Magazine* (www.envoymagazine.com). We are grateful to *Envoy Magazine* for permission to reprint Msgr. Swetland's contribution.

REVIEW ARTICLE

“Misconception Misconceived?”

A Review Article

by Kenneth D. Whitehead

Matthew Connelly. *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population.* The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008. 521 pages. \$35.00. Hardcover.

Some pro-life voices as well as some other voices in favor of traditional morality have hailed the appearance of this book on population control because, among other things, it includes in its densely written pages a devastating exposé of the 20th-century's infamous population control movement. Beginning with the eugenics movement and Margaret Sanger's drive for birth control in the early part of the century, American and Western elites increasingly came to see unchecked population growth as a menace threatening the future of civilization itself. Like today's environmentalists, the population controllers saw themselves as, quite liter-

ally, “saving the world.”

By mid-century and on into the 1960s, overpopulation alarmism had become totally overwrought and even hysterical in such books as Stanford biologist Paul Ehrlich's *Population Bomb*, which predicted mass starvation as early as the 1970s, and stated flatly that “the battle to feed all of humanity is over.” This kind of uncritical alarmism included such equally irresponsible attitudes as the judgment of a future president of Planned Parenthood, William Vogt, that we “should not ship food to keep alive ten million Indians and Chinese this year, so that fifty million may die five years hence.”

Such overheated sentiments—and they were quite widespread—had already and perhaps inevitably led to the formation of a determined movement among predominantly Western elites to curb population growth around the world. The resulting population control movement was not slow in getting organized, and it quickly became very prominent and

hugely influential on the world scene.

Especially concerned with Rudyard Kipling's "lesser breeds without the law," the population controllers, who included in their ranks various experts, writers, and researchers, as well as foundation executives and wealthy men like John D. Rockefeller, III, were initially seized with the need to get people and classes considered "inferior" to stop reproducing. While most of them were actually quite sensitive to being accused of racism or neo-colonialism, and were thus often quite careful and guarded in how they presented their case, particularly since the Nazis in Germany had given eugenics such a bad name, they were nevertheless quite determined to press forward to try to curb world population growth by whatever means that proved to be feasible. They were true believers in the thesis that overpopulation constituted a threat to humanity unprecedented in human history. Eventually they became convinced that everybody, not just those they considered the "lesser breeds," had to be stopped from uncontrolled breeding, and so they designed their various "programs" accordingly. "Control" was the watchword.

To achieve this control, the elites who constituted the population control movement set up various new entities and organizations such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the Population Council, the Pathfinder Fund, Zero Population Growth, and others. They also quite effectively brought to bear their personal and institutional influence in moving U.S. Government agencies such as the Agency for International Development (USAID), and UN agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), into the population control business. Eventually they succeeded in setting up entirely new specialized agencies such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which, even today, remains prominently in the news. While the Bush Administration typically withheld the millions of dollars customarily appropriated for it because of UNFPA's continuing support for China's Draconian one-child family policy, the Obama administration, as one of its first acts, rejected this "Mexico City policy," which went back to the Reagan Administration, in order that funds appropriated by the Congress in accordance with a population control rationale could again flow to UNFPA.

Population control had long become an accepted

"in" thing for many people, including especially opinion leaders, and such favorable attitudes towards it have persisted for many decades without being seriously questioned. As is the case with environmentalist alarmism today, beginning especially in the late 1950s, many people, especially among the elites, accepted that overpopulation indeed threatened the entire human future. Nor did they generally blanch at the idea that coercion might have to be employed to achieve the desired level of population control. In the United States at least, the population controllers long enjoyed the virtually uncritical patronage of the U.S. Government and the American political and media establishment. Both Presidents Eisenhower and Truman, for example, readily accepted the overpopulation myth, and both served as honorary chairmen of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA). The fact that Planned Parenthood had actually come to be considered *respectable*—another "charity" to be promoted by society women, as remains the case today—was in fact one of the most significant social developments in 20th-century America.

As a Catholic, President Kennedy was supposedly fearful of being perceived as being too close to the population controllers, but in actual fact his administration supported and promoted some of the various early population control initiatives that were increasingly being mounted. Kennedy's Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, for example, had already been involved in population control as head of the Ford Foundation.

However, back then, a President Eisenhower still did not know how to translate his convictions about overpopulation into government policy; he was still fearful of an unfavorable public reaction; it was still difficult even to discuss birth control openly in those days. This was before condoms were prominently displayed on supermarket shelves; you had to ask the pharmacist for them, furtively. These kinds of problems would be overcome very soon, however, beginning with the Johnson Administration's Great Society, in fact. But it was Eisenhower's friend General William Draper, however, who became one of the most ubiquitous and effective members of the population control establishment, both organizationally and in terms of raising money for the cause (he also got rich in the process).

The author of this book, historian Matthew Connelly, shows how up until the 1980s, all of the other U.S. administrations similarly became massively involved in population control activities. This was the case without regard to whether an administration was considered “liberal” or “conservative.” Population control had become something that was “in the air” for practically everybody. The U.S. taxpayer very quickly became the largest source of funds for all the burgeoning population control activities. For Congress, quickly and mostly uncritically, also came to take overpopulation for granted and to appropriate huge amounts for the various “programs” that got authorized to counter it—just as Congress generally continues to support family planning with public subsidies today in almost automatic and even knee-jerk fashion.

The record of the U.S.-led World Bank, under the arrogant and morally obtuse Robert S. McNamara, like that of USAID under the sinister Reimert Ravenholt, in supporting and promoting such programs as coercive sterilizations, IUD insertions, or the massive shipment of contraceptives (often in place of needed medical supplies), surely constitutes one of the more sordid and disgraceful chapters of misplaced government action in American history.

Though U.S. foreign aid after World War II had begun with honorable and idealistic motives, under the influence of the overpopulation scare, U.S. Food for Peace legislation, for example, came to require that a country’s record on family planning had to be taken into account before food aid could be granted. Elsewhere governments and organizations deliberately cut back on supporting and promoting health measures because it was feared that they were contributing to what was popularly called the population explosion.

Adoption of the term “family planning,” by the way, in place of the term “birth control” that had originally been coined by Margaret Sanger, proved to be a stroke of genius for the movement, comparable to the later adoption of “pro-choice” in place of “pro-abortion” in the U.S. culture wars. Of course the term “family planning” never was anything but a misnomer, however, since what was almost always involved in it was planning and acting precisely in order *not* to have a family!

Matthew Connelly is a Columbia University historian, and in this book he documents the whole

dismal history of the attempts of the population control movement to reduce world population and to promote family planning worldwide. Indeed he covers the subject in more detail than perhaps many people might be able to take. As a practicing historian, he goes in for primary sources, and he has consulted and cites a simply staggering number of the papers, records, memoranda, correspondence, data, and the like from the population control organizations (better that he has read through all this stuff than that anybody else should ever have to!).

He does not, however, credit any such thing as a population control “plot” or “conspiracy” by the Western elites. For one thing, the population controllers were operating quite openly and with apparent broad public support. For another thing, it turns out that Third World leaders were often just as ready as the Western (or former “colonialist”) elites to force population control measures on their peoples—Indira Gandhi’s ultimately failed forced sterilization program in the 1970s in India being a notorious case in point. Connelly is actually able to conclude that the population control movement was “a system without a brain,” but it was a system that was able to spread its tentacles nearly everywhere nonetheless.

The author correctly characterizes his history as primarily a “story of how some people have tried to control others without having to answer to anyone.” Almost inevitably in this connection, one thinks of the insight of C.S. Lewis in his *Abolition of Man* that when the idea of man’s control over nature is mentioned, what is usually meant is the control that some, usually a privileged, professional, scientific, or technical elite, find it possible to exert over others. The 20th-century population control movement, as Connelly shows, represents a classic case of this phenomenon.

He also shows that the drive organized by the population controllers ultimately did not succeed, at least on the terms they started out with. He cites studies showing that the present decline in world fertility and population growth began prior to and developed independently of the massive organized population control programs that were put in place. He cites further studies showing that the programs distributing contraceptives in poor countries likewise did not have more than a marginal effect on population growth. Nor, he finds, do any significant data support the once widespread assumption that over-

population causes poverty.

Connelly sees the UN World Population Conferences in Bucharest in 1974, in Mexico City in 1984, and in Cairo in 1994—along with the UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985—as stages on the road that ultimately led to the defanging of the sharpest teeth of the population controllers, and as eventually moderating their worst excesses. In his view, the population control movement ultimately failed to achieve its objectives of controlling the fertility of *others*.

While this is a heartening conclusion in some respects, *Fatal Misconception* is nevertheless *not* a book that pro-lifers or anyone who believes in and adheres to a traditional God-given morality can either applaud or approve of. For while the author rightly sees and records the errors and excesses of the population controllers, he himself, unfortunately, does not occupy any standpoint that affords him any moral high ground from which to look down on those he criticizes.

He sees readily enough the moral wrong of some human beings being coerced by other more privileged human beings to bring their fertility under control—coerced, that is, by what might even be styled a modern “patriarchal” type of elite, consisting mostly of rich white men from the West (except that the population control movement from the very beginning also had such major leaders who were women as Margaret Sanger or Marie Stopes—it was *not* just “rich white males.” Moreover, as has already been noted, Third World leaders also were only too often quite ready to coerce their own people. This kind of coercion, of course, can plainly not be justified.

In spite of his disapproval of the population controllers, however, author Matthew Connelly sees no moral wrong at all, apparently, when human beings on their own decide to resort to evil and immoral means to achieve the control of their fertility that *they themselves* have decided they need and want. On the contrary, this academic believes that a kind of “victory” over the population controllers was actually won and came about not so much as a result of any clear realization of the grave immorality of what they were doing, of the oppression they were perpetrating. Rather, as he essentially shows, this “victory” came about as a result of the emancipation, education, and empowerment of women—greatly helped along, as he also

shows, by some of the activist feminists among them. “Feminists and environmentalists,” he writes, were enabled “to forge a new, more enlightened consensus that promoted empowerment, not population control.” In particular, according to him, it was a question of placing in the hands of women themselves responsibility for “the control of their own bodies.”

The author resorts more than once to this familiar language of “women controlling their own bodies,” as a matter of fact. Indeed, he expressly affirms what he styles “reproductive freedom,” both as a moral imperative and as a “human right.” He declares that the feminists successfully “redeemed” the cause of “reproductive rights.” In reaching this conclusion, he is entirely in accord with much contemporary thinking and practice, of course. The reader will immediately recognize in this kind of language, however, the typical vocabulary of today’s radical feminists and pro-abortionist activists. Far from being uncomfortable with such language, Connelly readily employs it and expressly endorses it. He states at the outset in his Preface that he considers the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion in the United States to be “settled law”—just as the *New York Times* editorial on the morrow of the handing down of that same unprecedented decision similarly declared it to be henceforth “settled law,” and just as America’s secular liberal elites have since then not ceased to try to maintain it as such from that day to this.

However, acceptance of legalized abortion, denying the protection of the law to an entire class of human beings, namely, the unborn, can no more be accepted by moral and civilized human beings as a method of empowerment (or of anything else) than could be accepted the legalized slavery also once upheld by the same U.S. Supreme Court in its *Dred Scott* decision. As Abraham Lincoln said at the time, “if slavery is not immoral, nothing is immoral.” The same thing must be said of abortion, the killing of a living, though not yet born, human being: if this is not immoral, nothing is immoral.

No matter that the U.S. Supreme Court has nevertheless legalized abortion in the United States, and no matter that American secular liberal elites fervently endorse and defend this action of the Supreme Court, while the American public generally has tolerated it and in some ways even welcomed it

for more than 35 years. But it is still wrong. Slavery endured for decades and even centuries before it was recognized for the evil it was and abolished. The same thing has got to be true of legalized abortion. Those who think as Matthew Connelly apparently does *cannot* simply decide and declare that this crying evil is somehow a great benefit that has come about in the wake of female emancipation and empowerment. Rather, it is legalized barbarism; and in any rightly ordered society, those acquiescing in it ought surely to forfeit any right to be heard on any other moral issue.

Abortion always and in every case involves the taking of an innocent human life, and this remains the case whether it is imposed on populations from above, as continues to be the case today in, e.g., China, or whether it is “elected” by “choice” by individuals, as is the case in the United States and other Western countries today where abortion has been legalized. In all cases, though, abortion remains the killing of the innocent, and anyone who accepts or grants the legitimacy of this killing can scarcely claim to be occupying any kind of moral high ground that Matthew Connelly nevertheless appears to think that he can lay claim to.

For throughout his entire text, Matthew Connelly appears simply to assume and take for granted the legality and acceptability of abortion. He seems oblivious to the fact that any serious moral issue might even be involved. On the evidence of his text, he certainly disfavors any such thing as any kind of restrictions or any “ban” on abortions—although Western society successfully did ban abortion for nearly two millennia until the Soviet Union in 1920 broke ranks and became the first country in modern times to legalize it. Connelly notes, pertinently, that abortion was the “silent partner” in the population declines in Taiwan and Korea. “Between 1967 and 1978,” he writes, “forty-two countries made it easier to terminate pregnancies.”

In other words, the emancipation and empowerment of women that he lauds and that, among other things, secured “reproductive freedom” for women, came about not only because the feminists and the environmentalists (among others) worked so hard and so successfully for these goals against the population controllers themselves. It came about because society, in many if not most Western countries, had

meanwhile decided on a number of grounds that the unwanted members of the next generation who had not been eliminated by the world’s massive modern recourse to contraception or other means of birth control could now be eliminated by abortion, that is, by killing them before they could come to birth.

Thus, newly emancipated women everywhere could now henceforth avail themselves of this new and sure method of realizing their reproductive freedom. However desirable the modern emancipation of women must surely be considered in many respects, the fact that women could also now more freely elect to kill their offspring, hardly *can* be considered any great “benefit,” either for them or for the world at large, certainly not for children. This unhappy, indeed tragic, result, though, was probably inevitable, considering that the emancipation of women coincided with the legalization of abortion in so many countries. A situation was brought about whereby even the most avid of the population controllers could no longer discern any *need* for “population control” as such. It was coming about all by itself by “choice.” This is what the “victory” over the population controllers that Connelly praises really amounted to in the end (and in any case, the population controllers do not appear to have been displaced or “defeated” in any way in, e.g., China).

Nor is the world any better off because the original elite class of population controllers mostly got displaced, in effect, because of the emancipation, education, and empowerment of women coming along at the same time as the legalization of abortion in so many places. For the fact is that many of the same programs and institutions that the population controllers put in place remain with us still and carry on with their activities unimpeded, the annual debate that still takes place in Congress surrounding the activities of UNFPA providing a case in point. Current headlines noted entirely at random in the course of the writing of this review illustrate how today, for example, “the World Health Organization Circumvents Abortion Laws in Bangladesh” and “International Planned Parenthood Abortion Primer Distorts International Law.”

And if the way “some people have tried to control others without having to answer to anyone” is evil and immoral, as Connelly contends, then the activities of some of the non-governmental organiza-

tions (NGOs) freely operating today within the UN framework would surely have to qualify as well.

For example, in fiscal year 2007, the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA), America's premier abortion provider, topped \$1 billion in revenues, of which \$336 million came from the American tax-payer. In the calendar year 2007, PPFA's record of 290,000 abortions amounted to about 1 out of 4 of all the abortions performed in the United States. And as for those people whom the original population controllers considered "the lesser breeds," some 37 percent of all the abortions performed in the United States today are performed on black women, even though blacks make up only about 13 percent of the American population. More black American children are aborted every year than are born, and abortion is now the leading cause of death among blacks. The fact that blacks are carrying out this kind of genocide on themselves, rather than having it visited upon them by elite white population controllers, does not make it any less tragic.

And these are only a couple of random examples of the nature of the Brave New World that has actually resulted from "empower[ing] individuals by giving them control over their own bodies," as Matthew Connelly so blandly parrots today's typical pro-abortion language. Apparently the morality of the procedures employed in exercising this individual control over one's body is not supposed to enter in to the picture at all; it is all just supposed to be a matter of individual "choice" and "empowerment." At least the original population controllers thought they were helping to save civilization (and Western civilization at that!).

Matthew Connelly nevertheless claims to think that "empathy" should be a core value for historians, and he actually manages to exhibit quite a bit of this empathy for the population controllers, even as he is critical of their project. A very revealing *lack* of empathy on his part, however, comes in the references he makes to the pro-life movement. He knows very little about the pro-life movement, as a matter of fact; nor does he cite many serious pro-life sources in his voluminous references. His references to the movement concern almost exclusively that (small) part of the pro-life movement in America concerned with international population control and family planning activities. He makes reference, for example, to the

work of Father Paul Marx, O.S.B., founder of Human Life International (HLI). Typically, he describes Father Marx himself, one of the most gentle-hearted souls the present writer has ever had the privilege of meeting, as "pugnacious." No: Father Marx just objects to killing children.

Connelly's characterization of the pro-life movement, in almost every reference he makes to it, is similarly dismissive and even scornful. Just as he very consistently refers favorably to "women's control of their own bodies"—ignoring the fact that the aborted child is *not* part of the woman's body—so he consistently and regularly employs the typical language of pro-abortion activists, and occasionally he even relays some of their lies. He speaks, for example, without finding it necessary to cite any evidence or source, which he does so meticulously for almost everything else, that those favoring reproductive rights were obliged to face "physical assaults, clinic fire-bombings, and serial killers." In fact, after more than 35 years of mass pro-life activity, actual incidents of the type he mentions can still practically be counted on the fingers of one hand. Contrary to the mythology that has grown up and has been assiduously purveyed by NARAL, NOW, and suchlike pro-abortion organizations in their propaganda, the pro-life movement has been a singularly peaceful movement, as anyone who has ever been at the annual March for Life in Washington on the January 22 anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision can testify.

Connelly, however, holds a different view of all this, and one based for the most part on skimpy and sometimes superficial evidence. He deplores the fact that, as he claims, the pro-lifers were permitted "to pile calumny upon calumny on China's program." He is indignant that "the pro-life movement made [China's] one-child policy a poster child to oppose family planning everywhere." Quite casually and again without bothering to cite any sources for his characterization, he speaks of "pro-life provocateurs." All one can say, faced with this kind of colored language, is: some empathy! Some historian!

And if this is how he views the pro-life movement, it can perhaps easily be imagined how he views the Catholic Church. Here again his historian's empathy appears either to desert him or never to have been operative to begin with. He is scarcely able to mention the Church, various popes and their

encyclicals, or the Catholic bishops without revealing his pronounced distaste if not disdain for them. The fact that the Catholic bishops of America were thoroughly routed by the population controllers more than a generation ago and have not mounted any serious opposition to family planning in Congress or anywhere else virtually since then is a fact that one can infer from his documentation, though he himself nowhere expressly draws that conclusion.

He actually sees a kind of moral equivalence between the population controllers on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the Catholic Church, the pro-life movement, and other pro-natalists. He declares that “no less manipulative were those who denied hundreds of millions more people access to contraceptives and abortion because they wanted them to have more babies.”

This characterization, of course, could be considered an almost laughably simplistic notion (if the subject were not so serious) of why the Catholic Church has always opposed both contraception and abortion on moral grounds. The Church’s position here at least ought to be accorded some credit for consistency, even if one does not agree with it; for the Church’s position here is nothing else but what the whole of Christianity firmly held for many centuries up until very recent times. Only from the perspective of the 20th century’s sexual revolution—itsself hardly any great model for “success”—can the Church’s position be considered the strange departure from prevailing received ideas that so many people today apparently do consider it to be. A serious historian ought to know and understand something about all this better than Connelly does..

Even though Matthew Connelly dedicates this book to his own (presumably Catholic) parents for “having so many children,” he does not evince any real understanding of the Catholic teaching on abortion and contraception. He cites no serious Catholic theological sources concerning this teaching, and, as often as not, he garbles the few papal or episcopal sources that he does cite. On more than one occasion, he cites “dissenting” Catholic sources as his authority for what he evidently believes to be authentic “Catholic” positions. One blunder which makes one wonder whether he has actually read some of the sources he cites is his reference to John T. Noonan’s 1965 book *Contraception*. In this book Noonan did *not* show “how Church

teaching had changed again and again over the centuries,” as Connelly claims. Noonan’s book showed, rather, exactly the contrary, namely, that Catholic teaching on contraception had *not* changed over the centuries—even though Noonan himself went on to accept contraception anyway, against his own evidence. Later, Noonan wrote a book on usury purportedly showing how a Church teaching on a moral issue could change, even though, all the while, he had failed to show how the Church’s teaching *had* changed! Connelly himself at one point even incredulously quotes John Paul II to the effect that the “Church teaching on birth control could never change.”

All in all, then, Matthew Connelly exhibits in *Fatal Misconception* an indifference if not a willful blindness to the idea that there just might be some serious moral issues involved in today’s widespread recourse to contraception and abortion. He concludes his book on a note which purports to take broad moral questions and the human good into account, but he nevertheless simply takes it for granted without argument that contraception and abortion *are* suitable and moral means serving this human good. This, however, would seem to be a rather large assumption on almost anybody’s reading, one surely in need of serious discussion and the offering of evidence and proofs. However, he makes not the slightest attempt to prove or to provide evidence for the validity of his position here; he evidently does not think any evidence is necessary.

Indeed, one of the “encouraging signs” he describes is found in his statement that “some pro-lifers have recognized that promoting access to contraception is the best way to reduce the incidence of abortion.” Wrong! He needs to check the data on this, which he seems not to know anything about. As Pope John Paul II well understood when he composed his 1995 encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* on the Gospel of Life, and as the relevant data do indeed show, recourse to abortion is most prevalent precisely where contraception too is easily available and widely used. Widespread use of contraception actually *increases* rather than reducing the incidence of abortion (and in any case, it is not just a matter of the incidence of abortion anyway, but it rather entails the principle that any constitutional system professing to guarantee the equal protection of the law to all cannot just decide to leave an entire class, the unborn, outside of the purview of the law—as unfortunately

happens to be the case for the American constitutional system at the moment).

The idea that the availability and use of contraception actually increases the incidence of abortion may seem counterintuitive to some. Nevertheless, this is what the data generally do confirm. One reason for this perhaps surprising fact is that once contraception becomes morally acceptable and comes to be widely used, it very quickly becomes a kind of imperative: one is henceforth in *control* of whether or not a child is to be conceived and brought to birth. It is one's decision to make. It is a question of what one *wants*. The child is no longer thought to be a "gift of God" or a bearer of independent human rights and a human being entitled to respect and love. Rather, the question that now governs is whether the child is "wanted" or not.

Thus, the child is not very subtly transformed into a kind of object over which the contracepting couple have full control without regard to any other factor. The fact that any child conceived is a new human person in the full sense of the word, one who ought to enjoy full human rights, is simply conveniently laid aside and forgotten about. "Control" continues to be the watchword, even though, rather than being imposed from above by the population controllers, this control is now elected and exercised individually by one of today's typical "autonomous decision makers," not bound by any moral code, as so many people today consider themselves to be.

If, then, for whatever reason, contraception *fails*, or is not even employed in a given case, then abortion is almost automatically resorted to as an effective means of exercising the control that has already been antecedently and quite firmly established and decided upon. This is the precise *logic* of how contraception can and typically does lead to abortion. This logic, in fact, was strikingly borne out in the history of how legalized abortion actually came about in the United States: for the *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion was directly based upon an earlier Supreme Court decision, *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which had removed legal obstacles on the availability and use of *contraception*.

And in 1992, in its *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* decision upholding the legality of abortion in the United States as originally established by *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court expressly ruled that abortion had to be kept legal in the United States in order to provide the remedy, in the high court's own words, "in case contraception should fail." Those who imagine that contraception is part of the solution to the abortion problem, rather than part of the problem itself, have both their facts and their logic wrong.

For Matthew Connelly, though, the "fatal misconception" in his title apparently refers to the belief of an elite group of population controllers who felt justified in "trying to control others without having to answer to anyone." Though there is certainly much truth in this formulation, as Connelly indeed shows at some length, it ultimately reflects a seriously mistaken viewpoint on his part. For the true "fatal misconception"—and one which continues to be *literally* fatal for more than one million American children every year, more than 4000 of them every day—is today's unfortunately widespread belief that human beings can, without regard to the moral law, freely engage in actions which can lead to the procreation of new human beings, while arrogating to themselves the right to "control" any such possible "consequences" stemming from engaging in those actions, even if it means *killing* the offspring if any such do in fact result from the actions in question. It should be abundantly clear at this point that historian Matthew Connelly has thus very badly missed the whole point about what really does constitute today's "fatal misconception." He himself, precisely, is the one who misconceives it. ❖

Kenneth D. Whitehead's new book, *The New Ecumenism: How the Catholic Church after Vatican II Took Over the Leadership of the World Ecumenical Movement*, was published by Alba House in January, 2009. Another book of his, *Mass Misunderstandings: The Mixed Legacy of the Vatican II Liturgical Reforms*, was published by St. Augustine's Press in May, 2009.

Anglicans/Episcopalians Looking to Rome: 1570–Present

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Introduction:

This paper deals with Anglicans/Episcopalians who have sought, officially or quasi-officially, from the time of the Elizabethan Settlement (1570) to the present day, some form of corporate reconciliation with the Holy See. The date 1570 marks Queen Elizabeth I's excommunication by Pope St. Pius V and the definitive separation of the English Church from Rome. Groups seeking such a reconciliation have always been small in number and remain such today. My intent is to lead up to the Holy See's Pastoral Provision of 1980, given in response to petitions from groups in the United States seeking reunion, and, then, more importantly, to the Apostolic Constitution *Anglicanorum Coetibus*, of 2009, given in response to Anglican groups world-wide seeking the same reconciliation and reunion. These statutes facilitate the reception of Anglican/Episcopal clergy, Religious and laity into full communion with the Catholic Church and at the same time enable them to retain their liturgical and spiritual patrimony and to keep a distinct existence within the Latin Church.

Elizabethan Settlement to the 19th Century

No official or quasi-official overtures for reunion took place for a long time after the Elizabethan Settlement—a phrase denoting the liturgical, doctrinal and canonical changes beginning in the reign of Henry VIII (1509–47) but completed and made firm only in the reign of Elizabeth I (1558–1603) and climaxed by her excommunication in 1570. This was a period of persecution for Catholics in England (papists or recusants, as they were called) and for the missionary priests, trained on the

continent, who returned to minister to the remaining Catholics there.

Although secret but ineffective reunion negotiations are reported to have taken place in the reigns of James I, Charles I and Charles II,¹ the first such verified overture came not from England or from Rome but from a professor at the Sorbonne, Louis Ellies Dupin (1657–1719), a theologian, historian and author of Gallican tendencies (the position that the French Church was relatively independent of the primatial authority of the Bishop of Rome). He was interested in the reunion of the separated churches, specifically the Russian and the English Churches, but with the French Church, not straightaway with Rome. In 1718 he initiated a correspondence with the then Archbishop of Canterbury, William Wake (1657–1737) with a view to the reunion of the two Churches. Dupin, however, died in 1719 and the effort collapsed.²

The Oxford Movement

The next significant recorded effort for reunion came with the Oxford Movement of the mid-19th century and its aftermath, the Anglo-Catholic Movement and the formation of the Anglo-Catholic party in the Church of England.³ Oxford scholars, of whom the best known are John Henry Newman (1801–90), Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800–82) and John Keble (1792–1866) (though they had many associates and successors), through a study of the ancient Church and the Church Fathers, recovered in large measure the Catholic heritage of doctrine belonging to the Church of England (and to the Universal Church) in its pre-Reformation period and called for the re-insertion of these doctrines and associated liturgical practices in the life of the contemporary English Church. Such a recovery, they held, would justify its claim to be the Catholic Church of England as distinguished from the “Italian Mission”, the Church in communion with Rome, elements of which had survived from the Reformation period and were now being increased and strengthened by Irish immigration

and the 1850 restoration of the Pope's hierarchy, sometimes referred to as the Papal Aggression.

The Oxford Movement, although originally opposed by the Anglican bishops, ultimately generated a substantial Anglo-Catholic party in the Church of England distinguished from the Evangelical or low Church and Liberal factions. The Oxford theologians, called Tractarians because they wrote and published theological essays or tracts, emphasized orthodox doctrine in its full Catholic form, a complementary sacramental practice and an active social concern. Some of the Oxford Movement leaders, like Newman, looked to Rome and became Catholic, but most did not. The remaining leaders and their associates labored to raise the Church of England from the bland Protestantism, Liberalism, and Erastianism (meaning the reduction of the Church to a department of the state) into which it had sunk progressively since the Elizabethan period. There had always been a few Catholic-minded bishops and scholars, such as Archbishop Laud and the other so-called Caroline Divines of the 17th century, but they were definitely a small minority.

Moreover, being Anglo-Catholic did not necessarily mean looking to Rome, then or now. Some Anglo-Catholics did, most did not. Lord Halifax, whom we shall treat shortly, is the premier example of those who did. Most others would consider a group reconciliation with Rome only when the popes abandoned the fantastic idea of papal supremacy, which they arrogated to themselves, it was asserted, in the middle ages. Most Anglo-Catholics were satisfied with the Branch Theory of the Church popularized by the Oxford theologian William Palmer; namely, that the Catholic or Universal Church has three parts: the Roman Communion, referring to those Churches in communion with the bishop of Rome, the Orthodox Churches of the East and the Church of England (with its extended reality, the Anglican Communion).

Significant Anglo-Catholic theologians such as Edward Bouverie Pusey (who became the *de facto* leader of the Oxford Movement after Newman's reconciliation in 1845), William Palmer (1803-85) of Oxford, Darwell Stone (1859-1941), the American Episcopalian Francis J. Hall (1857-1933), and, closer to our own time, Eric Lionel Mascall (1905-1993), represent such a point of view. Pusey did look to Rome (and Mascall to a Reformed Rome). Pusey wrote three *Eirenicons* to show how the Church of England and Rome could be reconciled, but, after Vatican I, gave up that hope.

Lord Halifax and His Roman Forays

The major step in a "looking to Rome" movement came after the founding in 1859 of the English Church Union, the object of which was to defend and promote High Church or Tractarian principles in the Church of England. The second president of this Union was Charles Lindley Wood (1839-1934, the second Viscount Halifax from 1885), who held office from 1868-1919 and again from 1927-34. He was an extraordinary gentleman—a convinced and devout Christian, an Oxford Movement Anglican, a zealous Churchman, in his own mind as Catholic as the Pope of Rome and with an indefatigable energy, pursuing for almost 70 years (he died in his 95th year) the goals of catholicizing the Church of England and (at least from 1890) reconciling that Church with the Holy See. A moment must be spent on his remarkable ecclesial life.⁴

Charles Lindley Wood, born in 1839, was a son of privilege. His father was a knight, then, a viscount engaged in high government service. The young Charles studied at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, where he became a fervent and zealous Churchman under the influence of Tractarian professors.

Forsaking a promising political career, he decided early on to devote his life to the defense and promotion of the authentic Catholic heritage of the Church of England, and from 1890 onward to press for reunion with Rome. He constantly fought all efforts in and out of Parliament to reject or dilute the Catholic heritage of the Church recovered by the Oxford Movement and all State efforts to evaluate or determine its teaching and worship. For Halifax the daily Mass, the Blessed Sacrament and the practice of Confession—all, of course, in his Anglo-Catholic framework—were the pillars of his spiritual life.

At the same time he was a man of his time, culture and class, a peer of the realm, happily married with several children. He was wealthy, with at least two estates, had many servants and a residence in London, was accustomed to traveling and vacationing abroad. He was very charitable and concerned for the tenants on his estates but at the same time thoroughly content with and a defender of the class system of which he was a part. It was this context that he spent his whole life upholding Catholic doctrine and practice in the Church. He was on good terms with several successive archbishops

of Canterbury and of Westminster, as well as with the prime ministers of his time, while maintaining his distinctive church positions and seeking, in two conspicuous periods of his life, reunion with Rome.

On a trip to Madeira (a Portuguese island in the Atlantic Ocean off Morocco) in 1899–1890 undertaken for the sake of his then ailing son Edward, he met the French Vincentian priest Etienne Fernand Portal (1855–1926), a scholar very interested in Christian reunion. They became close friends and generated a plan to bring England back into communion with the Holy See, for which they thought a first step should be to seek from the Holy See approval or acceptance of Anglican Orders, which Rome had regarded in practice as invalid since the Elizabethan Settlement. When that issue had been resolved, they thought, a broader doctrinal conversation could take place.

Anglican Orders

Through his contacts in Rome, by publishing pseudonymously a monograph on Anglican Orders and by founding periodicals dedicated to the reunion issue, Portal eventually obtained approval from Pope Leo XIII for a papal study commission on Anglican Orders and Halifax received at least passive approval from the Anglican authorities for his encouraging this step. The study commission was to present its conclusions to the Holy Office (now called, after Vatican II, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith). The exact nature of the judgments and division of opinion that occurred within the study commission are not clear; but in any case, the judgment of the Commission of Cardinals of the Holy Office which received the Commission's report was negative; and Leo XIII issued his well-known Bull *Apostolicae Curae* (1896) declaring Anglican Ordinations conducted according to the Anglican Ordinal of 1552 invalid.⁵

Although changes in this Edwardine Ordinal were made later (in 1662) no bishops were then alive who had been consecrated prior to its issuance and therefore even in the hypothesis of a now (1662) satisfactory ordinal, no validly ordained bishop was alive to use it.

Although the Holy See consistently, since the Elizabethan Settlement, had treated Anglican Orders as invalid, this now weighty and definitive pronouncement came as a severe disappointment to Halifax and Portal. Halifax attributed the negative judgment to the intervention and lobbying by the Catholic bishops

of England, particularly Cardinal Herbert Vaughan of Westminster. Halifax, however, did not lose his personal confidence in the validity of Anglican Orders. It is not clear how at the time he regarded the nature of the papal decision. Did he consider it a disciplinary decree formed on insufficient or partially false evidence? Perhaps. On the other hand, while not accepting the decision, virtually alone among Anglo-Catholics he accepted the Roman primacy in its fullest sense as *divino iure*, ordained by God.

It became clear afterwards and is clear today that Church authority regards the decision on Anglican Orders as definitive and irreversible on the precise issue with which it deals. Revisions of the Anglican Ordinal have taken place at several times and in several places since 1662 and the participation of bishops from the Old Catholic Church of Utrecht and the Polish National Catholic Church in the USA have complicated the analysis of some Anglican and Episcopal ordinations. But to safeguard the validity of the sacraments, the Catholic Church, in practice, does not accept Anglican Orders and requires the re-ordination of Anglican or Episcopal priests seeking to exercise their ministry in the Catholic Church.

Although the Halifax-Portal initiative failed, neither gave up working for the cause of reunion. Halifax pursued his catholicizing efforts in the Church of England. Portal turned his attention to the Eastern Orthodox Churches, particularly the Russian Church. Then in 1920—some 25 years later—the Lambeth Conference of that year issued an encyclical letter urging renewed efforts for the reunion of Christians and observed that no such effort could be successful without the participation of the “great Latin Church of the West.”

Meanwhile, across the ocean in the United States on October 30, 1909 at Graymoor, Garrison, New York, a small group of Episcopal Friars (2) and Sisters (5) led by the Rev. Paul Wattson and Sister Lurana White entered as a corporate unit into full communion with the Catholic Church by permission of Pope St. Pius X. This little community of Franciscans, called then and now (when they have grown to be a very large religious community) the Society of the Atonement, had already in 1908 founded the Church Unity Octave.

The Malines Conversations

Halifax, now 82 years old, saw this Lambeth Conference statement of 1920 as an opportunity once again to pursue reconciliation of the English Church with the Holy See. He decided to approach the Belgian Cardinal Desiré Joseph Mercier (1851–1926) archbishop of Mechelin-Brussels (also called in French, *Maleen* or Anglicized as Maleens), a very open-minded prelate who had been a professor of philosophy at the University of Louvain and had an interest in Christian reunion. Mercier was amenable to sponsoring a conference or series of conferences between Anglican and Catholics, for which Rome gave a tacit approval. Halifax obtained the endorsement, somewhat hesitant, of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson.

Four Anglican and four Catholic theologian-scholars, together with Halifax and Mercier, ordinarily took part in the four sessions, 1921–26, which were held in the residence of Cardinal Mercier and with him as chairman from 1921–25 (the last, 1926, being chaired by Archbishop Van Roey, Mercier's successor).

Hesitancy and suspicion by authorities on both sides—Rome, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Protestant elements in the Church of England, and the Catholic leaders in England—meant that no significant progress was ultimately made at Malines beyond that which the participants themselves made at the discussion table, much to the distress of Halifax, who was now a very old man and growing deaf, but as indomitably focused as ever.

The English Catholic leaders had been generally opposed to the Malines conversations. Why were conversations concerning England's churches being held in Belgium under Belgian sponsorship? they asked. Moreover, English Catholic leaders judged that any form of corporate reunion of Anglicans with the Holy See was illusionary. Anglicans wishing to become Catholic should be admitted only individually.⁶

Mercier had died in early 1926 and Portal the same year. Halifax could not help feel that he had been let down to some extent by Mercier whose enthusiasm seemed to wane as the conversations continued, by Archbishop Randall Davidson of Canterbury, who backed down when suspicions arose on all sides and by the firm opposition of the English Catholic leaders who rejected the idea of a corporate reunion. Halifax also believed in his heart of hearts that eventually the

Church of England would become Anglo-Catholic; but that was not to be. He continued, however, doggedly in his mid-eighties to work for his goals within the Church of England until he died peacefully in the full possession of his faculties on Jan. 19, 1934 in his country estate in Hickleton, Yorkshire, in his 95th year.

The Anglo-Catholic Movement continued to grow in the Church of England into the 1960's. In the year 1960 Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher (1887–1972, archbishop from 1945–61) made a visit to Jerusalem, Constantinople and Rome, the first Archbishop of Canterbury to visit Rome since 1397. Six years later Archbishop Michael Ramsey also visited Rome and, together with Pope Paul VI, agreed to establish the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (1968 –) whose purpose was to bring about full communion between the Catholic Church and the Churches of the Anglican Communion.⁷

The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission

Early Agreed Statements of the Commission on the Eucharist, Ministry and Ordination and on Authority, with Elucidations on all three documents, were published in a unified report in 1982 and showed a convergence of doctrine on these issues particularly the first two, but not full agreement. Later evaluations by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith acknowledged a convergence but could not fail to note ambiguities and clear differences. A second commission (1982–) issued several more agreed statements—on Salvation and the Church (1986), the Church as a Communion (1990), Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church (1993), the Gift of Authority (1998), any Mary, Grace and Hope in Christ (2004) sometime showing extraordinary progress but not full agreement.

That extraordinary measure of agreement, reached in the latter two statements, however, represented more the agreement of the Anglican members of the Commission with their Catholic colleagues rather than the agreement of the Anglican Provinces throughout the world. The negative reaction from the (Anglican) Church of Ireland is a conspicuous example.

Division in the Episcopal Church

Actions of the Episcopal Church-USA from 1974, first in ordaining women as priests and then as bishops and other pivotal changes—such as the acceptance of abortion, homosexual unions, church blessings of the same, ordination of clergy living homosexual lifestyles and a general modernist or evolutionary approach to Christian teaching introduced grave obstacles to the progress of Catholic-Anglican and Orthodox-Anglican dialogue. The Church of England, considerably later (1992) than the Episcopal Church-USA, eventually approved the priestly ordination of women and, in 2008, of bishops. These actions inevitably led to the conclusion that, although dialogue should continue, its original goals were unattainable.

The Episcopal Church-USA and the Anglican Church in Canada had long, even prior to 1974, been developing in a manner severely at odds with Catholic teachings.⁸ When the Episcopal Church at its General Convention (1976) gave formal approval to the action of the maverick bishops who ordained women priests in 1974, some Anglo-Catholic clergy and laity considered this action the last straw in a series of developments over several decades. These included a weakening of positions on contraception, abortion and sexual morality in general, on the doctrine of the apostolic ministerial succession, and on remarriage after divorce. Some Episcopal clergy and laity held a Congress in St. Louis, MO, in 1977 which gave birth to the Anglican Church in North America. Unfortunately, this new church dissolved over the next decade into several smaller jurisdictions, a fractionalizing that has continued to the present day.

Impelled by the growing toleration of homosexual practices, the blessing of homosexual unions and the ordination of homosexually active persons as priests and bishops, more seceding Episcopalians, in 2009, formed yet another new church—also called, the Anglican Church in North America. This church, reportedly with 100,000 members, has already received recognition as a legitimate Anglican province from several African provinces of the Communion. Virtually none of these church bodies founded from 1977 to the present day have been or are, however, looking to Rome.

Only a relatively small group of Episcopalians have turned that way to end their instability, fractionalization and inner conflicts. The final section of this paper deals with them and similar groups elsewhere.

Anglicans/Episcopalians—USA Look to Rome

Two very small groups of Anglican-Episcopal clergy and laity in the USA decided in the later 1970's to make an approach for reconciliation with the Catholic Church in such a manner that they could retain their liturgical and spiritual traditions. Through intermediaries in the US they ultimately approached the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome with their petitions.⁹

The first group was a delegation of priests from the Society of the Holy Cross, an England-based priestly fraternity, whose USA provincial then was Fr. James Parker, who led this effort. (Fr. Parker is now a Catholic priest in the Diocese of Charleston, SC.) The second group, headed by Canon Albert Julius DuBois, of the American Church Union (a smaller counterpart of the English Church Union), a priest who was attached to the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island, but at the time was retired and living in California, led the group then called the Pro-Diocese of St. Augustine. Members of this group met in Rome with Franjo Cardinal Seper, then prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to present their petition.

The Pastoral Provision

In 1980 with the approval of Pope John Paul II these groups together were given what is called the Pastoral Provision, a papal favor which upon their individual profession of Catholic faith and sacramental incorporation (to the extent necessary) into the Catholic Church permitted them to retain much of their Anglican/Episcopal liturgy and spiritual traditions and organize themselves in congregations of common identity which would be incorporated as personal parishes in Latin (Roman Rite) dioceses. The then Bishop Bernard F. Law of Springfield—Cape Girardeau in MO (later Cardinal-Archbishop of Boston) was placed in charge of this pastoral provision with the title of Ecclesiastical Delegate.

Episcopal clergy being reconciled and seeking to function as Catholic priests would need to receive Catholic ordination. If they were married, an existing valid marriage, would not prevent otherwise qualified men from receiving Catholic ordination. Like priests of

the Eastern Churches in Catholic communion, however, if a priest's wife died, he could not remarry nor could a single or celibate priest marry after ordination. This special dispensation for men being ordained priests in the Latin Church recognizes that they originally undertook their ministry in a framework that did not require them to live a celibate life. Therefore, many had married before their ordination as Episcopal priests or afterwards. Such clergy are in a manifestly different situation from Catholic priests who, prior to ordination, had made a solemn promise to live a celibate life but later resigned their ministry and married.

This canonical favor given by the Holy See to these Episcopal clergy and laity (it applied only in the USA) was unique and unprecedented in that it permits them to have their own liturgical formularies drawn mainly from the 1928 and 1979 Books of Common Prayer and a quasi-distinct organization. These liturgical formularies are gathered in *The Book of Divine Worship* (1983, 2003). Thus the Latin or Western Catholic Church now has the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite, the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite and the Anglican Use in the Roman Rite. The Pastoral Provision was misunderstood at that time by some as being an opening to married priests in the Latin Church. It was not intended as such at all. It was an opening to those Episcopalians, including their clergy, who already accepted the Catholic faith to be united fully with the Catholic Church while retaining their liturgical and spiritual traditions.

With the congregations, it was expected, some clergy would also reconcile or vice versa. In fact, since 1980 to the present, only about a half-dozen congregations, mostly in the southwestern United States, have reconciled and been incorporated into Latin dioceses as personal parishes or mission congregations. A few more are in various stages of formation. Slightly more than 100 former Episcopal priests have been ordained Catholic priests since 1980 through the Pastoral Provision. Sixteen of these priests are now deceased and at least another fifteen are retired. Not every Episcopal priest who reconciled has sought Catholic ordination and some have not qualified.

Several reasons account for the few congregations received: existing Episcopal congregations are likely to be divided on the issue of reconciling with the Catholic Church. Being Anglo-Catholic, as has been said, doesn't automatically include seeking communion with Rome.

Many persons, both Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic, have already left the Episcopal Church and joined one of the so-called "continuing Anglican Churches." Congregations leaving the Episcopal Church cannot take their property with them and thus have to start anew. Some Catholic-minded Episcopalians have simply joined Latin Rite parishes. Many others have apparently made their peace with the new (2009) Anglican Church in North America. A few have joined Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Anglo-Catholicism has never been completely homogeneous. In the final analysis Anglicans *choose*, beyond the clear statements of the Prayer Book, what they will believe as constitutive of their Anglican commitment. For example, Lord Halifax embraced the Roman primacy and all other definitive Catholic teachings. Most Anglo-Catholics do not.

The Now of the Pastoral Provision

Archbishop John J. Myers of Newark, New Jersey, succeeded Cardinal Law as the Ecclesiastical Delegate when the latter assumed a position in Rome in 2006. Bishop Kevin W. Vann of Fort Worth, Texas, is now the vice-delegate with a few other bishops as consultants. The Pastoral Provision Office has been located variously in Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Missouri; Boston, Massachusetts; Washington, D.C. and, most recently, in Houston, Texas. Msgr. William H. Stetson, an Opus Dei priest, succeeded Father James Parker (one of the first priests ordained, 1982, through the Pastoral Provision) as Pastoral Provision Secretary in 1995 and continues to serve in that position currently. In Sept. 2009, a new, additional office was established in the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center in Newark, New Jersey, and Msgr. James M. Sheehan, a priest of the Archdiocesan Curial staff, will become the Pastoral Provision secretary in a transition to be completed in June, 2010.

Episcopal priests seeking Catholic ordination, after two years as Catholics, receive an assessment of their theological and formational background from the Pastoral Provision Formation Faculty, a team of seminary professors at Seton Hall University of Newark, NJ. Needed additional preparation is accomplished usually by "distance" education. The bishop-sponsor appoints

a priest-mentor to work with each candidate. The candidates are then certified for ordination by the Formation Faculty. Permission to ordain must come from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to the diocesan bishop who has sponsored the candidate and has agreed to incardinate him into his diocese. Most such priests serve in Latin Rite parishes and institutions as also in the military, prison, college and university chaplaincies throughout the country; only a small number serve in the Anglican Use parishes or congregations.

Looking to Rome: International Petition

Another recent development in the “looking to Rome movement” is the petition to the Holy See for a corporate reunion from a federation of small “continuing Anglican churches” internationally (founded 1990) calling themselves the Traditional Anglican Communion.¹⁰ In North America this group is represented by two small jurisdictions, called the Anglican Church in America and the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada. In 2007 the leaders of this TAC worldwide signed a full profession of the Catholic faith (by endorsing the Catechism of the Catholic Church) and sent it to Rome with a request for full ecclesiastical communion and directions as to how they should proceed from this point. The Holy See acknowledged receipt of their petition and promised a substantive reply.

In the USA this group has no formal relationship with the Pastoral Provision; and it is not known what inquiry, if any, the Holy See has made or is making about this on any other member unit of the federation.

Anglo-Catholics in England

The Anglo-Catholic party in the Church of England, much larger than any comparable group in North America, continues to seek arrangements that will permit it to remain within that Church. The Church of England General Synod’s recent approval for ordaining women as bishops has generated a crisis for Anglo-Catholics, who do not wish to be subject to women bishops or to be served by priests or bishops ordained by them. News reports have indicated that Anglo-Catholic delegations have

visited Rome for talks with the Congregations for the Doctrine of the Faith but no statements have been issued confirming such visits or indicating the subjects discussed.

When, in 1992, the General Synod approved the ordination of women as priests, several hundred clergy left the Church, about 300 to become Catholic and ultimately to be ordained as Catholic priests. Those clergy who left at the time received a financial severance, but no such arrangement is contemplated by General Synod at this time for clergy who leave the Church over women bishops. Catholic authorities in England have emphasized that Anglican clergy or laity who seek reconciliation with the Catholic Church must be motivated by acceptance of the normative Catholic faith in its entirety and not by any single issue, such as women’s ordination as priests and bishops. At this juncture the future of Anglo-Catholics in the Church of England is not clear.¹¹

Conclusion

What is the future of the Pastoral Provision in the USA? Nothing presently on the horizon indicates that it will grow significantly. Only a relatively large influx of persons—clergy, Religious and Laity—would brighten this future. Such a movement might occur as a result of pressures within the Episcopal Church, the various Continuing Churches, or the Anglican provinces in other nations. Will the Pastoral Provision Statute be extended to other nations such as Canada, Australia and Britain? Will some other form of canonical distinction and administrative unity be given those petitioning on an international level? The statute of the Pastoral Provision identifies itself as not definitive and given *ad tempus indeterminatum*; in other words, given not as an invariable formula for the future or for either a set period of time or permanently but as a structure open to the future, related, of course, to the need it serves or will serve. Thus, as developments take place, the Holy See may alter the conditions of the statute to take account of these developments. But looking for authentic unity means looking to Rome, the tree from which the branch long ago was torn.

Postscript

Since this essay was written and immediately prior to its deliverance as a lecture¹² on Nov. 6, 2009, a significant development affecting Anglicans/Episcopalians Looking to Rome occurred on Monday, October 20, when at a press conference in Vatican City, Cardinal William J. Levada, Prefect of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, announced the imminent publication of an Apostolic Constitution, the most authoritative form of a papal document, enabling Catholic-minded Anglicans worldwide—viz., those who already profess or are ready to profess the Catholic faith in its entirety—to be reconciled to the Catholic Church not merely as individuals converting to the Latin Church, but as congregations or other units that could retain major elements of their Anglican liturgical and spiritual identity and, beyond the canonical framework of the 1980 Pastoral Provision—USA, could have their own fully distinct existence in the Church with their own ecclesiastical superior in frameworks known as Personal Ordinariates, an arrangement akin to the Military Ordinariates, existing in the USA and in other countries. This ecclesiastical ordinary could be (but need not necessarily be) a former Anglican priest who, being qualified, was ordained a Catholic priest or, if celibate, ordained a bishop and serve as the bishop-ordinary.

Such personal ordinariates, where needed, would be erected by the Holy See in consultation with the bishops of a particular country or region. In the case of the United States the small already existing Anglican-Use parishes or congregations are, in accord with the Pastoral Provision of 1980, incorporated as personal parishes or as missions in the Latin Rite Diocese where they are located. The new canonical arrangement when implemented would permit them to be church entities under their own ecclesiastical superior or ordinary. These units in the USA already have their own worship book, the Book of Divine Worship, drawn from the 1928 and 1979 American Books of Common Prayer and from the Roman Sacramentary.

This new Apostolic Constitution, *Anglicanorum Coetibus*¹³, issued November 9, 2009 provides a uniform and universal way for such Anglican units received into full communion to have a distinct and separate existence under their own ecclesiastical ordinary. This canonical framework allows them greater unity and the

ability to develop those institutions which would contribute to preserving that unity and the continuity of their Anglican usage and patrimony.

It remains to be seen how many Anglicans worldwide will seek to be reconciled to full communion with the Catholic Church through the implementation of personal ordinariates. In England a committee of Catholic Bishops has been appointed to oversee the process of implementation. In the United States, according to the office of the Bishops' Conference, each unit seeking reconciliation and admission to a personal ordinariate must make application to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: H. E. William Cardinal Levada; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Piazza del S. Uffizzio, Rome, Italy. The Pastoral Provision—USA will continue for those who wish to be received and ordained for a Latin Diocese rather than in an Anglican Personal Ordinariate.¹⁴

ENDNOTES:

These endnotes include only a few select references on topics for which an extensive literature is available in theological libraries.

1. See Michael Rear, *One Step More*, London, The Catholic League, 2nd ed., 1987.
2. For a brief account of Dupin's life and work, see the Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, (henceforth ODCC), 3rd ed., ed. by F.L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 515-16.
3. The Oxford Movement has given rise to an abundant literature about itself and its personalities. For a succinct historical account and informative biographical entries on all its principal leaders, see the above mentioned dictionary under the heading Oxford Movement, Newman, J.H., Pusey, E.B. and Keble, John. Larger and fuller treatment include R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement, Twelve Years*, 1833-45, London, Macmillan, 1892; Geoffrey Faber, *The Oxford Apostles: A Character Study of the Oxford Movement*, London, Faber and Baber, 2nd ed., 1936, which focuses on Newman and his principal associates; and for Newman individually, C.S. Deasain, *John Henry Newman*, London, Nelson, 1966; for the Anglo-Catholic Movement, which followed the Oxford Movement, see W.D. Sparrow Simpson, *The History of the Anglo-Catholic Revival from 1845*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1932.
4. For Charles Lindley Wood, the 2nd Viscount Halifax and his 70-year effort for church reunion, see Lockhart, J.G., *Charles Lindley, Viscount Halifax, Part I, 1839-85 and Part II, 1885-1934*, London, Geoffrey Bles: the Canterbury Press, 1935, 1936.
5. Halifax's own account of the Anglican Orders Commission of Inquiry and Pope Leo XIII's final decision on the issue will be found in *Leo XIII and Anglican Orders*, London, Longmans Green, 1912. An abundant literature, pro and con, by both Catholics and Anglicans, on the validity of the 16th century orders is readily available in libraries of theology. See also Hughes, John Jay, *Absolutely Null and Utterly Void*, Washington-Cleveland, Corpus Books, 1968; and by the same author, *Stewards of the Lord*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1970; Clark, Francis, S.J., *Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Reformation*, Westminster, MD, Newman Press, 2nd ed. 1967.
6. Halifax contributes his own account of the Malines Conversations in Halifax, Viscount (ed.), *The Conversations at Malines, 1921-25: Report presented to the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Anglican Participants*, Longmans Green, London, 1928. See also Dick, John A., *The Malines Conversations Revisited*, Leuven (Brussels), University Press, 1989.

7. Basic facts about the establishment and progress of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission will be found under that heading in the *ODCC*. Additional information and full texts (with evaluations) of the various study documents issued by the Commission and its successor, ARCIC II, are published in the *Information Services of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity*, Rome; Vols. 1–124, 1968–2008.
8. The doctrinal controversies within the Episcopal Church–USA, especially since the 1970’s are fully covered, in the periodical *The Living Church*; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; also for the ARCIC I and II study documents, see *Origins*, a documentary service of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, Vol. 1–35, 1971–2007, Washington, DC.
9. Accounts of those Episcopalians and former Episcopalians seeking a group reconciliation with the Holy See, which resulted in the 1980 Pastoral Provision will be found in Fichter, Joseph H., S.J. *The Pastoral Provisions—Married Priests*, Kansas City, MO, Sheed and Ward, 1989 and on the website of the Pastoral Provision Office; www.pastoralprovision.org
10. The Traditional Anglican Communion explains its doctrinal stance and petition to the Holy See on its website; www.acahome.org
11. Current developments respecting the Anglo-Catholic party within the Church of England are reported in *The Church Times* and in *The Church of England Newspaper*, both independent weekly newspapers dealing with the Church of England.
12. Nassau Community College Center for Catholic Studies, Garden City, New York, Nov. 6, 2009.
13. *Anglicanorum Coetibus, Benedict XVI, Providing for Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans Entering into Full Communion with the Catholic Church*, London, Catholic Truth Society, 2009
14. Vatican website: www.vatican.va; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith email; cdff@cfaith.va.

Integrity and Communion: Keys to the Authentic “Renaissance” of Art

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Pontifical Gregorian University

Goethe once remarked that “without having seen the Sistine Chapel one can form no appreciable idea of what one man is capable of achieving.” You have to wonder what the German polymath would have thought accomplishable by 260 of the world’s greatest artists gathered in the same place on November 21st, 2009. The Holy Father himself pondered the possibilities as he addressed these creative minds: “You have the opportunity to speak to the heart of humanity, to touch individual and collective sensibilities, to call forth dreams and hopes, to broaden the horizons of knowledge and of human engagement.”

What was originally envisioned as a simple encounter between the pope and select artists evolved into a major convention: painters, sculptors, novelists, poets, musicians, actors, movie producers, theatre directors, and photographers ranging from Claudio Baglioni to Vadim Ananiev, Franco Zeffirelli to Andrea Bocelli, Krzysztof Zanussi to Terence Hill—not to mention world-class ballerinas Carla Fracci and Liliana Cosi. Prior to the audience, the participants had the opportunity to stroll through the Vatican Museums conversing about art, beauty, faith, and theology. Archbishop Gianfranco Ravasi, President of the Pontifical Council for Culture and host of the gathering, emphasized that the event was a beginning, not an end. Scheduled to coincide

with several anniversaries including the publication of John Paul II’s *Letter to Artists*—passages of which were read by Sergio Castellitto—as well as a similar gathering hosted by Pope Paul VI in 1964, the meeting was meant to reignite a dialogue between faith and beauty and a friendly collaboration between artists and the Church, particularly by focusing on the two principles of integrity and communion.

Montini, in fact, was well noted for the enormous amount of energy he dedicated to the dialogue between the Church and modern culture. He began his Pontificate on the heels of an acrimonious debate about the attitude the Church should take towards modern art. The controversy peaked in a bitter dispute over the chapel of Our Lady of All Graces in Assy. Nestled in the Alps of southern France, it was conceived by the Abbé Devémy as a place of prayer and worship for patients receiving treatment at a nearby sanatorium. Frustrated by the mediocre work of “third-rate” artists, Devémy made a resolution to commission only the best and the brightest, regardless of religious background. Matisse, Chagall, Braque, Léger, and Lipchitz were among those invited to contribute. Dedicated in June of 1950 and declared a French historical landmark in 2004, Our Lady of All Graces remains a poignant symbol of the strained relationship between Catholicism and French culture that has endured to the present day.

Behind the chapel of Our Lady of All Graces were two leading advocates for Catholicism’s embrace of

modern art: Dominican Fathers Pie-Raymond Régamey and Marie-Alain Couturier. The former was the author of the influential *Religious Art in the Twentieth Century*, and the latter had studied in Paris and worked professionally in fresco and stained glass. Both had close ties with Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Lèger, and Rouault. Using the journal *L'Art sacré* as a forum, they summoned the Church to a dual task: first, she must reflect upon and articulate the precise goals of ecclesiastical art and the ideas embodied therein. Second, she must be willing to step back and ponder modern art on its own terms. The presupposition was that visionary artists, even outside the context of faith, are moving along a trajectory towards the transcendent and mystical. This approach, referred to by Couturier as the “restoration of visual sensitivity,” was essential to the rebirth of Christian art.

Couturier's sympathy for modern art raised a philosophical question which had already occupied theoretical aestheticians for many years. Namely, how does “form” present beauty? Couturier's position was rooted in the idea that the form, as the metaphysical principle which delimits matter, places a constriction upon sensual being. The shift to formal purity in the visual arts was accordingly justified by the idea that form diffuses beauty rather than acting as a window onto it. It restricts something infinite by nature rather than opening a door into it. Consequently, the artist's task is to purify and liberate form from these individuating conditions. The aim of abstraction is to disencumber these forms from their material specificity. Because they are ubiquitous, these forms can be detected in any setting ranging—almost arbitrarily—from nature to industry to mechanics. An unfortunate consequence of this theory was a gradual subordination of beauty to the goal of purifying and liberating form.

This idea, however, had been percolating in philosophical aesthetics for some time, especially in the theories of expressionism and formalism. Both differ from representationalism by asserting that the artwork is a conveyer of meaning, though a meaning not essentially related to the subject depicted. Under the influence of Benedetto Croce, many theorists dismissed representation as inessential to aesthetics, some even deeming it as harmful. What matters is the expression of emotion, and this expression occurs regardless of the represented content. Croce drew a further distinction between true art and “art” that only entertains, amuses, or arouses. His ideas deeply influenced R. G. Collingwood, who held that it is the “meaning” of the artwork—not my reac-

tion to it—that is of primary importance. With serious art, I am not so much interested in the object's effect on me as I am in the thing itself. Conversely, with entertainment, my only interest is in the object's effect on me. Further reflection on this distinction led Clive Bell to come up with the elusive notion of “significant form”, which he described as a distinctive combination of lines and colors constituting the artwork's essence. Significant form was made the centerpiece of a quite implausible aesthetic theory named formalism.

The paradox presented by the chapel at Assy is that, notwithstanding the excessive attention to form in the twentieth century, it is precisely an integrity of form that the chapel lacks most. It is a gallery of modern religious art rather than a unified, coherent space dedicated for prayer and worship. The fundamental purpose of fostering meditation upon the sacred mysteries was marginalized by a desire to showcase the work of famous twentieth-century artists. Indeed, taken individually, several of the pieces are of considerable merit (Georges Rouault's stained glass window *Christ aux outrages* on the west façade—the first work commissioned for the chapel—remains a masterpiece of twentieth-century sacred art), but together they are a cacophony. This lack of integrity is a glaring weakness of *Our Lady of All Graces* and the feature that separates it from the work of great medieval artisans whose names will remain forever unknown to us because they subordinated their subjectivity to the collective efforts of the guild. The glory they sought was divine rather than personal. Their collective focus was the execution of a structure whose architecture, ornamentation and furnishings formed an integrated whole and rendered homage to God alone.

Hence, the development of modern art is more than tangentially related to the modern exaltation of the self. Later in life, Jacques Maritain perceived a crucial difference between Eastern and Western art: “the more the personality of the Oriental artists succeeds in forgetting itself and immolating itself in Things,” he wrote in *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, “the more, in point of fact, it is present and revives in the work.” Compare this to Maurice Novarina, chief architect of *Our Lady of All Graces*, who in 1996 proudly boasted that the artists involved in the project worked “*tous habitués à des actions personnelles*.” In fact, Couturier's *modus operandi* for dialogue with the world of modern art was to talk to one artist at a time, a practice that carried over into the very design and construction of the chapel. Thomas Klise made an *a propos* observation that “now art glorifies the artist, affirming the part above the

whole" (*The Last Western*).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Church and society have yet to sort through the artistic chaos that scarred the twentieth. A *tout court* return to Romanesque, Gothic, and Neo-Gothic styles is too simplistic. What is required is a re-visioning of the relationship between the sacred and profane, a main goal of Couturier in the 1950s and an activity still brewing in theological circles today (think of Radical Orthodoxy). During preparations for the meeting in the Sistine Chapel, Archbishop Ravasi admitted as much. He explained that the sad "divorce" between artists and the Church was in many ways consensual. Out of mutual fear, the Church had walked away from artists and artists away from the Church. The Church became complacent with the commonplace and mundane rather than risking a venture into the bold and imaginative. She eschewed the daring of the fine arts and rested content with the industriousness of professional artisans at best, mass producers of kitsch at worst. The most she hoped for was to find good craftsmen with the ability to reproduce figures of saints that exuded a kind of unctuous emotion that the faithful could readily admire and imitate. This kind of average art is on ample display in Lourdes and Lisieux.

In France, the reasons for the fissure between art and the Church were deep and complex. Couturier used *L'Art sacré* to retrace the rapid de-Christianization that occurred during the Enlightenment and French Revolution. This, he argued, led to the Church's embarrassing unfamiliarity with the mentality, goals, and style of modern art. Many of the faithful naively rejected modern art on the simple grounds that its creators were unbelievers and therefore incapable of embodying spiritual values and aspirations. The overriding criterion for evaluating the merit of a work was therefore the faith of its creator.

Yet the Church's reluctance towards modern art was not entirely unfounded. It is true that after 1850, artists unmistakably moved away from beauty and pure objectivity. They seemed entirely interested in "pure self-referential experimentations and provocations," Ravasi remarked. Again we see a direct correlation between the *via pulchritudinis* and the *via communionis*: to walk the path of beauty is to journey in communion with others. "Authentic beauty," Benedict insisted, "unlocks the yearning of the human heart, the profound desire to know, to love, to go towards the Other."

We can sense the Magisterium's ambivalence towards modern art in Pope Pius XII's *Mediator Dei*

(1947), an encyclical closely scrutinized due to the ongoing work in Assy. Adopting a balanced and diplomatic tone, the Pontiff acknowledged the Church's duty to order and regulate divine worship, "enriching it constantly with new splendor and beauty," but also "to modify what it deemed not altogether fitting" (n. 49). He noted that "progress" in the fine arts "has exerted considerable influence on the choice and disposition of the various external features of the sacred liturgy" (n. 56). He thought it opportune to reiterate three essential characteristics of liturgical worship formulated by his predecessor Pius X: "sacredness, which abhors any profane influence; nobility, which true and genuine arts should serve and foster; and universality, which, while safeguarding local and legitimate custom, reveals the catholic unity of the Church" (n. 188). Perhaps Pius XII is most diplomatic when addressing the arts of architecture, sculpture and painting:

Recent works of art which lend themselves to the materials of modern composition, should not be universally despised and rejected through prejudice. Modern art should be given free scope in the due and reverent service of the church and the sacred rites, provided that they preserve a correct balance between styles tending neither to extreme realism nor to excessive 'symbolism,' and that the needs of the Christian community are taken into consideration rather than the particular taste or talent of the individual artist ... Nevertheless, in keeping with the duty of Our office, We cannot help deploring and condemning those works of art, recently introduced by some, which seem to be a distortion and perversion of true art and which at times openly shock Christian taste, modesty and devotion, and shamefully offend the true religious sense. These must be entirely excluded and banished from our churches, like 'anything else that is not in keeping with the sanctity of the place' (n. 195).

Was the chapel at Assy to be numbered among the "works recently introduced by some"? Many were convinced that if the structure as a whole was not, the crucifix by Germaine Richier, severely criticized by Gabriel Marcel and finally removed by Bishop Çesbron in April of 1951, was. In any case, a gradual openness to modern art seemed implicit in further remarks made by Pius XII in 1950 when addressing the First International Congress of Catholic Artists. The Pontiff affirmed that "the purpose of all art is to break the narrow boundaries of the finite, and open windows onto

the infinite for the benefit of the human spirit, yearning in that direction.” But for as much as he seemed to be clearing space for modern art, this Address was quickly followed by a Letter to the Clergy entitled *Menti Nostrae* which decried “works which astonishingly deform art and yet pretend to be Christian” and reprimanded priests (Fathers Couturier and Régamey?) who “have allowed themselves to be carried away by the mania of novelty.” Another step backwards was signaled by the 1952 Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office which issued an injunction against any art “which disturbs or even merely diminishes the piety and devotion of the faithful, or which might reasonably be considered in bad taste or cause of scandal.”

In parsing these statements, we must keep in mind that the controversy surrounding Our Lady of All Graces was about more than a chapel or the arts in general. These pronouncements were made in the thick of great turbulence in the French church. The priest-worker movement had been censured, the Dominicans were under fire, and theologians such as Congar, Chenu and Feret had been removed from their positions.

Moreover, it has never been the competence of the Roman Curia to issue definitive decrees concerning the suitability or unsuitability of individual works of art. It does fall, however, to the Church as a whole—bishops, clergy, religious, and laity—to keep vigilance over the art and architecture that plays much more than a decorative role in the liturgical and spiritual life of the Church.

At the same time, we must not forget that Paul VI and John Paul II did not wish to limit the dialogue to liturgical or devotional art. They wanted to engage *all* art and to encourage *all* artists to aspire to the “religious”. Pope Benedict has followed suit. “All art *of the first order*,” he said, “is by its nature, religious” (italics mine). He then elaborated briefly the qualification “of the first order”: “Art, in all its forms, at the point where it encounters the great questions of our existence, the fundamental themes that give life its meaning, can take on a religious quality, thereby turning into a path of

profound inner reflection and spirituality.”

Thus it is for liturgical art, religious art, or any “art of the first order”. Integrity and community are key ingredients for each. Professor Antonio Paolucci, Director of the Vatican Museums, remarked that religious art must seek “*contiguità*” and “*assonanza*” with the world. Something similar could be said about any “art of the first order”, for it should seek *contiguità* and *assonanza* with authentic transcendence—the true, the good, and the beautiful. If images—be they abstract or representational—do nothing more than imitate, or if they seek only to purify form from the alleged constrictions of actual existence, then they will forever fall short of their true iconographic vocation. To fully understand this vocation, great works of art must be studied within the historical, cultural, and religious milieu out of which they were born. A triptych was meant to be placed over an altar, not on a museum wall. Too often artworks depicting overtly religious themes are analyzed according to philological or aesthetic standards that fail to account for their evangelical, catechetical, or spiritual ends. This leads to a facile categorization by “style” and “period” that adheres to artificially devised aesthetic standards.

To take but one example, Raphael painted his Sistine Madonna clearly aware that it would face a crucifix hung at the far end of the chancel in the church of San Sisto. This explains the pitiful look of dismay and trepidation of mother and child as they behold the instrument of Jesus’s future passion. This simple contextualization and sensitivity to religious narrative would have not only have spared us a pile of academic Freudian nonsense about the child’s relationship to his mother, but also inspired artists and architects to be attuned to one another in the design of sacred spaces, working in *communion* for the *integrity* of the whole. I simply wish to propose that these two factors are at the forefront of the *via pulchritudinis* which, as Pope Benedict suggested, “leads us to grasp the Whole in the fragment, the Infinite in the finite, God in the history of humanity.” The possibilities are endless. ✠



One-Party Classroom: How Radical Professors at America's Top Colleges Indoctrinate Students and Undermine Our Democracy. David Horowitz and Jacob Laksin. New York: Crown Forum, 2009, 321 pages, \$26.95.

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No one who has spent his life wandering about in the groves of academe needs to be told that for some years now a very large portion of this country's college faculty members thinks along pronouncedly liberal lines. The leaning is clearly to the left. Few and far between would be the professor, especially if he is in the humanities, who could honestly be described as a conservative thinker. Nothing particularly new there. A 2007 Harvard study claimed that "95 percent of the professors on liberal arts faculties are likely to share liberal or left-wing approaches to social issues." (279) Other studies have shown that "the ratio of liberals to conservatives in the liberal arts professoriate ranges from 10 to 1 to 30 to 1." But has it gone beyond that? Is liberalism giving way to radicalism? *One-Party Classroom*, by David Horowitz and Jacob Laksin, argues that such is precisely the case, and the authors offer some compelling evidence in support of their position.

The book presents the results of a close analysis of an array of courses—150 in all!—which are now being offered in the humanities divisions of the following institutions: Duke University, the University of Colorado, Columbia University, Pennsylvania State University, the University of Texas, the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, Temple University, Miami University of Ohio, the University of Missouri, the University of Southern California, and the University of California at Santa Cruz. In analyzing the 150 courses, the authors quote liberally from the descriptions of them found in the schools' catalogues, which descriptions are quite revealing. The authors also provide us with interesting biographical information of several of the instructors, and then they offer their own critique of and commentary on the courses under review.

Reading at a single stretch so many course descriptions—couched as they are in the stilted style which is best described as late academese—can prove to be a positively purgatorial experience. It brings home to one the special strains to which the English language can be subjected. Phrases like "critical thinking" and "social justice" appear very often in the course descriptions, and these, our authors inform us, are common left-wing code phrases: to "think critically" means to think leftist, and "social justice" is in effect a synonym for socialism. Another favorite phrase in current academic jargon is "developing strategies," something which the students are continuously being urged to do. The guiding supposition appears to be that any knowledge that the students might manage to gain in a given course is not meant to serve as food for contemplation; it is to be directed toward praxis. Taking the courses all in all, it is difficult to believe that they would place undue burdens on the mental capacities of even the most lethargic of enrollees. The basic requirement, for students, would seem to be simply to spoon up without question what the instructor deigns to dish out. In short, these courses do not impress one as being remarkable for their academic rigor.

That judgment is fortified by an observation David Horowitz makes in the book's Introduction, tellingly entitled, "An Academic Tragedy." There he writes: "The outcome of our research leaves no doubt that the failure to enforce academic standards is a problem that is endemic to institutions of higher learning," (5) and he contends that the problem is not limited "to a few aberrant instructors." (5) "*One-Party Classroom* demonstrates beyond a reasonable doubt," he writes, "that the attempt to indoctrinate American college students is more pervasive and extreme than even the harshest critics of academia previously suggested." (6) (Among those critics, he mentions Allan Bloom, Dinesh D'Souza, Roger Kimball, Neil Hamilton, Richard Bernstein, Daphne Patai, and Noretta Koertge.) Horowitz traces the roots of the present situation to "the political history of the 1960s and its aftermath." (6) As an illustration of that point he cites the case of Black Studies, a program that tends to

specialize in the kind of courses which are analyzed in this book. "The field of Black Studies was not so much created by universities as forced on them during the turbulent decades of the 1960s and 1970s, through a species of political blackmail." (51) Between the years 1968 and 1971, more than 300 such programs were set up on American college campuses. Running neck and neck with Black Studies, in perpetrating courses in indoctrination, is Women's Studies, followed close behind by departments of sociology and English.

At some institutions the standard freshman composition course, usually a requirement for all students, has been turned into a convenient vehicle for disseminating ideological propaganda. The principal, and once sacrosanct, aim of that course was to help students become better writers, in the process of which they were expected to meet rather exacting standards. But the very idea of adhering to standards is today regarded by some academics as quaintly out of date, if not, somehow, downright perverse. Speaking of standards for language, Professor Houston Baker of Duke University, one time president of the prestigious Modern Language Association, boldly states: "I am one whose career is dedicated to the day when we have a disappearance of those standards." (21) A rather strange day to which a college professor should be dedicating his career. If today's Johnny can neither read nor write, perhaps it is because his teachers refuse to bother themselves with such pedestrian concerns, tending as they are to higher matters, while often pocketing princely six figure salaries.

One of the things students are being systematically taught today, especially if they are enrolled in Women's Studies courses—and being taught as if it were on the same level as Maxwell's equations—is that gender is "socially constructed." [Sic.] If you are a male or a female, neither of those designations is to be understood as having anything to do with biology. It all comes down to sociology. That so many of our academic intellectuals could take so interesting a doctrine seriously goes no little distance in explaining many of the other fascinating features which our college campuses now have to offer. Take Marxism, for example. Though

tried and found to be radically wanting in the real world, Marxism continues to enjoy vibrant good health in the rarefied atmosphere provided by the Ivory Tower. There, snug and secure in their temperature-controlled sinecures, tenured radicals work away busily at redesigning the world. It's nice work, if you can get it.

The final chapter of the book is entitled, "The Worst School in America." That dubious honor is conferred by the authors upon the University of California at Santa Cruz. From their description of the institution--more precisely, its humanities division--it does in fact come across as something singularly peculiar. And perhaps the most peculiar thing about it is a program bearing the fetching name, "The History of Consciousness," a more cosmic and comprehensive a field than which it would be hard to imagine. It is a degree granting program. Indeed, with a vengeance, for it would seem to dispense degrees with wild abandon, especially the Ph.D., which is apparently available almost for the asking, so long, that is, as you happen to be the right kind of asker. According to Professor Page Smith, the founder of the program, the promiscuous dispensation of the doctorate has a distinct purpose behind it, which is, the professor explains, to show that the degree is a fraud. Interesting logic there. I would have thought that if you considered something to be a fraud you would desist from perpetuating it, unless of course you believed that perpetuating fraud is just the kind of business in which a tax-supported academic institution should be involved.

Given the revelations of the decidedly tawdry academic goings-on which have been made public by *One-Party Classroom*, one might suppose that the venerable American Association of University Professors would have leapt at the chance to take every necessary measure to correct the situation. Not so. As Horowitz recounts in the book's Conclusion, "The End of the University as We Know It," the AAUP showed itself to be more willing to contribute to the problem than to solve it. Instead of standing up for standards, they promote a policy that serves to undercut them. Instead of going to bat for truth, they effectively attempt to transform it

into a tenuous and endlessly malleable entity which is to be arrived at by consensus. Truth or falsity established by a show of hands. So, by this logic, if enough people in a department, or on a campus, think that it is true that gender is socially constructed, well then, by George, it is true.

After reading this book, two thoughts immediately presented themselves. The first was the observation that there would seem to be very strong evidence to suggest that professional academics, taken as a class, have to be numbered among the most humorless people on the face of the earth. The evidence? Their apparent total incapacity to appreciate, and probably even to recognize, the absurd, especially when it touches upon their own lives and doings. And then I wondered about the general tenor of students who now so thickly populate our college campuses. Just what odd species of intellectual zombie have we bred, who would be content to sit through the kinds of courses that are described in this book? One might callously say that they are only getting what they deserve, but that skirts a deeper question: Do they even know what they are getting?

Are we indeed witnessing the end of the university as we know it? One earnestly hopes that all is not yet completely lost. In any event, in order to know just how bad things have become, anyone who is interested in and concerned about the fate of third level education in the country should feel duty-bound to read *One-Party Classroom*. What it tells us is not to be ignored.

Pilgrims to the Northland: The Archdiocese of St. Paul, 1840-1962. Marvin R. O'Connell. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009, xiii, 642 pages.

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When, in 1850, Pope Pius IX formally established the Diocese of St. Paul, embracing a sprawling stretch of Upper Midwest real estate (166,000 square miles in all)

known as the Minnesota Territory, the ground had already been seeded for the eventual growth of Catholicism in the area, thanks to the labors of explorers and missionaries of the likes of Joliet, La Salle, Duluth, Marquette, and Hennepin. It was the Belgian Recollect friar, Louis Hennepin, who, in 1680, while a captive of the Dakota Sioux, gave the name of St. Anthony to the falls on the upper Mississippi which is now tightly hemmed in by downtown Minneapolis

Whites did not begin to settle in the area which was to become the future state of Minnesota in any appreciable numbers until the first half of the nineteenth century. The United States government had made its presence felt there in the early part of that century with the establishment of Fort Snelling in 1819, and it was to that installation that Fr. Lucian Galtier had made his way in 1840, at the behest of Bishop Loras, to become the first resident priest in what was then the northern reaches of the diocese of Dubuque. Fr. Galtier saw to the building of the first two churches in Minnesota, St. Peter's in Mendota, and St. Paul's, located in a scrubby little riverside settlement bearing the unlovely name of Pig's Eye, promptly renamed St. Paul by Fr. Galtier.

Joseph Cretin (1799-1857) was the first bishop of St. Paul. He arrived in his see city, such as it was at the time, in the summer of 1851, to take up the responsibilities for the challenging assignment that had been given him. A Frenchman like Loras, he had been among the latter's first recruits for the American mission field, and had served as his vicar general in Dubuque before being consecrated bishop and sent to St. Paul. At the time of his arrival there were some 31,000 souls living in his vast diocese, 27,000 of whom were Indians. The number of Catholics was not large. When he died six years later, this quiet, hard-working, unostentatiously devout man left behind a diocese populated by 50,000 Catholics, served by some 27 priests. Among those priests were nine members of the Order of St. Benedict, which Cretin had established in the diocese. Their home, St. John's, some eighty miles north of St. Paul, was to become one of the largest Benedictine abbeys in the world.

Bishop Cretin was also responsible for bringing the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet to St. Paul, whose impact on the growth of the diocese over the years would be difficult to exaggerate.

Bishop Cretin was succeeded by the Dominican Thomas Langdon Grace (1814-1897), who had accepted his north country assignment only reluctantly; but once he assumed his position as the ordinary of St. Paul, in 1859, he was unstinting in fulfilling its demanding obligations. A native born American (Charleston, South Carolina) of Irish immigrant parents, he was a studious man who kept close tabs on what was transpiring on the larger American scene, especially in the political realm. It was perhaps the seven years he had spent as a student in Europe that lent him a certain cosmopolitan air which was much admired in St. Paul, by Catholics and Protestants alike, but for all that he was a man entirely without pretensions. In the quarter of a century which he served as the Bishop of St. Paul, a period that included the trauma of the Civil War, begun not long after his taking office, he accomplished much in a variety of significant areas. His tenure as ordinary saw a massive influx of immigrants into the state, a good many of whom were Catholics. When he retired in 1884, there were 150,000 Catholics in the diocese, with 147 priests, 27 seminarians, 14 religious orders of women, and 6 of men. There were 95 churches dotted throughout the diocese.

Given the type of history that Father O'Connell has written here, it is of course natural that he should devote considerable attention to the various bishops who have headed the see at St. Paul, and indeed he does full justice to those remarkable men, bringing them to life for the reader in an especially telling way. But the peculiar genius of this book lies in its inclusiveness; this is the story of not just the few, but the many. Father O'Connell effects this by what I will somewhat pretentiously call his method of representative selectivity, whereby he focuses on particular priests, or religious, or lay people, or parishes, or organizations, or institutions, each of which reflects a significant facet of the diocese, and then artfully blends their stories into the larger narrative, thereby enrich-

ing it considerably. Thus, and just by way of sampler, we come to know the memorable Fr. Alexander Berghold of Holy Trinity parish in New Ulm, who worked among the German immigrants of southwest Minnesota. We meet Mother Seraphine, sister to John Ireland, who for some forty years was the provincial superior of the Sisters of St. Joseph, whose developing shape and direction bear the mark of her strong personality. We learn of Fr. John A. Ryan, who devoted his life wrestling with various social issues, particularly those having to do with labor; of Fr. Virgil Michel, O.S.B., of St. John's Abbey and the liturgical movement he founded; of the industrious trio made up of Fr. Paul Bussard, Fr. Edward Jennings, and Fr. Louis Gales, who proved to be formidable figures in the field of Catholic publishing, giving to the world *The Leaflet Missal* and *The Catholic Digest*, the latter of which had, by 1936, a monthly circulation of over a million. On the subject of publishing, it also bears mentioning that the weekly newspaper, *The Wanderer*, still going strong after almost a century and a half, also saw its inception in the diocese of St. Paul.

It was not until the twentieth century that American Catholics gained the ambiguous distinction of being numbered among the country's most affluent citizens. This was definitely not the case for the Catholics to whom Bishop Grace ministered in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. But though those pioneer Catholics were decidedly un-affluent, they were astonishingly generous with what they had, especially when it came to supporting the Church. In one of his pastoral letters Bishop Grace wrote: "Be not ashamed, brethren, of the loyalty of the poor; think it not a disgrace, but a privilege, to be associated with them. The Church rejoices in the number of her poor....She loves them as Christ loved them." (164)

One of Bishop Grace's continuing worrisome concerns was the fact that so many Catholic immigrants, especially the Irish, had become so narrowly partisan in their politics, precisely on account of their allegiance to the Democratic Party. "Abstain from party strife," he urged his flock, "preserve your independence; and do not

become the tools of bold and intriguing men." (165) Harboring the highest respect for the U. S. Constitution, which he saw as the best guarantor of individual rights, Grace considered it of paramount importance that Catholics "...never consent to sink or sacrifice [their rights] in the interests of any political organization." (166) In a letter to James McMaster, the editor of *The Freeman's Journal*, with whom he was a regular correspondent but who did not see eye to eye with the bishop on this issue, he wrote that there was a need for Catholics to free themselves from obeisance to the Democratic Party, so that they were no longer "under the domination of...political tricksters and demagogues." (170)

Though Minnesota's geographical location spared it from being the scene of any Civil War battles, its citizens did experience a shocking event that took place in the state during the war, and that was the Dakota Sioux uprising of 1862, perhaps aptly describable as a last desperate attempt on the part of the Indians, if not to recover them, at least somehow to avenge themselves for the loss of the lands which they had occupied for centuries and from which they had been so summarily removed. Before the dust of the uprising had settled, some 500 white settlers lay dead. Of the 319 Indians who were subsequently captured and brought to trial, 309 were found guilty and condemned to death. After reviewing the proceedings of the trial, President Lincoln commuted the sentences of all but 38, and these were scheduled to be hanged, in Mankato, on December 26, 1862. Then occurred one of the more noteworthy events in Minnesota Catholic history. Fr. Augustin Ravoux, who had come to the state with Bishop Cretin, and who at the time was Bishop Grace's vicar general, traveled to Mankato to be with the condemned Indians during their last days--a thoroughly priestly act if ever there was one. He had always been especially devoted to the Dakota people, and though his dreams of a mass conversion of them had never been realized, the influence he exerted in Mankato was remarkable. He stayed with the condemned men until the end, and of the 38 men who mounted the scaffold on the day after Christmas, 1862, 31 had

been baptized by him into the Catholic faith. Later he wrote of his experiences on that day: "I considered myself happy in being able to assist to prepare them for the great journey to eternity.... During the few moments they stood on the scaffold, while the executioners were tying the fatal knot around their necks, I remained on my knees, invoking from the very heart the mercy of God in their behalf.... May they rest happily in the bosom of God, and may their supplications obtain the grace of conversion for their unfortunate tribe." (227) One of the causes of the uprising, in Bishop Grace's studied opinion, was the U. S. Government's stubbornly persistent refusal to heed the Dakotas' repeated request to have Catholic, rather than Protestant, missionaries sent to them.

When Pius IX convened the Vatican Council in 1869, Bishop Grace begged to be excused from attending for reasons of health, but he sent as his representative a young priest by the name of John Ireland, who was at the time the rector of the Cathedral parish, and who one day would be his successor, and unquestionably St. Paul's most famous ordinary. Interestingly, though, John Ireland almost did not become the bishop of St. Paul. When Pius IX selected him for episcopal rank, in 1875, he was intended to be the first bishop of Nebraska, and lands farther west. So alarmed was Bishop Grace at the prospect of losing for his diocese a man who had already shown himself to be an exceptional priest in several salient ways, that, health considerations notwithstanding, he went off to Rome to intercede personally with the Holy Father and to persuade him to change his plans for John Ireland. Needless to say, he succeeded.

John Ireland (1838-1918), the third bishop of St. Paul and its first archbishop, was himself an Irish immigrant, having arrived in this country at the age of ten, along with his parents and extended family. After a short stay in Chicago, the Irelands migrated to the new promised land of Minnesota, where Bishop Cretin soon saw in the young John the makings of a future priest. In 1853 Cretin sent John, then fourteen, and Thomas O'Gorman, aged eleven, to France, to study at he seminary at Meximieux, where he

himself had begun his priestly training. The two were to remain life-long friends, and O'Gorman was eventually to become the first bishop of Sioux Falls. Ireland was ordained a priest by Bishop Grace in 1861, shortly after the young man returned to St. Paul—now a bustling city of 11,000, and the capital of the state—from his eight years of French seminary education, and in short order became an outstanding presence in the fledgling diocese. He quickly gained renown as a preacher and public lecturer, and for the rest of his life he was regularly called upon to preach and lecture at venues throughout the state, and indeed the entire country. Among the more significant of the many projects he actively promoted, once he returned to Minnesota after serving as a chaplain in the Civil War, was the Catholic Colonization Bureau, the purpose for which was to settle new immigrants, mainly Irish, on the land. He carried on this project for years, and with considerable success, with no little thanks to the support given to the project by the railroad magnate James J. Hill, "The Empire Builder."

After the Nebraska scare, John Ireland was consecrated a bishop by Bishop Grace, to serve as his coadjutor, in December, 1875. Nine years later, when Bishop Grace retired, he succeeded him as Bishop of St. Paul. John Ireland was a multi-faceted man, and defies any attempt facilely to sum him up. Mention was made of his prowess as a public speaker. Not a few of the speeches he gave were devoted to the subject of temperance, to which cause he remained dedicated throughout his life, and which earned him the accolade of "the Father Matthew of the West," after the famous Irish Capuchin and temperance crusader. Like Bishop Grace, Ireland was troubled by how the Irish had been totally captured by the Democratic Party, especially because he believed the party cynically exploited the Irish weakness for fire water. In an address he gave to a gathering of Irish-Americans, Ireland did not mince words: "Alcohol [is] the bane of [your] country and countrymen; but for it Ireland might today be free and an honored member of the sisterhood of nations; but for it Irishmen would be better, truer, nobler members of soci-

ety." (260)

During the almost thirty-five years that he was the ordinary of the see of St. Paul, John Ireland showed himself to be a man of boundless energy. He seemed to be constantly on the go, traveling widely, and often, in this country and abroad, but for all his peripatetic propensities, always carefully tending to business at hand in St. Paul. In 1885 he founded what has devolved today into the University of St. Thomas, a diocesan institution which, the founding documents stipulated, was never to be under the control of a religious order, a stipulation reflective of Ireland's life-long antipathy toward religious orders of men, especially the Jesuits. He oversaw and supported the founding of the College of St. Catherine, run by the Sisters of St. Joseph, the first Catholic college in the country to be granted a Phi Beta Kappa chapter, and he was also importantly instrumental in the founding of the Catholic University of America. The St. Paul Seminary, which was actually built by James J. Hill, was another of the jewels he set in the crown of the diocese. His continuing interest and active involvement in education led to his fostering what came to be known as the Faribault Plan, a cooperative venture whereby a Catholic school building was leased to the public school district and where all the local children were taught by religious Sisters; the Catholic pupils were given their catechetical instruction after regular school hours. The experiment stirred up a fair amount of controversy, and Ireland, though never repudiating the concept behind it, eventually decided to abandon it. Perhaps the two most impressive monuments—literally speaking—to Archbishop Ireland's tenure are the Cathedral of St. Paul, and, across the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, the Basilica of St. Mary, both designed by the architect Emmanuel Louis Masqueray of the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and both of which opened their doors for worship in 1915. They stand out today as commanding, not-to-be-ignored, architectural statements.

Because he was a man with strong views, who would seem to have passed up few opportunities for expressing them forthrightly, and always articulately, Archbishop Ireland was not

without his adversaries, some of the most adamant of whom were to be found within the American episcopacy, in the persons of, for example, Bernard McQuaid of Rochester and John Lancaster Spalding of Peoria. Perhaps the liveliest issue with which his name is associated is the Americanist Controversy, or, to some, the Americanist Heresy, which prompted Leo XIII, in 1899, to issue his apostolic letter, *Testem Benevolentiae*. That Ireland was an unabashed and unapologetic patriot is not open to doubt. In an address given to fellow bishops at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884, his rhetoric soared. "Republic of America," he pronounced, "receive from me the tribute of my love. I am proud to do thee homage, and I pray from my heart that thy glory may never be dimmed.... Thou bearest in thy hands the brightest hopes of the human race." (295) He was firm in his conviction that it was imperative that the Catholic immigrants pouring into the United States should be thoroughly assimilated into the culture of their new country, but not, as some of his adversaries appeared to believe, at the expense of their Catholic faith. For the archbishop, Catholicism and Americanism were completely compatible. He adamantly repudiated the "Americanism" condemned by *Testem Benevolentiae*, and indeed it would be difficult to imagine anyone more staunchly orthodox in his faith than John Ireland. He was an altogether remarkable man, a prelate the likes of which one would be hard pressed to find in the contemporary Church. *Webster's American Biographies* probably does not exaggerate when it ends its lengthy and laudatory entry on John Ireland with the observation that, at his death in 1918, he "was hailed in obituaries throughout the nation and the world as perhaps the greatest American churchman of his time." (334)

Austin Dowling (1868-1930), another son of Irish immigrant parents, was installed as the second archbishop of St. Paul on March 25, 1919, after serving as the bishop of Des Moines. A modest but determined cleric, keenly aware that he was called upon to fill the shoes of a man who at the time of his death was already somewhat of a legend, Dowling made the develop-

ment of Catholic education in the diocese one of his principal projects during his relatively short tenure as ordinary. An important part of that project was saving the College of St. Thomas from collapse under the weight of years of accumulated debt, for which effort he invited the Congregation of the Holy Cross from Notre Dame to take over the administration of the institution, a fact with which many priests of the diocese, loyal to the memory of Archbishop Ireland, were not at all pleased. Perhaps Archbishop Dowling's most noteworthy accomplishment was the founding of Nazareth Hall minor seminary (high school plus two years of college), which, before its closing, in the turbulent wake of the Second Vatican Council, had provided a sterling education to many priests of the diocese, and yet many more laymen.

John Gregory Murray (1877-1956), yet another son of Irish immigrants, was bishop of Portland, Maine when, in 1932, he was called to be the archbishop of St. Paul. Like his predecessor Austin Dowling, he was a modest and unassuming man, but with a clear and quietly determined sense of his duties as a prelate. The task he faced was a daunting one, for when he took over as archbishop, the Great Depression was a settled fact of American economic life. One of Archbishop Murray's first acts was to bring the College of St. Thomas back under the administrative control of the archdiocese. Through the unstinting generosity of Ignatius O'Shaughnessy, a 1907 graduate of St. Thomas, in due course the institution was put on very sound financial footing. The antisemitism which was an integral part of the Nazism born out of the 1930s drew sharp and repeated responses from Archbishop Murray. In 1938 he wrote: "The savage persecution of our brethren of the Jewish race demands united effort to put an end to the barbarism into which a once noble people have been dragooned by the most diabolical leadership exercised in modern times." (523) The Ninth National Eucharistic Congress was held in St. Paul during the summer of 1941, as the nation teetered on the edge of World War II. During that war 32,015 Catholics from the diocese served in various branches of the military (1,151

of them women), and many diocesan priests joined the Chaplains Corps. Of those who served, 997 gave their lives. As the archdiocese prepared to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 1950, the numbers that could be cited were impressive: 294,000 Catholic faithful; 267 parishes; 532 priests; 1,740 Sisters; 50 Brothers.

When Archbishop Murray died, in 1956, he was succeeded by his coadjutor, William O. Brady, former rector of the St. Paul Seminary, and immediately before his appointment to St. Paul, the bishop of Sioux Falls. It is with his tenure as the archbishop of St. Paul that Father O'Connell brings his history to a close. Archbishop Brady served as the see's ordinary for but six years, dying suddenly of a heart attack in 1962, in Rome, where he had gone to engage in preliminary preparations for the Second Vatican Council. Though his tenure as archbishop was short, it was an eventful one, for Brady was an energetic and decisive man, and among other things he brought about a flowering of Catholic education in the diocese, and several brand new high schools were founded. The see's two hospitals, St. Joseph's in St. Paul and St. Mary's in Minneapolis, both saw appreciable expansion. There is something fitting, aesthetically as well as historically, in the fact that *Pilgrims to the Northland* ends with the death of Archbishop Brady in 1962, for not long after that year we were to witness the beginnings of a total transformation in the Church, and the fourth archbishop of St. Paul could rightly be considered as the last of a kind. One wonders if he did not have an unsettling intimation of things to come. In an address he gave at a liturgical conference at St. John's Abbey in 1957, he entered this plea: "In your enthusiasm for liturgical prayer... do not take the rosary away from us." And then, later: "I do not wish to enter here the sometimes noisy, intemperate and even disrespectful agitation for the vernacular. That is a special problem on which the Church has less than gently said, 'Please don't take our Latin from us.'" (615) History, or rather those who make it, for good or ill, were to dictate otherwise.

Lengthy though it be, this review does not do anything like justice to Father Marvin O'Connell's excellent

book. It is a history of a particular diocese, yes, but it is much more than that, and you do not have to hail from St. Paul to be caught up in and carried away by the fascinating story he tells. It is a history which takes into account the salient events of the Church at large in this country during what arguably was her most dynamic and exciting period. And it is written in a masterful style by a man who ranks among the foremost Catholic historians at work today. In the Preface to his book, Father O'Connell writes: "Since [history] is a construct of him who practices it, it is to a degree no less an art." (x) And, in the pages to follow, he goes on to prove just how artful history can be.

The Line Through the Heart: Natural Law as Fact, Theory, and Sign of Contradiction. J. Budziszewski. Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books, 2009, 241 pages, \$25.

Reviewed by D. Q. McNerny
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There was a time, not too long ago, when the uncontested factualness of the natural law was universally acknowledged. But then it was as if a wave of amnesia swept across the whole of western culture, and there was a massive forgetfulness of the very foundations of moral reasoning. Of course, that makes it sound as if Western culture was an innocent victim of something which was quite beyond its control, and that won't do. No, it was something which we brought upon ourselves; the forgetfulness was self-induced, the logical outcome of our consciously succumbing to various forms of errant philosophy. Perhaps the most scandalous aspect of the phenomenon is the role our legal scholars had to play in the whole affair. Once the staunchest defenders of the natural law, they became, with but few exceptions, its most persistent foes.

But the dawn is now breaking in the east, or rather—a more apt image—the sun is in fact well above the horizon. We are experiencing today a rather pervasive and fast growing resurgence of interest in the natural law,

spearheaded by a group of scholars who are remarkable for the firm grasp they have of their subject, for the substantive quality of the books they have written, and for the impressive heft and cogency of the arguments they mount on behalf of the natural law. Among the preeminent figures in this group of scholars is Professor J. Budziszewski of the University of Texas. A few years ago, in 2003, he published a meaty and lively volume called *What We Can't Not Know*, in which he laid out in a lucid and compelling way, and in a style laced with refreshing wit, the basic principles of the natural law, while giving them—this was an especially valuable aspect of the book—pointed topical application. In a particularly useful chapter he spells out just what it is about our society that explains how it has happened that we have become virtually oblivious to the natural law. He cites and trenchantly develops, the following factors: the atrophy of tradition; the cult of the expert; the return of the sophist; the infantile regression of public reflection; the disabling of shock and shame; the prolongation of adolescence; the cult of feelings.

Professor Budziszewski has now come out with a new work, *The Line Through the Heart*, the first sentence of which reads: "This book is about natural law—about the foundational principles of good and evil inscribed in human nature." (xi) Composed of ten chapters, equally distributed between two parts which are titled respectively "Moral Law" and "Political Law," the book treats of a wide variety of subjects from the perspective of, and as illumined by, the basic principles of the natural law. Why is it that in recent decades we have managed to get so many critical things wrong in our moral reasoning, for example, regarding such matters as abortion? It is in great part because, Budziszewski argues, of "the suicidal proclivity of our time to deny the obvious." (4) Contemporary society is in a state of denial with respect to the intrinsic evil of certain acts. Now, the problem with people who are in a state of denial is that it is impossible to engage in serious philosophical discussion with them. Nonetheless, "we can philosophize about denial even if we cannot philosophize with those who are in denial," (21) and this the author

does with marked success. Much modern moral philosophy has been bedeviled by the specious notion, accepted by not a few of our philosophers as if it enjoyed the status of a self-evident first principle, that in moral reasoning one cannot legitimately make the move from "is" to "ought." To which Budziszewski aptly responds: "If it really were impossible to derive an ought from the is of the human design, then the practice of medicine would make no sense." (13)

The foundational support for all of our moral reasoning is our natural knowledge of God, and concomitantly, of His eternal law, and this knowledge is shown by the simple but powerful fact that we see the universe as intelligible. We look out at cosmos, not chaos, and cosmos has explanation only in cosmic Intelligence. It is *synderesis*, which Budziszewski calls "deep conscience," which allows us to make direct contact with the rudimentary principles of the natural law, and thus puts us in possession of those seminal moral truths we "cannot not know." But if this is the case, how are we to explain the grossly unnatural (i.e., against the natural law) kinds of behavior which so many people today would seem to be quite "comfortable" with—such as abortion, homosexuality, and free-wheeling fornication? Budziszewski explains this state of affairs under the rubric of "The Problem of Unnatural Connatality." Relying upon the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, he demonstrates that the nub of this problem is the topsy-turvy process by which the unnatural becomes unnatural (i.e., second nature) through habituation. Intrinsically disordered acts, such as homosexual acts, become ingrained behaviors through repetition, until the subject reaches a point where he is blind to the unnatural *qua* unnatural, and learns to live with his aberrant "lifestyle" because he sees it as normal, rationalization having effectively transformed evil into "good." Standing squarely on his head, he takes inordinate pride in being such an upright fellow.

One of the most tragic effects of our opacity regarding basic natural law principles is the degrading mockery we have made of the concept of "person," by defining it in terms of function.

This is the crudest kind of reductionism, for “to define a person in terms of his function is not to *qualify* him as a moral person, but to *disqualify* him as a moral person.” (109) Our professional ethicists are constantly tinkering with basic notions such as “person” and “human,” and some of them seem to operate under the delusion that the definitions they concoct constitute reality; that is, a person is simply what the “expert” *says* is a person. But our experts, in being so grossly wrong about person, open the door to a whole array of associated distortions. “No one in our time has been able to come up with [a criterion] that turns babies in the womb into unpersons and leaves everything else as it was. And no one will.” (111) The lid to Pandora’s Box has been lifted. There is no other way of getting it right about person than simply to open our eyes to the obvious, and to see a person as “a proper subject of absolute regard.” And once our blindness is cured in this respect, we can then see that a person has “*inherent* rights, rights inherent in one’s nature, inherent in what one is.” (108)

Chapter Seven of *The Line Through the Heart* offers the reader a clear, dispassionate, commendably balanced treatment of the question of capital punishment, firmly grounded in natural law principles. Budziszewski is here making “The Case for Justice,” and in doing so reminds us that the primary purpose of punishment, be it capital or otherwise, is retribution, which might generally be described as a civil society’s duty to take prompt and decided measures to rectify a wrong committed against the common good. In much of the recent discussion swirling around the controversial issue of capital punishment, the secondary purposes of punishment—rehabilitation of the wrong-doer, protecting society against further depredations by the wrong-doer, and deterring others from becoming wrong-doers—have been given so much emphasis that its primary purpose has been virtually lost sight of. The author invites us to go back to basic principles, and to reflect more carefully on the chief rationale for punishment, so that we might rediscover its essential nature.

Budziszewski provides a particularly interesting and thought-provoking discussion of the phenomenon of

judicial activism. Most of us would be fairly prompt and confident in asserting that our judges, through their reckless activism, are doing direct violence to the Constitution. But is that really the case? In reflecting the opinions which were developed by “Brutus,” one of the contributors to the *Federalist Papers* (the person behind the pseudonym was most likely New York judge Robert Yates), Budziszewski offers food for some possible second thoughts regarding this matter. As “Brutus” read that founding document, the Constitution does not at all ensure a healthy balance of powers among the three branches of government; rather, it puts most of the power in the hands of the judiciary, which he saw as quite dangerous. The judiciary, “Brutus” feared, would end up ruling the roost, taking upon itself the task of interpreting just about everything, very much including the Constitution. It is a sobering bit of analysis. The author comments: “Brutus’s arguments seem even stronger today than they did at the time they were written.” (134) He goes on to observe that it is quite unrealistic for us to look upon the courts as the nonpolitical guardians of the Constitution. And as for the members of the Supreme Court, it is plain that they “can no longer distinguish...their lawlessness from the law, or their arbitrary will from those principles of right that are antecedent to their own authority and limit it.” (143) Put another way, they are not in the least bit guided in their deliberations and decisions by the dictates of the natural law.

The final chapter of the book is dedicated to an examination of “Illiberal Liberal Religion.” Budziszewski focuses his attention on what he identifies as the three faulty premises of liberalism regarding toleration: “The first is that religion is essentially *intolerant*; the second, that liberalism is essentially *tolerant*; the third, that the practice of toleration is essentially neutral—that it accommodates all varieties of belief, suspending judgment as to their merits.” He tellingly exposes the faultiness of each of these premises. The supposed liberal tolerance turns out to be highly selective, not to say crassly self-serving, and the claim of neutrality is frankly fraudulent. As Budziszewski rightly points out—another instance of

his calling attention to the obvious—neutrality is simply impossible. No one who thinks, who acts in accordance with how he thinks, who discriminates between right and wrong (however he might define them), can be neutral. But what happens when, as liberalism does, it pretends to be neutral when in fact it is not? We then bear witness to spectacles of intolerant tolerance, to displays of nonjudgmental judgmentalism, to liberalism’s ranting against those who have the temerity to “impose their morality on others” while it wantonly imposes its own in broadcast fashion. Thus we have here a particularly interesting, though not a little exasperating, case of self-delusion, for this supposed neutral liberalism “has only ad hoc standards it does not admit to having.” (178) Inseparable from liberalism’s profound misunderstanding of the true nature of tolerance is its profound misunderstanding of religion, the latter explained by its incapacity to see that “a given religion can be properly tolerant if, and only if, it has a sound understanding of goods and evils.” (172) While promoting itself as being disinterested with respect to religion, illiberal liberalism is in effect attempting to establish “a *liberal* confessional state.” (183) The author concludes with this observation: “In this country, for the foreseeable future, the chief danger to religious toleration arises not from avowed religions, but from the unavowed illiberal religion of liberalism itself.” (186)

Professor Budziszewski identifies himself as a scholar of public life; he is all of that, and of the first order. In *The Line Through the Heart* he has given us a rich and penetrating analysis of many of the dominant ills that now beset our society, and he provides the surest remedy for them: a return to the basic principles of the natural law. Here is a book which everyone can read with great benefit.

Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God, Elizabeth A. Johnson. New York and London: Continuum, 2008. 234 + xiii pp. Hardcover \$24.95.

Reviewed by Anne Gardiner, Professor Emerita, John Jay College, CUNY.

In *Quest for the Living God*, Sister Elizabeth Johnson CSJ, professor of theology at Fordham University and feminist author of *She Who Is* (1993) and *Truly Our Sister* (2004), warns us against thinking of God as an “invisible, greatly powerful, grand old man in the sky.” She dismisses this view as “modern theism,” a man-made “construct” dating from the 18th-century Enlightenment. She never explains how the same image comes to be found in antiquity in the vision of Daniel (Dn 7). She alleges that this “modern theism” is responsible for the prevailing view that God is unchanging, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent — ignoring the fact that these same attributes were mentioned as far back as the Council of Rome, 382 A.D.

The Catholic Church, she says, promotes a “primitive idea of God unworthy of belief,” a “retarded” view that reflects a “precritical mentality,” an “idol.” Her elitist contempt for the Church is typical of the academic dissenter. However, Johnson has too little knowledge of ecclesiastical history to back up her views. She claims that it was 18th-century “theism” that led to “neo-scholasticism,” which in turn promoted ideas of God that are “cramped, confined,” “authoritarian,” and “deficient to the point of being idolatrous.” To think properly of God, she argues, we must follow the spirit’s “unrestricted drive” to “boundless truth.” Thus, humble obedience to the Church is to be cast aside and a freethinking spirit unleashed. But wait, wasn’t such a spirit unleashed already in the 16th century?

She repudiates the belief that grace is something “objective” that can be “lost by sin and gained again by penance”; thus she contradicts the Council of Trent (Denzinger 807). Instead, she teaches that grace is something “subjective” found everywhere at all times, as in the “love” expressed in “creative art, literature, technology”; thus she ig-

nores the distinction between aesthetic and supernatural grace. She claims that the “divine life” is not closer to some than to others, but equally near to all without any need for religion, and that everyone who dies finds a future life (yes, but the question is, what kind of future existence, in Heaven or in Hell?). Moreover, she says that God has a “liberating partiality” for the “oppressed” regardless of their sins, and so theology is not about promoting “individual piety and moral living,” but about transforming social structures worldwide. To achieve this we must embrace a “mystical-political” theology as the core of our new spirituality and abandon private “bourgeois” religion. Is Johnson unaware that liberation theology has already been tried and found wanting?

In Chapter 5, “God Acting Womanish,” the author recounts how the women’s movement of the seventies led Catholic feminists to divide into three groups: (1) those who left the Church because “male dominance so distorted their religious experience”; (2) those who “defected in place, remaining *in* but not *of* the system”; and (3) those who remained only to “reform” the Church for the sake of future women. Evidently she belongs to the third category. She charges that there is a “theological error” behind “the dominant images of God,” because to call Him “lord of lords,” and “king of kings” leads to patriarchy in church and society. Besides, it is idolatry if people take literally the naming of God after the “image of powerful men.” She thinks there was an ancient conspiracy against women in the Catholic Church — with men in authority using their positions as a “model for the divine” and coming up with “verbal depictions of God in liturgy, preaching, and catechesis, along with virtual representations in art” that created a link between God and “maleness.” Here she ignores the great vision of God as the *husband* of Israel in Hosea and Canticles. Instead, she laments that the “ruling male substratum of the idea of God” was “engraved in public and private prayer” within the Church and has remained thus far resistant to “iconoclasm.” On this point she cites the late Mary Daly — a feminist who abandoned Christianity in the early

seventies but continued to teach Catholic theology.

Quest for the Living God, the title of this book, means the search for a deity who is *not* Father. In a burst of iconoclastic fury, the author calls on women to turn away from the patriarchal “idol” and seek the “female face of God.” She summons them to pull the “idol off its pedestal, breaking the stranglehold of patriarchal discourse and its deleterious effects. God is not literally a father or a king or a lord, but something ever so much greater.” Women must use female metaphors for God to open the “patriarchal cage” and release the “divine mystery.”

But first, she warns, they must be careful when they image God as mother not to promote an ideology of self-sacrifice, because motherhood is rewarding only when “undertaken as an active experience of creative involvement.” (The implication is that women must have so-called *choice* in bearing a child.) She has another warning, too. She says that merely attributing “feminine” qualities to God means that He could still be “envisioned in the image of the ruling man, only now possessing a milder, sweeter side.” This is not what feminists want: they want a “female icon” of the divine “capable of symbolizing the whole mystery,” and they can choose one from a “growing treasury of female icons of the living God who acts womanish: outrageous, audacious, courageous, willfully desiring the flourishing of women.” Note well, here is a purported deity that has been let out of a “patriarchal cage,” was constructed to answer feminist expectations, and is acting *outrageous, audacious, and willful*. Doesn’t this sound like our ancient Enemy pretending to be as God? Doesn’t this remind us of the Serpent who deceived the first woman into believing he wanted her “flourishing”? And logically, why is a “female icon” not suspected of being an “idol,” if a male image is?

Sister Elizabeth Johnson takes up the “icon” of “Sophia” and uses it to subvert the Incarnation. She declares that Jesus in the Gospels speaks “Sophia’s words” and does “her deeds” and that the pre-history of Jesus in the Gospel of John is “the story of Wisdom under the guise of the metaphor of the Word.” She asserts that Jesus is

the “human being Sophia became.” This is threadbare stuff right out of the seventies. It is the kind of diktat that has since left several orders of sisters in their death-throes. In sum, Johnson insists that it was not the Second Person of the Trinity who took flesh and redeemed us, but Sophia who came down and disguised herself as God-made-man. This is a theological error: Sophia is an allegory God’s Wisdom, not the Second Person of the Triune Godhead. For the sake of feminism, Johnson is willing to turn Scripture upside-down and pretend that the Word, the Son of God, is only a metaphor for Sophia. Why? She explains that “*only* if God is named in this more complete way, *only* if the full reality of historical women of all races and classes enters into our symbol of the divine, *only* then will the idolatrous fixation on one image of God be broken, will women be empowered at their deepest core” as they uncover the “mystery of divine Sophia’s gracious hospitality toward all human beings and the earth.” So feminists can only be “empowered” by sacrificing the Truth. What this amounts to is putting feminism above the Catholic Faith. The feminist construction of “Sophia” is supposed to trump two thousand years of unbroken apostolic teaching.

In chapter 8, Sister Elizabeth Johnson complains about how *Dominus Jesus* (2000) speaks of the salvific role of Jesus Christ as “unique and singular, proper to him alone, exclusive, universal and absolute,” and about how it also calls the Catholic Church the universal sacrament of this mystery. She thinks this document “denigrated the value of other religious traditions” and showed “no concrete knowledge of others gleaned from interreligious dialogue.” Her idea of ecumenism is that Catholic theologians dialoguing with representatives of other religions should “pass over” to the thinking of their “dialogue partners” and “savor” the world from a non-Catholic perspective. She even urges them to enter into their partners’ religious practices. Note well that she worries about idolatry if we call God “Father,” but she is not at all worried if we engage in non-Christian worship. She offers the example of her acquaintance Diana Eck, a Methodist, who worshiped in the temple of Vishnu and

felt her idea of God much “enlarged.” Johnson argues that in order to reconcile diverse religions we need to present Jesus not as “lording it over other manifestations of God in the world,” but as one who “washes feet.” What an odd thing for a Christian to say! Jesus Christ is no longer in a state of humiliation, but long ago ascended into His glory. He is God over all “manifestations” of deity in the world.

In chapter 9, on “ecological theology,” the author contends that mind and spirit have evolved from matter: “Human thought and love are not something injected into the universe from without, but are the flowering in us of deeply cosmic energies, arising out of the very physical dynamism of the cosmos, which is already self-organizing and creative.” The human mind emerged, she insists, with no “special supernatural intervention” because the material world is already “the matrix of God’s gracious indwelling,” an indwelling that empowered “evolutionary advance.” For her, Nature (rather than the Eucharist) is the “sacrament of continuous divine presence,” the “locus of divine compassion,” and the “bearer of a divine promise.” Thus she invites the worship of Nature, rather than of Christ. She also castigates human beings for their “unbridled reproduction” and draws up this predictable list of “pernicious sins” — “racism, sexism, ecclesiastical clericalism, and ruination of the earth.”

In the last chapter the author encourages us to “deconstruct our naive imaginations” of the Trinity. To advance this project she asserts that when Jesus said “hallowed be thy name” in the Lord’s Prayer, he was referring to the name “YHWH,” not “Father,” because the name “Father,” she exclaims, cannot possibly be “the name of God all by itself.” A strange remark for a Christian to make! Contrary to what Johnson says, the beautiful name of “Father” does not demean women. On the contrary, it offers every believer in Christ a greater intimacy with God, inviting us personally into the heart of the Trinity.

One has to wonder, does this book represent what Sister Elizabeth Johnson teaches her students at Fordham? If so, I hope our shepherds will take heed of this and act to protect the young from an ideology as deadly as asbestos

or lead paint left over from forty years ago. Old as it is, it could still poison another generation of Catholic women.

Failing America’s Faithful: How Today’s Churches Are Mixing God with Politics and Losing Their Way. By Kathleen Kennedy Townsend. Grand Central Publishing. 224 pages. \$24.99.

Reviewed by Anne Barbeau Gardiner, Professor Emerita of English, John Jay College of the City University of New York.

Catholic dissidents tend to be mentally frozen in the decade of their rebellion against the Church. This phenomenon can be seen in the person of Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, who has turned into a virtual pillar of salt by gazing back at the sexual revolution of the 1970s. In this, her first book, the eldest daughter of Robert Kennedy claims that the Church “betrayed” her generation and went into “decline” by failing to change its teachings about contraception, abortion, and sodomy.

Townsend, who is on the board of the *National Catholic Reporter*, says her faith taught her “humility about one’s own righteousness” and the humility to know there is “always more to learn.” This is odd because there’s not a trace of humility to be found in her entire book. She’s unflinchingly self-righteous in her support of abortion. Another oddity is her claim that “moral discomfort” is one of the “most important things about Catholic life.” Yet she’s perfectly comfortable with the violent deaths of 50 million American babies surgically ripped from the womb since 1973. Like Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, Townsend comes from a very large family but strongly opposes “massive” families. She supports social programs for the poor, but defends the abortion juggernaut that targets the poor for elimination before they can be born. She uses terms like *broad*, *expansive*, and *inclusive* to describe the morality she approves of, and *narrow* for Church teachings. But she herself is narrow in her application of terms like justice, mercy, neighbor, and the least of these — all of which she obstinately

refuses to extend to babies in the womb.

Townsend has long been defining sin for herself. As a young woman she made up her mind that sexual intercourse didn't have "to wait till marriage," provided she found the man she wanted to marry. She decided that what the Church condemns as fornication was something good that might determine "if we were compatible. Luckily for me we were."

In 1974, when she was a senior in college, her close friend became pregnant out of wedlock and aborted her child. Far from trying to dissuade her, Townsend wrote a research paper on abortion to justify that decision. After all, her friend was a "good person" who "cared deeply about her family" and was eager "to devote much of her life's work to helping those least able to help themselves." Note how narrowly Townsend applies the terms family and those least able to help themselves to exclude the baby in the womb. She claims she was torn between "my love for my friend" and "the teachings of the Church that would condemn her as one of the world's worst sinners." In this remark she caricatures a merciful Church as ruthless. In her paper Townsend reached the following conclusion: "My friend's experience — the awful position she was in — made me look at the moral questions anew, and the reason for the Church's adamant, unforgiving, un-nuanced doctrine. It also made me realize that 'pro-choice' was not the best slogan. I prefer 'pro-conscience,' for that clarifies that women make moral decisions." Note that she defended her friend as having aborted her child not out of fear and shame, but on the basis of a "moral decision," as an act of "conscience."

The Church offers forgiveness to the worst of sinners provided they repent, but Townsend declared that there was no need for her friend to repent — because abortion, like fornication, is something good. Thus, since her teen years this woman has been calling herself a Catholic but making up her own religion as she goes along.

To justify her brazen disobedience in spiritual matters, Townsend in the 1970s cast all the blame on the Church: "Never in my youth had I seen Catholics stand up to their priests or to Vati-

can edicts the way I and so many other Catholics felt forced to do by the illogic and inhumanity of the Church's sexual declarations." Note her expression forced to. She can't be blamed or expected to repent, you see, because it was the illogic and inhumanity of the Church that forced her and other dissidents to rebel. From that point on, her contempt for the spiritual authority of the Church just kept growing. Soon feminism made her regard Catholic morality as emanating from "celibate" men who don't know "the joy of sex," who are interested only in their "power," and who can't see that Catholics who had participated in the "liberations of the feminist and sexual revolutions" would never again obey "a Church that seemed so reactionary."

So, why hasn't Townsend left the Catholic Church? She sticks to it like a burr because, she says, "I am a Catholic in the way that I am a member of my family or an American. Just as my family raised me, shaped me, taught me, provided me with a sense of rootedness, so has Catholicism." Thus the Church is for her an umbilical cord she can't quite cut off. Her self-made Catholicism, which never requires any docility to Church teachings on morality, is chiefly a form of therapy for dealing "with tragedy, with sadness, sorrow, and the forces of evil." She attacks a "privatized" Catholicism all the way through her book — by which she means a Catholicism that meddles in sexual matters — yet hers is the most privatized religion of all, because it's self-made and merely therapeutic. Another reason she remains a Catholic is because she's certain that at the "appropriate time" the Church will "reawaken to the promise of Vatican II." In her total lack of humility, she expects that the Church will finally repent and come round to her view of contraception and abortion. She can't imagine that she might be the one who needs to repent. There are none so blind as those who will not see.

Up to 1986 Townsend's apostasy was private, but that year she ran for Congress on an abortion-rights platform. She laments that at the time, "My own pastor criticized me from the pulpit," and the Church "attacked me, tried to isolate me, and generally tried to make me feel unwelcome." She calls these

wholesome rebukes personal attacks, and claims she suffered them because she was a Kennedy, a member of America's most prominent Catholic family. Although her archdiocese "blacklisted" her as a speaker, she spoke at Catholic events anyway and on those occasions would be greeted by protesters who'd ask her, "How can you call yourself a Catholic?" At first, she says, she felt as if attacked by members of her own family, but as the years passed, she hardened her heart and stopped taking "the Church's attacks personally."

She complains that this treatment continued even after she left office, as when there were protests about her speaking to a graduating class at her old school in Maryland in 2003. At this juncture she was "saddened" that the protesters' "view of the Church's teachings was so narrow." Although she unashamedly "disagreed with the Church on abortion rights," she has the audacity to claim that "the idea that each soul was precious, that every person was indispensable in the sight of God, stood at the heart of everything I tried to do." Note that she calls her opponents narrow, but she flatly refuses to be broad enough in her application of the concept of each precious soul to include babies in the womb. She complains that "my Catholic Church" has allowed its social-justice agenda to be "trumped by an all-consuming focus on contraception, abortion, same-sex marriage, and embryonic stem cell research — none of which are mentioned in the Gospels." But she herself has an all-consuming focus on "abortion rights" and pretends that protecting the lives of babies has nothing to do with social justice.

Sandra Schneiders, a nun and professor of theology at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, commiserates with Townsend, who cites her as saying, "Where in the Scriptures do we find anything about abortion?" This is astonishing! What kind of doctor of Catholic theology is Schneiders if she's ignorant of St. Luke's account of the Visitation and of the fact that our Church's moral teachings are not based entirely on the letter of Scripture? Are natural law, Church fathers, councils, and encyclicals unknown to her?

Townsend assures us that if the

Church continues to condemn abortion today, it's only to protect its claim to infallibility: The issue is "simply too high profile for the Church to brook dissent," because for the Church to admit to error amounts to saying its word is "not the absolute reflection of the will of God," and then its "authority" vanishes. Townsend would be happy if the Church at least conceded that abortion is a "deeply complicated" issue on which "good Catholics" can "disagree." (Not a chance!) But if no concession is forthcoming, Townsend wants American Catholics to ignore the Church on abortion as they have on contraception, for "that's when the Vatican's hierarchy truly collapses." Townsend forgets, of course, that our Savior solemnly promised that the Gates of Hell would not prevail against His Bride, the Church.

In case the Church will not change its teachings to suit Townsend, this paragon of humility declares that power reverts into "the hands of individual worshippers." She summons Catholics "to reclaim our churches," for after all, "Jesus did not follow the rules." And she praises Voice of the Faithful for using the recent scandals (which she unfailingly calls "pederasty" scandals, rather than more accurately "homosexual" scandals) as a weapon "to open up Church governance to the laity." Townsend then proposes that Catholics set up new altars: "If we call on the Church's leadership to reform from within and it refuses to budge, we can form Eucharistic communities that keep alive the idea that women can be priests, that men might someday be allowed to remain priests when they are married." Her "reformed" Church, she crows, won't be "troubled" by issues like same-sex marriage. So, you see, when Townsend dreams of leaving the Kingdom of God, she wants to do it in style, like Lucifer, taking legions along with her.

Let me underline this reference to Lucifer. Abortion is atheism in action, so to endorse and promote it publicly as Townsend does amounts to waging war against God Himself.

Here is a book which, except for the personal reminiscences, is a rambling collection of prefabricated thoughts and phrases. Yet it serves a purpose in that it offers a striking

example of how frozen in time and how void of moral seriousness are the Catholic dissidents of the 1970s.

Montesquieu and the Logic of Liberty. Paul A. Rahe, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. xxv + 369 pp. Cloth, \$45.00.

*Reviewed by Jude P. Dougherty,
The Catholic University of America*

It is a truism that our grasp of the present depends greatly on how we understand the past, and, of course, how resolved we are not to repeat its mistakes. Rahe's scholarship has convinced him that we have much to learn about the present by revisiting Montesquieu, especially his celebrated work, *The Spirit of the Laws*.

Montesquieu wrote more than 250 years ago, but Rahe makes the case that his work remains timely, given the strange melancholy, one may say, an unnerving dissatisfaction that characterizes the political culture of our day. Political correctness Rahe believes has resulted in a misreading of the status quo, a willful blindness that shields us from acknowledging the current political drifts that threaten the foundations of the liberty that we have heretofore taken for granted. Those cultural and political conditions of liberty were ably addressed by Montesquieu in a number of time-transcending works. His *Spirit of the Laws* (1748) is his most widely read book, but in the eighteenth century every major work that Montesquieu ushered into print found a widespread audience. Rahe tells us that by 1800, Montesquieu's *Parisian Letters*, first printed in 1721, had been published in 93 editions. His *Considerations on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and their Decline* (1734) appeared in 62 editions by the end of that century and had been translated into seven languages. *The Spirit of the Laws* underwent 128 editions in eight languages. Montesquieu's great work became the political bible of learned men and would-be-statesmen everywhere in Europe and beyond. In Britain it shaped the thinking of Edmund Burke, Edward Gibbon, William Blackstone, and Adam Smith, and in America

its influence can be detected in the *Federalists*, particularly in the thought of Madison and Hamilton.

"If then we wish to understand wither we are tending," Rahe suggests, "we would be well advised to reacquaint ourselves with the forgotten form of political science and to read with care Montesquieu and then those such as Rousseau and Tocqueville, who clearly followed his lead and expounded in crucial regards upon what he had to say."

Montesquieu was pessimistic about the future of parliamentary democracy as he found it in the England of his day. He wrote, "Just as all human things come to an end, so the state of which we speak will lose its liberty; it will perish. Rome, Lacedaemon and Carthage have in fact perished. The state will perish when the legislative be more corrupt than the executive power." Montesquieu feared the elimination of intermediate powers within the state. "Abolish in a monarchy," he wrote, "the prerogatives of the lords, the clergy, the nobility and the towns (as Parliament did in England) and you will soon have a popular state — or, indeed, a state despotic." A populist government, particularly if it falls into the hands of the lower orders is likely to be more tyrannical than any monarchy. Absent virtue in the people, such a government will make the public treasury their "object" and distribute the public money to themselves.

Rahe is sparing in explicitly relating his text to the present although he intends his reader to do so. As one reads *Montesquieu and the Logic of Liberty* the implied lessons are many. It is easy to find in the political and financial sectors of the present a parallel to Montesquieu's account of aristocratic corruption. "When the ruling families no longer observe the laws, the republic may continue to exist with regard to and among the nobles, but it will be despotic with regard to the governed."

This volume is not Rahe's first excursion into the past to understand the present. It follows upon his *Republics Ancient and Modern: Classical Republicanism and the American Revolution* (1992) and his *Against Throne and Altar: Machiavelli and Political Theory under the English Republic* (2008). With this and its companion volume, *Soft Despotism, Democra-*

cy's Drift, also published this year by Yale University Press, Rahe has endeavored, in his words, "to flesh out in the light of the ruminations of Montesquieu and his most important heirs, a political science and an account of the political psychology of liberal democratic man sufficient to enable us to recognize the plight that we are now in so that we can come to grips with the peculiar maladies that give rise to the present discontent." No one who reads this and his companion volume can deny that he has done so.

Answering the New Atheism: Dismantling Dawkins'[s] Case Against God. Scott Hahn and Benjamin Wiker, Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2008. pp.vii+151. Paperback, \$12.95.

Reviewed by Marie I. George, Professor of Philosophy, St. John's University, NY.

Theologians Hahn and Wiker¹ are certainly to be commended for writing a book with the goal of helping those who may be vulnerable to Richard Dawkins's pro-atheism rhetoric. The two often do a fine job of exposing the deficiencies of Dawkins's arguments. However, their book suffers from a lack of order, and a considerable number of philosophical errors.

In chapter 1, "Dawkins'[s] God, Chance," the authors call Dawkins on his absurd claim that anything is possible, even a cow jumping over the moon or a statue waving its hand. They point out that Dawkins takes this tack in order to avoid acknowledging that there are miracles--according to Dawkins these are simply very, very unlikely natural events. They also point out the deficiency of Dawkins's argument for life being widespread in the universe: Dawkins *assumes* that the possibility of getting the spontaneous assembly of DNA is one in a billion, next asserts that there are a billion billion planets suitable to life, and then concludes that there must be a billion planets that contain life. He offers no evidence that DNA can spontaneously arise even once by chance, much less for the odds of its doing so being one in a billion.

What is less satisfactory about chapter 1 is the discussion regarding probable arguments for God's existence. I think Hahn and Wiker are saying that while one can give a probable argument for a necessary truth, one can't give odds for its being true. If this is their point, it could have been made more simply; for example, it is a necessary truth that the angles of a triangle equal two right angles. One could make a probable argument that this is so by measuring the angles of a couple of drawn triangles with a protractor, taking an average, and then picking the whole number closest to the average. One couldn't say though, "what are the odds that the angles of the triangle are equal to two rights?"

If one defines faith as accepting something as true in the absence of evidence, then Hahn and Wiker are correct to point out that Dawkins is inconsistent in both saying that he does not think God's non-existence can be absolutely proven, and that he does not have faith in God's non-existence. They should have acknowledged, though, that faith which comes from divine inspiration is qualitatively different from faith which comes from argumentation that falls short of being absolutely conclusive. Hahn and Wiker also should have said a lot more than they do on the question of whether or not the non-existence of something can be proven. The argument from evil in the world, for example, attempts to establish the non-existence of a personal God who cares about humans.

Yet another problem with chapter 1 is Hahn's and Wiker's assertion that Aristotle said that chance is not really a cause because it is not really a thing. Aristotle explicitly says in the *Physics* (196b14): "It is clear that chance is something." Moreover, Aristotle says that chance is a *per accidens* cause (granted its existence depends on the prior existence of nature and intelligence). I can walk to the library with the intention of meeting up with a friend there, or I can walk to the library intending solely to check out a book, and by chance meet a friend there. The cause of my meeting the friend in each case is plainly not the same.

Chapter two is also a mixed bag: some good points are scored against

Dawkins, but then other statements that are made are wrong or questionable. The authors speak as if a scientific case could be made for the existence of an intelligent cause of nature. This claim seems similar to the Intelligent Design position that there are scientific ways of testing for whether the letters on a page are sheer gibberish or contain coded information. Still, it does not pertain to science to define either intelligence or design; the clarification of such general concepts pertains to philosophy. Adequate scientific tests for intelligence and design then are then not independent of such clarifications. (The importance of making this distinction is driven home by the tests done on the chimps who have been taught symbolic means of communication. The primatologists performing the tests often claim that chimps have human-like intelligence due to a failure to adequately address the philosophical question of what human intelligence is.) Hahn and Wiker make a similar mistake later on when they say that a proof is scientific when it rests on the very activity of science itself. Science investigates nature by formulating hypotheses and testing them by doing experiments; it belongs to philosophy to reflect upon the presuppositions implied in the pursuit of science.

Hahn and Wiker assert in chapter two that it is a fact that the universe had a beginning. The big bang is not a fact; it is a theory. Also, we have no way of knowing for sure if the big bang was not preceded by a big crunch in part of a never-ending cycle, although most physicists maintain that the universe could not undergo an infinite number of oscillations due to entropy. Our authors are right, though, to call Dawkins on begging the question as to the origin of life. Dawkins assumes that it originated by chance "because we are here." They also correctly point out the error Dawkins makes in presenting the design hypothesis as an alternative to the anthropic hypothesis. Indeed, the question people ordinary ask is whether the anthropic principle is best explained by an intelligent designer, a question which would be nonsensical if the anthropic principle and an intelligence behind nature were mutually exclusive. But then Hahn and Wiker do a superficial job of treating multi-verse

theories. While they rightly point out that direct evidence of such theories is in principle unobtainable, they fail to actually set out what the physicists who promote them say in their defense. While Hahn and Wiker may well be right that the proponents of multi-verse promote this view out of a desire to eliminate the need to appeal to an intelligence behind nature, they should have provided evidence of such in these physicists' writings. None of the physicists in question are even named. Later in the chapter our authors make a good point in regard to Dawkins's claim that climbing any mountain can be done so long as it is done gradually over a long period of time. The only way one could tell whether the mountain to the human brain could be scaled in a given amount of time was if one knew the rate of evolution and how high a mountain the human brain represented.

Chapter 3 opens with Hahn and Wiker stating Dawkins's basic argument, namely, that prior to Darwin it was reasonable to think that a supernatural intelligence was responsible for the design in organisms, but after Darwin more and more evidence has been discovered indicating that apparent design could be reduced to the blind workings of nature. Christian philosophers have certainly offered responses to this claim. However, Hahn and Wiker, instead of directly addressing this argument as they should have, pursue a different question, namely, what the experiment in which people prayed for sick individuals did or did not show. Among other valid points they make, they note that insofar as Dawkins is a materialist, he is unable to take into account what effect prayer might have on the spiritual good of the patient. They then bring in Christ as a response to the problem of evil. (This raises the interesting question of whether a theodicy based on reason alone is possible.) Later in the chapter, our authors make the misguided claim: "Since we see that everything in nature is contingent (St. Thomas's third proof), then something non-contingent will ultimately have to ground the contingent,' is the same kind of reasoning as, 'Since the universe is expanding, then it must have arisen from an infinitely dense point.'" (69). First, an actu-

ally infinite physical being is something Aquinas rejects as being impossible. Secondly, the big bang is a *theory* used to explain why the universe appears to those who make scientific observations and calculations to be presently expanding. Thirdly, reasoning from the expanding universe to the singularity it expanded from is to reason from one contingent being to another contingent being; thus it is not at all the same kind of reasoning as Aquinas's third way which argues from contingent beings to a necessary being.

Hahn and Wiker open chapter four with this argument: science seeks truth, but if one was determined to think what one thinks by the motion of the molecules in one's brain (or fill in here some other materialist explanation), there would be no way of knowing that what one thinks corresponds to the way things really are. Someone could insist that there must be some correspondence; otherwise we wouldn't survive. But then as Hahn and Wiker point out, this explanation does not seem applicable to our ability to know truths that have no survival value. Our authors, however, do not consider whether this ability is the by-product of an ability to know that does have survival value. Undoubtedly, advances in medicine are one of the main reasons why so many humans survive today who in ages past would have died at a much younger age. The best practical solutions, however, are not merely pragmatic, but are based on a real understanding of the things in question, an understanding that could be pursued independent of any interest in application. Take the case of stomach ulcers. At first they were treated by medications that only addressed the symptoms. It was only when fundamental research discovered the main cause of stomach ulcers (the bacterium, *H. pylori*), that a cure for the typical ulcer was developed. What reason is there to think that an intellect powerful enough to extend the human life span forty or more years, oftentimes by getting at the causes operative in a healthy body, would not be capable of understanding causes of other things, even when this knowledge was devoid of practical use? (I may be playing the devil's advocate here.)

In Chapter 5 our authors make

some good points in regard to what Dawkins in principle should hold regarding morality, but they certainly could have marshaled their arguments in a more orderly way. The *first thing* they should have pointed out is that "morality" has no meaning if humans are just one animal species among others (they do note it, but only towards the end of the following chapter). There would be squirrel behavior and penguin behavior and human behavior, but there would be no justification for calling any behavior moral. What makes some human behavior moral is that it proceeds from free choice. If a person is insane and hits you, or if a person bangs into you because someone has shoved him, in neither case has that person committed a moral act. Hahn and Wiker are curiously silent about free will, yet morality cannot be defined without reference to free will.

Dawkins himself is conveniently silent about free will. In a debate with David Quinn on the Ryan Tubridy Show, he said: "I'm not interested in free will." With good reason. If he looked more closely at the topic, as does his fellow atheist William Provine, he would see that his materialism entails the denial of free will. Our actions would be determined by natural causes such as genes and environmental factors, just as are the actions of any other animal. Atheist Michael Ruse sees this, and goes on to logically conclude that there is no such thing as morality; morality is only an illusion put in place by natural selection to further the propagation of genes. No wonder Dawkins steers away from the topic. However, Hahn and Wiker are to be faulted for letting him get away with it.

Hahn and Wiker also fuel a common confusion, namely, that espousing the biological theory that the diverse species have originated over time because of random variation and natural selection logically commits one to espousing eugenics. Allowing people with genes for certain genetic diseases to have children rather than preventing this by, e.g., not providing them adequate health care, means that more people with bad health will be born. This is a simple fact. Does acknowledging this fact determine whether one ought or ought not to care for the people in question? Of course

it doesn't. The "ought" question is a moral question. Questions concerning which features are selected against when left untreated are factual questions pertaining to biology.

At the end of chapter 5, Hahn and Wiker make no attempt to found morality on something known to all by reason. This leaves one wondering whether they think this is a viable option. They look to the Christian belief that we are fundamentally different from other animals insofar as we are made in the image of God to provide a foundation for morals. However, reason tells us that we are different from other animals, and this would seem to suffice as a foundation for morality. Aristotle certainly thought so; none of his treatises on ethics makes mention of our being created in God's image. In the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Bk III, chaps. 1-2), he distinguishes a merely voluntary action (e.g., a dog, un-coerced, walks to the bowl it knows its food is in) from a chosen action which requires deliberation, i.e., a rational assessment of what ought to be done (e.g., a human takes some broccoli, while leaving some for others as a result of understanding the importance of caring for one's health and of not being selfish). Hahn and Wiker leave the impression that a person relying on reason alone could never know moral truths such as that marriage is an exclusive relationship between one man and one woman until death or that cannibalism is morally wrong. And once again, while Hahn and Wiker are correct that one cannot derive anything close to Christian morality from Dawkins's position, it is because there would be no morality if what Dawkins holds was true.

I'm going to leave off here. Overall the book follows the same pattern; flawed philosophical analyses, omissions of important philosophical issues, and shoddy scholarship mixed together with some very good points. When Dawkins draws outlandish conclusions, Hahn and Wiker are generally quick to expose the flaws in his reasoning. When it comes to many of the more subtle philosophical issues that are raised, the two are plainly out of their waters; and it was unrealistic of them to think that they could adequately treat such issues in a mere 151 pages. While

the instances where Hahn and Wiker fail to show that Dawkins is wrong do *not* establish that Dawkins is right, nonetheless those who are favorable to Dawkins may end up scoring Hahn's and Wiker's faulty arguments as points in Dawkins's favor. I thus register my doubts as to how helpful *Answering the New Atheism* would be to a student (or other person) whose faith has been shaken by Dawkins's arguments.

A book I would recommend to such people is *Oracles of Science: Celebrity Scientists versus God and Religion* (Oxford University Press, 2007). It was written by two philosophers of science, Karl Giberson and the late Fr. Mariano Artigas. One of the six main chapters of the book is devoted to Dawkins's views. While Giberson and Artigas's coverage of the flaws in Dawkins's views is less extensive than Hahn's and Wiker's, the two have a far better command of the philosophical issues involved. *Oracles of Science* also exposes the deficiencies in the thought of five other atheist (or agnostic) big name scientists, including Stephen Hawking and E. O. Wilson. Given that these scientists are (or have been) highly vocal on the topic of religion, it is likely that impressionable students may also have been influenced by them as well, and not just by Dawkins—which is another reason to recommend *Oracles of Science* over *Answering the New Atheism*.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Benjamin Wiker holds a Ph.D. in Theological Ethics from Vanderbilt University. He has taught at a number of institutions of higher learning, although I was not able to find out in what department. He was a member of the Discovery Institute and is the author of a number of works on science and religion.

Spirit and Life: Essays on Interpreting the Bible in Ordinary Time. Scott Hahn, Steubenville, Ohio: Emmaus Road, 2009.

Reviewed by Janet P. Benestad, Secretary for Faith Formation and Evangelization, Archdiocese of Boston.

A Catholic scripture scholar I know tells the following story. A cloistered nun said to her:

"You are so lucky. You get to study the Bible all day," to which my friend replied, "No, Sister, you are the lucky one. You get to pray it all day."

Similarly, Scott Hahn tells a story about his own doctoral defense. He thought he had found a new insight into Matthew's account of Jesus giving Peter the keys of the kingdom in an obscure passage from Isaiah 22 about the "key of the house of David." Hahn insisted that the two passages taken together mean that Jesus represents the new Davidic kingdom. At Mass one day Hahn, a new Catholic, was surprised to find them joined as readings. Hahn offers this story to support his thesis that the only way to read scripture authoritatively is to read it in the context of the liturgy or, as he likes to say, from the heart of the Church.

Spirit and Life: Essays on Interpreting the Bible in Ordinary Time is a collection of previously published essays and a talk gathered into one book for the explicit purpose of helping the next generation learn how to read the Bible. It begins with three essays which analyze Pope Benedict XVI's contributions to the study of the relationship between Scripture and liturgy. The pope argues that early Christians received Scripture primarily in two ways: by hearing the Word proclaimed at liturgy and by being members of the body of Christ assembled to receive the Eucharist. Further, the study of Scripture cannot be done in the absence of an attitude of prayer because to know Jesus is to see Him at prayer. Christology, therefore, is not an ordinary discipline but one which requires theology of the saints as well as theology of the schools. Finally, God's revelation of himself as Word requires the response of the Church gathered in worship and, so, an individual confession of the Creed is nothing less than an acknowledgement of the "name of Jesus Christ, of the content of the Old and New Testaments and of Christ's divinity."

Hahn addresses some questions that plague contemporary Scripture study and offers responses from the Pope's writings. First, he considers the proposition that Scripture can be read by believers and non-believers alike and both interpretations be valid; next, that Scripture is subject to the same rules of interpretation as any other text; and,

finally, that the Jesus of history would not necessarily support the dogmas of the Church. In response, says Hahn, Pope Benedict says that “Scripture is a symphony” and in its fullness it “includes everything which contributes toward the holiness of life and increase of faith;” second, that the Scripture, because it is the Word of God “. . . has the power to accomplish the very things that it signifies and, as such, is no merely human text;” and, third, that calling Jesus “Son of God, One in being with the Father,” is to describe the historical Jesus.

Just these first three essays would have made a wonderful little book on how to read Scripture. The additional essays serve to round out Hahn’s thesis. For example, “Scripture’s Liturgical Sense,” shows the effect on the average Catholic of reading *Genesis* and *Exodus* within the context of liturgy. For example, the creation story shows God as having fashioned a cosmic and kingly Temple where He and man might meet. Adam’s sin, then, is not just an act of disobedience, but a failure to offer himself in sacrifice and praise to God, that is, a failure to engage in an act of worship in the temple God prepared. Hearing this story at Mass helps the ordinary believer to relate better to the consequences of Adam’s sin, says Hahn. For example, what does it say to those who attend Mass only intermittently, or to those who try to do faith-sharing outside the tradition?

The essay entitled “The Cathedral: Where Heaven and Earth Meet” sup-

ports the authority of local bishops by borrowing from a theme made popular by Hahn, namely that liturgy is the place where heaven comes to earth. When the bishop says Mass, he “presides in the place of God” and, thus, shares in His authority, a teaching that has important ecclesial implications. “Matthew: Gospel of Fulfillment” illustrates that the lectionary is designed to demonstrate the fulfillment of the Old Testament in the New. The readings from Matthew help us realize that God created us, freed us, died for us and, thereby, gave us the means to continue that story in our own reading of Scripture and participation in the liturgy. The essay on “The Times of the Signs: Toward a Biblical Approach to ‘Pentecostal’ Phenomena” demonstrates that there are times in the history of God’s people when the Holy Spirit manifests Himself in extraordinary ways, such as through the gifts of tongues and healing. This has obvious implications for understanding current Pentecostal movements in the Church. “Christ in Majesty, Scary Jesus,” is a delightful yet profound little piece on human images of God that reveals our modern tendency to prefer depictions of God as gentle Lamb or suffering servant rather than images of God as judge. The collection concludes with a talk that I had the pleasure of hearing Hahn deliver at an education conference in Pittsburgh in which he confronted catechists on some serious issues of formation. He advanced the idea that teachers of religion need to be disciples

first before becoming apostles. We need to receive the Word, “meditate on it deeply, weave it into our prayer and into our actions, and finally into our teaching. . .” said Hahn. “We need to discipline ourselves to study with constancy before we can teach effectively. . . We must not approach the mysteries of faith as mere fodder for lesson plans. We need to let the truth sanctify us. God wants to make us saints more than He wants to use us to make others saints.” Anyone who knows the problems with the teaching of Scripture in typical parish and school religion classes can appreciate the spiritual and pedagogical benefit of Hahn’s advice.

Quoting from *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* by the Pontifical Biblical Commission (1993), Hahn says, “In principle, the liturgy, and especially the sacramental liturgy, the high point of which is the Eucharistic celebration, brings about the most perfect actualization of the biblical texts . . . Christ is then ‘present in his word, because it is he himself who speaks when Sacred Scripture is read in the Church’ . . . Written text thus becomes living word” (ix). Hahn offers this last line as a motto for this book, which he admits to using very successfully in teaching his own courses on Scripture. Would that this motto might become a watchword for those who study and teach the Scripture in parish programs, Catholic schools and institutions of higher learning. ✠

Remarks after the Conferral of the Cardinal O'Boyle Award

We are truly grateful and humbled to receive this award from such a distinguished group as the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars. Cardinal O'Boyle remains a witness and example to us of fidelity to Truth, known for his ardent defense of *Humanae Vitae* at a time when within the Church and without, the tide was turning another way. While last year's many commemorations of the 40th anniversary of *Humanae Vitae* indicate a greater acceptance of this magisterial teaching, proposing a compelling explanation of God's Plan for human sexuality, marriage, and the family remains a challenge for Catholic leaders at the University and in public life. This responsibility for contributing to the intellectual foundations of cultural renewal grows more urgent as our society poses increasing threats to the dignity of human life.

As Msgr. William Smith, our beloved and greatly missed teacher, would repeat to us over and over again, "the Culture of Death is an idea before it is a deed." Each of you have the challenge and the joy of leading young men and women engaged in the exploration of ideas, to discover for themselves that the person of Jesus Christ and the teaching of His Church provide the most compelling, true, and satisfying answers to the deepest questions and desires of their hearts.

Much of the apostolic work that our sisters engage in is an effort to reflect back to others their own innate goodness, dignity and beauty and to help heal the wounds left by sin and a betrayal of trust and love.

We proclaim: every human being is an unrepeatable reflection of God, created from love and for love. Unfortunately, many people today after having experienced the pain of divorce, infidelity, and abortion have lost hope in the possibility of authentic love.

Pope Benedict gives the antidote to this growing cloud of hopelessness, writing in *Deus Caritas Est*, "Love is the light—and in the end the only light that can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working. **Love is possible**, and we are able to practice it because we are created in the image of God. To experience love and in this way to cause the light of God to enter into this world—this is the invitation I would like to extend to you."

In our apostolic work serving pregnant women in need, with couples trying to find their bearings after receiving adverse prenatal diagnoses, and with women and men seeking reconciliation and healing after an abortion, we encounter many who have lost confidence in their own capacity to love. The great challenge and joy of our lives as followers of Jesus and especially as religious women is to bear witness that **love is possible**. Otherwise stated, sacrificial love—love that seeks the good of another before one's own, love that is a sincere and complete gift of self—is real and possible and is the path to lasting happiness and fulfillment.

In our convent in Manhattan, we invite pregnant women to live with us as our guests. Those who come have nowhere else to turn. Some are still considering abortion when they move in and they watch every move we make, constantly testing the authenticity of our lives and our concern for them. They hear the

morning bell call the sisters to prayer long before the sun has risen, they observe our simple common way of life and realize that we have nothing of what the world says will bring happiness, and yet they experience in the convent a joy, peace and freedom that they have never known before. In time they grow not only to trust in our love for them but also to begin to believe that they are lovable. They experience that we love them not because we are good but because they are so good and deserving of love. And in turn, they desire to love in truth. Their newly embraced maternity becomes a school of love in which they discover a new and vast reservoir of strength and goodness within themselves.

As they respond to the grace of their vocation to motherhood more often than not they simultaneously begin a new journey of faith. Actually, earlier today at a Mass in New York City, (quite appropriately at the very same time that Fr. Schall was delivering his lecture on eschatology) one of our former guests, after completing a year of RCIA, was baptized along with her baby, and went on to receive her first holy communion and the sacrament of confirmation. God's grace abounds! And we are blessed to be daily witnesses to its marvelous power to heal, purify, strengthen and restore.

Truly "Love is the light—and in the end the only light that can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working. **Love is possible...**"

Thank You.

Sister Mary Elizabeth
Sister of Life

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Marie George (FCS member & Professor of Philosophy, St. John’s University, NY) has published “Stewardship of Creation: What Catholics Should Know about Church Teaching on the Environment”, St. Catherine’s Press, (2009). Suitable for parish discussion groups. Some of the points the book addresses include: environmental issues are life issues; Benedict XVI’s position on “human ecology” (the irony of people chemically sterilizing themselves while decrying the effects of herbicides on frog reproduction); and the Church’s stalwart defense of the

value of the human person against the environmentalists who think the planet would be better off with fewer people on it.

Please contact Alice Osberger at Osberger.1@nd.edu if you would like a copy of her book to review in the FCS Quarterly.”

FCS Speakers Fund

A hearty thanks to all who have contributed to the fund that we have established for the support of travel and lodging expenses incurred by some of the speakers at our annual conventions.

In particular, let me acknowledge the following for their gifts of \$500 and more to this fund:

Prof. Carol Abromaitis
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Rev. John L. Kelly
Mr. William L. Saunders, Jr., Esq.
+ Msgr. William Smith

Dean Gladys Sweeney
Msgr. Stuart Swetland
Bishop Thomas Tobin

I am happy to report that we have now met the \$10,000 anonymous challenge grant that we received a couple of years ago. This means that the Fellowship has now been given a matching amount and has doubled the total of the contributions that we raised during this campaign. We would like to continue to develop this fund, so that we will be able to provide even more of the support needed for the speakers whom we want to have at our conventions. Please consider making a gift. In addition to donations for this fund, we would be

happy to receive suggestions about whom we might approach for a contribution.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank all of those who have so generously and so repeatedly supported our annual conventions by special gifts, and especially Msgr. Daniel Hamilton and the Saint John Fisher Fund, the Ave Maria School of Law, and the Franciscan University of Steubenville. We are most grateful to all our donors.

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Alessandro Manzoni's *The Betrothed*

The *Betrothed* (*I Promessi Sposi* in Italian), a novel set in the seventeenth century around Milan, is, in my judgment, one of the finest novels ever written. Published in 1827 and then revised in 1842, it has become required reading for every student in Italy and helped establish the Italian spoken in Florence as the national language, the establishment of which was important for the eventual unification of Italy. Manzoni is not only a great story teller, but also a man whom many regard as wise. It seems as though every major Italian writer and critic has commented upon the novel—Croce, Moravia and De Sanctis, to name a few.

Manzoni's novel is, patriotic, democratic and religious. His patriotism is visible in the way he deplores the occupation of Italian regions by the Spaniards, which is a veiled criticism of the Austrian rule in the nineteenth century. His democratic leanings shine though in his peasant protagonists, Lucia Mondella and Renzo Tramaligno. Through these characters and their struggles Manzoni demonstrates his solidarity with the lives of the peasants, the "little people." He recognizes the dignity of every single person and holds the gentry or upper classes responsible for the well-being of the peasants. In the novel he shows how the moral lapses of some clergy, the bad leadership and moral corruption of the rulers and the bad behavior of the braves and their mafioso bosses all make the life of the peasants very hard and expose them to temptations that many cannot resist. When the local parish priest, Don Abbondio, refuses to marry Renzo and Lucia in response to a threat from Don Rodrigo, a corrupt noble, Renzo is tempted to commit sin by resorting to violence. Manzoni's comment on Renzo's temptation illustrates the author's judgment on Don Rodrigo's threat. "Bullies, oppressors and all those who do wrong to others are guilty not only of the evil they commit, but also of the corruption they bring into the souls of their victims."

Manzoni's religious inspiration is apparent when he demonstrates his marvelous understanding of the heights of Christianity in his presentation of Cardinal Federigo Borromeo, the saintly bishop of Milan and Father Cristoforo, the Capuchin convert, and Lucia, the young peasant girl. Manzoni says of Cardinal Borromeo: "He was one of those few men — rare in any age — who devote the resources of an exceptional intellect, of vast wealth, and of a privileged position in society in an unbroken effort

to seek out and practice the means of making the world a better place."¹ As a young boy Borromeo was able to accept the constant teaching of his religious tradition on humility, the vanity of pleasure and the injustices of pride, even though the diametrically opposed teachings were often professed and lived by the very people who taught the authentic Christian doctrine. He came to believe that everyone has a duty to perform so that life is not "a treadmill for the majority and unending holidays for the few."² He had no interest in having a superior position so that he might enjoy superiority over others. He was content to do his duty as a simple priest and only accepted to become Archbishop of Milan "at the express command of the Pope."³

While archbishop, Borromeo was frugal in the use of resources for himself, but very generous toward others. He used his great personal wealth both to help the poor and to support learning. He did the latter on a grand scale by establishing the Ambrosian Library and paying a salary to nine scholars to work in theology, history, literature and oriental languages. Manzoni reports that Borromeo continued his patronage of the library and scholars despite hearing criticism. When a plague was ravaging Milan, Cardinal Borromeo resisted pressure to leave the city, but stayed on, motivating his priests to offer their lives in the care of the sick.

Cardinal Borromeo's conversation with Don Abbondio shows pastoral care and an appreciation for the possibility and obligation of overcoming moral weakness. As Abbondio's bishop, Borromeo reproaches him for failing to carry out his priestly duty to marry Renzo and Lucia, but then he helps the parish priest to overcome his fear of threats, to appreciate the sufferings of the betrothed and to grow in love for them. The cardinal tells the parish priest that he should have prepared himself for his priestly duties by asking God for the requisite courage. This exhortation reminded me of Augustine's reflection on the accountability of the soul in his *On the Free Choice of the Will*: "It must be held to account for what it has not tried to know, and for what it has not taken proper care in preparing itself to perform rightly."⁴ Don Abbondio clearly did not prepare himself to carry out the duties of the priesthood. In fact, he never tried to understand the meaning of being a priest.

A remarkable trait possessed by Cardinal Borromeo was his independence from the opinions of others.

After describing an unusual act of kindness by Borromeo, Manzoni writes, “we would like to see more examples of a virtue so free from influence by the reigning opinions of the day — for every period has its own...”⁵ Despite criticism Borromeo had given a young girl a suitable dowry so that she would not be forced into a nunnery by her father.

Manzoni makes clear that Borromeo’s virtues were quite extraordinary, even for a good bishop. Despite the pressures of the culture and corruption within the Church, Borromeo was able to avoid unwise accommodation to the spirit of the age. He lived out, in truly remarkable fashion, the Biblical teaching that all men and women should find ways to live for the common good. “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received” (I Peter 4:10). Borromeo’s use of his gifts contributed not only to the good of the church, but also to the common good of the region surrounding Milan. He set a tone that raised people to a higher level of existence.

There is so much more that must be said to introduce this fascinating novel, but that must be for another time. Let me conclude with the observation of an Italian literary critic who nicely captures what happens to a society, according to Manzoni, when individuals in positions of influence act perversely. “The perverse man influences and ruins the whole ambience that surrounds him. The ambience, in turn drags humanity to faults and infinite errors, holding it fast in injustice and continually destroying every will and every impulse to virtue.” This, of course, is the kind of insight that one finds in the political philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. ✘

J. Brian Benestad, *Editor*

1. *The Betrothed* (Penguin), 401
2. *The Betrothed*, 401
3. *The Betrothed*, 401
4. St. Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, Book III, no. 218
5. *The Betrothed*, 401



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