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EX CATHEDRA

- The Resistance Speech of Archbishop Charles Chaput J. Brian Benestad

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Fifty Years Since Vatican II

by Rev. Joseph W. Koterski, S. J.
President, Fellowship of Catholic Scholars

Religion always plays a principal role in forming and reforming cultures. In classics like *Religion and Culture* and *Progress and Religion* Christopher Dawson, the first chair of Roman Catholic Studies at Harvard, supported this thesis by numerous examples from across the broad sweep of human history. In conscious opposition to the trend popular in sociology and anthropology that reduces religion to some epiphenomenal result of culture, Dawson saw the enormous power of religion to shape the ways in which people organize their lives and fashion their ideas.

Culture, in the sense intended here, does not just mean high culture—the art and ideas that are typical of a society—but the whole way of life that flows from beliefs and ways of giving worship, as well as from living arrangements and basic values. Sometimes these beliefs and practices are made explicit in so many words, but often they are simply accepted as part of the unstated background assumptions that are taken for granted and serve as the foundation for stability and activity in a given culture.

As we approach the fiftieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, we do well to ponder Dawson's thesis for Catholic culture today. Vatican II opened on October 11, 1962 after three years of preparatory work. Pope John XXIII's surprise convocation of a council came less than three months after his election. By the time the Council finished in 1965, changes of various sorts had been introduced into Catholic culture. The ways in which Catholics lived and worshiped had changed profoundly. But as in any significant cultural change, it has taken several generations to sift the good from the bad and to differentiate passing fads from abiding trends. As an association of Catholic scholars who are blessed to live at a critical distance from these events, we would do well to commit ourselves to reflection on this question in the next few years.

It is not enough to reflect on whether we like or dislike the changes that have occurred. It is as important to determine what kind of changes these were as we

look ahead. Whether rejoicing or lamenting, some see the Council to have introduced practically a new form of religion by virtue of the radical departures from what went before. Others, and especially the steady hands at the tiller of Peter's barque, stress the profound continuity of the Church before and after the Council. They are not naively optimistic about every trend, but they do not take even the most considerable changes to have produced a new religion. Their confidence that the Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church grounds their appreciation of the many ways in which the Church has been refreshed and renewed and challenged. But with a clarity that comes only from thinking with the Church, they can also see certain conciliar initiatives that still need to come to fruition, and certain wild growths that need to be pruned.

In the neuralgic realm of liturgy, for instance, some bitterly resent the recent decisions by Pope Benedict XVI about the Extraordinary Form of Blessed John XXIII as an unconscionable throwback to pre-conciliar forms of worship. Others see Pope Benedict's overture as too little and too late, and many of those who withdrew from the Church a generation ago and more still refuse to be reconciled. Ironically, both these views see the new form of worship to be a case of radical discontinuity between the old religion and the new religion, despite their diametrically opposed judgment about which one is right and proper. But thinking with the Church, for instance, along the lines of Benedict's pre-papal book *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, allows us to welcome not only this opportunity but also the liturgical restorations of the *Novus Ordo* that will be introduced beginning with the First Sunday of Advent in 2011.

On questions of morality something similar seems to be the case. Diametrically opposed conclusions have been drawn by those who have ironically made the same judgment about the radical discontinuity of pre- and post-Vatican II religion. Some of these individuals, for instance, claim that there was a fundamental break from the outmoded categories of natural law thinking typical of the pre-conciliar period, and they await the day when the full implications of the new orthodoxy will be revealed, especially in the acceptance of homosexuality. Often correlated with this stance on morality is a radical vision of ecclesiology in which hierarchical models of church governance are inevitably going to be replaced with a thoroughly democratic version of decision-making. For others, however, the sense of the radical discontinuity between pre- and post-conciliar religion has inclined them to see the ongoing develop-

ments in Catholic social teaching by Pope John Paul II and now Benedict XVI as pure naïveté, if not some secret plot to provide ecclesial authority for a reprehensible liberal agenda in the political order.

We will stand closer to the truth on questions of morality as on questions of liturgy if we bear in mind the continuity of the Church before, during, and after the Second Vatican Council.

Perhaps it was the response to the 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae* that opened the floodgates to dissent and began the repudiation of natural law analysis in favor of consequentialism and proportionalism. Yet I cannot help but thinking that sociologically it was the perception that when even the most sacred things like the liturgy could be radically changed, then so could anything else. For some with a "progressive" mindset this shift meant a new-found freedom that increasingly became an uncritical sort of license. In the liturgy it seemed to mean that we should do whatever people like and that the experts should feel free to experiment and set new trends. In sexual morality it meant that one could ignore Catholic strictures on contraception, re-marriage after divorce, homosexuality, and that it is now permissible to argue for acceptance of such practices as gay marriage, *in vitro* fertilization, and embryonic stem-cell research.

The common root of the rationalization involved in these patterns of thinking may be the conviction that they are operating within what is really a new religion rather than one that has been refreshed and renewed. If the change had really been as substantial as that, there would be no reason to be concerned about contradicting what had before been solemnly proclaimed. Instead of asking "how has the Holy Spirit guided the Church," the standard for judgment would become "what makes sense to me" or "what we find reasonable." But to mistake all change for such substantial change would be to miss the kind of change that is genuine and healthy organic development in the supernatural organism that is the Church—a Church that lives and grows by the grace of God.

My own sense in these and comparable matters is that *in medio virtus stat*, and that our recent popes have repeatedly urged the continuity of the Church through and after the Second Vatican Council, precisely to allow the Catholic religion, in all of its truth and beauty, to be what reforms Catholic culture in the most authentic sense of reform. We are already starting to see a number of books that address this issue from a modernist viewpoint that risks distorting the historical picture, including the five-volume series entitled *History of Vatican II*,

edited by Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak et al. (Orbis, 1996-) and John W. O'Malley's *What Happened at Vatican II?* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008). Among those who give a better picture by their stress on the continuity is Agostino Marchetto's *The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council: A Counterpoint for the History of the Council*, translated by Kenneth D. Whitehead, a distinguished member of the Fellowship (University of Scranton Press, 2010).

What is needed from Catholic scholars is careful study of these matters. As part of the plans announced in this *Quarterly* to have some special focus on one or another topic of contemporary concern in each issue, I would like to see serious study of the documents of the Second Vatican Council grace these pages. For all of us, the golden anniversary of the Council presents an opportunity to reflect on the documents, on their reception, and on the tasks that still await us for the authentic implementation. My hope that generous members of the Fellowship will offer their analysis of the texts as well as longitudinal studies about subsequent documents and resulting practices. To guide us, of course, we have the wisdom of the biblical injunc-

tion about testing a thing by its fruits. The pages of the *Quarterly* can provide a fine venue for circulating scholarly reflection on these matters.

I hope that those who respond to this invitation to submit scholarly essays on Vatican II and its heritage will consider the topic in all its amplitude. Whether it be essays that follow the lead of Pope Benedict XVI in seeing *Dei Verbum* and *Sacrosanctum Concilium* as of pre-eminent importance, or by examining the significance of Pope John Paul II's concentration on *Gaudium et spes* and *Dignitatis humanae* for the development of his theology of the body and his arguments for religious freedom in a secular age. I can also well envision articles on the proper translation of crucial texts and their correct theological interpretation, e.g., in the controversy over the meaning of "subsist" in the claim that the fullness of the universal Church subsists in the Catholic Church, or the range of interpretations permissible in the conciliar discussions of the meaning of revelation, inerrancy, and inspiration. Please feel free to consult with me or with Dr Brian Benestad, the editor of the *Quarterly*, about participation in this initiative. ✠

ARTICLES

Tolerance, or the Imposition of Truth?

Paper presented at the 11th Bi-annual German-American Colloquium held at Wildbad Kreuth, Bavaria, July 24-30, 2010, on the topic of "Tolerance, with Special Reference to Islam"

By Kenneth D. Whitehead

I.
A regular and recurring phenomenon in the history of mankind has been the conviction on the part of those who believe themselves to be in possession of truth, whether religious, philosophical, ideological, or otherwise, that they are obliged to impose this truth on others precisely because it *is* the truth, according to them. If they are in possession of some form of power, the attempt at imposition of their cherished truth becomes almost mandatory. This phenomenon is especially seen today in

the case of those Islamic believers who are prepared to resort to violence, terror, and the killing of the innocent in order to impose what they believe to be the truth. The same imperative to impose one's particular "truth," minus of course the direct resort to naked terror, is not absent in the practice of today's secular liberals when they hold power.

The phenomenon is not new. It was regularly seen, for example, in the destructive secular ideologies of the 20th century such as Communism, Fascism, or Nazism, which similarly believed themselves to be in possession of "truths" which they were obliged to impose, if necessary by force, on those considered to be "in error." Their error was that they did not accept the reigning ideology.

Unfortunately, the phenomenon in question has not been absent in the history of Christianity itself, where force has sometimes been sanctioned to insure

conformity to a favored version of Christianity, whether Catholicism, Orthodoxy, or Protestantism. Virtually from the time Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire, Church leaders sometimes proved willing to consent to the use of power to insure conformity to the truth—this was sometimes the case even when it *was* the truth that was being imposed, although it was by no means always the case that it was the real truth that was being imposed. Examples abound in history, from the measures of the ancient Christian emperors to those of the “most Catholic” kings of Europe or of the Protestant princes enforcing the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio*.

In more recent years, of course, rather than any Church attempting to impose anything, or any state attempting to do so for the sake of a religious confession, it has been more likely to be a secularizing modern state imposing its version of a new kind of “truth” or “orthodoxy,” namely, what the French aptly call *laïcité*, and what we in America call “secularism”—the modern world’s counter-religion. Today in America the imposition of this kind of “truth” is likely to come from a federal judge insisting that the principle of “the separation of Church and state” forbids, say, prayer in the schools, or demands the recognition of intimate same-sex relationships as “marriages.” In such cases, what supposedly has to be imposed follows from what is deemed to be the “truth,” even though today it is no longer a religious but a secular “truth.”

In enlightened democratic countries, however, probably a majority of people, along with public opinion generally, are today distinctly uncomfortable with the idea that what is considered to be the truth always and necessarily has to be imposed. Often no reasoned basis is offered for this typical modern discomfort. Nevertheless it is widely recognized today that trying to impose even a widely accepted and reigning “orthodoxy” on those who disagree with it does entail some negatives and disadvantages. Recognition of this has helped establish another idea thought to be important if not essential to the working of a democratic system today; indeed this particular idea has become one of the principal pillars of modern democracy: it is the idea of *tolerance*.

Tolerance, allowing the expression of various actions and opinions which do not conform to a single accepted standard, has come to be accepted as virtually the principal standard of any democratic system today. Toleration of differing and even opposing ideas and positions is held to be the necessary way or method of

preventing any idea or position in particular from having to be imposed. Tolerance is thought to be especially necessary where religious ideas or convictions are concerned, since religious truth claims are generally considered to be “absolute,” and hence would logically and presumably have to be imposed if tolerance were not the standard of practice.

Among the contemporary writers and thinkers who have noticed how tolerance now seems to constitute one of the main pillars of democracy is Pope Benedict XVI. As Cardinal Ratzinger, he noted how Pontius Pilate’s question—“What is Truth?”—cannot in democratic theory really admit of any particular or definitive answer, much less be imposed, because to affirm or establish one “truth” would be to eliminate and exclude thereby all other “truths.” In any case, as Cardinal Ratzinger pointed out, it is widely if not nearly universally believed today that, as Immanuel Kant supposedly proved long ago, we cannot in any case even know what “truth” is; we can only know “appearances.” Hence there is supposedly no longer any theoretical basis today for the democracy we affirm except tolerance.

Pope Benedict himself, of course, sees that this position entails not a few problems, including especially the problem of the “relativism” that he himself considers “the deepest problem of our time.”¹ We all recall how on the eve of his election to the chair of Peter he spoke about “the dictatorship of relativism.” Where relativism has come to be the rule, society ends up tolerating things that should *not* be tolerated. Where truth need not be recognized and affirmed, falsehood and error come to enjoy equal status with truth.

For many people today, however, none of this is seen as a problem. The late American political philosopher, John Rawls, probably spoke for many when he asked: “How is it possible that there exist over time a stable and just society of free and equal citizens profoundly divided by reasonable though incompatible religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines?”² For Rawls, as for most of our contemporaries today, this question can only be answered and resolved by—precisely, tolerance! Tolerance is what allows otherwise “profoundly divided” people to live together in peace and harmony. Society must therefore allow and put up with whatever anybody thinks or does, provided, the theory goes, only that the rights of others are not harmed or encroached upon.

It should be immediately evident, however, that merely to affirm, or even sincerely to try to practice, tolerance, says nothing at all about, nor does it set any

limits upon, what can be tolerated. This has always posed a problem for democracy: can *undemocratic* opinions and actions also be freely tolerated? Should they? On what principle can they be excluded if the basic standard is tolerance? Can *intolerance* be tolerated? Does the fact that, at least in theory, everything has to be tolerated not mean that some evils also have to be tolerated, and hence, in effect, are themselves going to be *imposed* on society?

The experience of contemporary democratic societies would suggest that this is the case. The reign of Rawlsian tolerance that has in effect been the standard for decades in the United States has resulted, for example, in a society where no accepted standard of personal morality any longer exists or is upheld by society. Evils flourish because the truth about them as evils is left aside while they are “tolerated.” Applying the Rawlsian theory of justice thus results in no little *injustice*, and in fact is an inexcusably questionable and simplistic notion.

Society *cannot* avoid or prescind from making and applying moral judgments, and, in fact, regularly does make and apply such judgments. Laws remain necessary and also generally must be enforced, although what society now judges to be legal or moral under the current system of tolerance exercised without reference to truth is as likely as not to reflect the kind of superficial moralism familiar from today’s preoccupations with such fashionable ideas as multiculturalism, diversity, political correctness, feminism, environmentalism, and the like. Some of today’s typical “moral” judgments themselves thus turn out to be evil, e.g., “helping” a woman solve her problem pregnancy by providing legalized abortion or “helping” a sterile couple to conceive by processes involving the destruction of many human embryos.

When truth is abandoned, even in the interests of tolerance or of avoiding clashes or conflicts, true morality almost necessarily also goes by the board. The typical experience of modern society shows that we *cannot* successfully lay aside truth in the interests of tolerance.

There should never have been any doubt about this. Classical moral thinking never dreamed of assigning to tolerance the central role that modern democratic thinking has assigned to it. Our colleague Dr. Jude Dougherty, emeritus Dean of the School of Philosophy of the Catholic University of America, has reminded us that neither Aristotle nor St. Thomas Aquinas ever really recognized tolerance as a primary virtue. Neither did the Stoics.³ Tolerance is a method and an expedient, and can only be usefully applied or practiced if other factors remain operative, including especially a clear

recognition of what truth is and what it entails. Leaving Pilate’s question unanswered does *not* suffice. In no way can tolerance serve effectively as a substitute for truth, as the Rawlsian regime under which we are currently living in the United States currently goes on mistakenly trying to do.

II.

Reliance on tolerance as a major prevailing social standard can often lead to unfortunate results. One current salient example of this—and while we could cite a number of other examples, in this paper we shall confine ourselves to only one—is provided by the tolerance that is so widely—and strangely—accorded to Islamic extremism in the West. Why *is* Islamic extremism so widely tolerated in spite of the harm it has done? Or rather, why is the damage and harm that is manifestly done by Islamic-motivated terrorism so often ascribed to other motives, motives that are supposedly non-religious? We are, after all, under attack from the proponents of that same Islamic extremism, yet American government and media figures typically vie with one another to exonerate Islam from any responsibility for terrorist acts committed by jihadists invoking Islam as their primary motive.

Islam as a religion, of course, is considered a prime candidate for tolerance because the very premise of modern thinking on the subject is that since religious doctrines tend to be “absolute,” a danger would be posed if tolerance were not the operative principle and rule with regard to them. But why does this same tolerance so often get extended also to the extremism and even the acts of terrorism that are openly claimed to be motivated by Islamic teachings?

One answer to this question may be that the modern secularist mind simply does not know how to deal with acts that are claimed to be religiously motivated. Another answer that may apply, however, is provided by the consideration that tolerance *must* always be accorded to Islam since it has come to be *required* in the case of Christianity. What secularists today fear much more than what they consider to be an alien and distant Islam (still considered to be such in spite of the current active aggression against us by some Muslims) are the “absolute” doctrines of Christianity, which at one time constituted the moral and legal underpinnings of the West. Nothing brings about more genuine shudders of horror on the part of present-day secular liberals than the fear that Christian moral standards that were

formerly the rule might again somehow be thought applicable to modern society. If tolerance ever ceased to be the general rule, Christian morality might then more easily manage a comeback. The attitude of secular liberals towards this possibility is seen in how quickly and almost automatically they equate the “Christian right” in America with the Muslim Taliban. On a typical secularist reading a Pat Robertson or a Jerry Falwell is seen as dangerous as an Osama bin Laden. Whereas there is no fear whatsoever on their part that the Taliban might ever actually come to rule here, the same thing is not true of Christianity; there is actually a very great and lively fear on the part of the secularists that Christianity just might again somehow come to influence or even dictate what is moral. *That* would be *intolerable* in the secularist view.

Tolerance must therefore remain the rule: “religions,” all religions must be “tolerated.” But then, of course, they most decidedly must *not* be allowed any influential or determinative role either. This, in fact, is how tolerance is really understood by today’s secular liberals: it is applied where they want to see it applied, but is conveniently laid aside and forgotten about where they do not want to see it applied.

And in contemporary secularist ideological thinking, tolerance must apparently even be extended to the religious justifications offered for terrorist acts—if tolerance is to remain the standard that in practice continues to forbid any public criticism on moral grounds or any effective way of going against the current relativist license in the West. Even undesirable things such as religiously motivated terrorism must thus be tolerated, since tolerance must remain the general rule!

Tolerance was originally adopted as a new prevailing standard in the secularized West, because, among other reasons, it was thought to be the answer to the religious conflicts and wars that had divided the West, especially following the Reformation. And to this day tolerance continues to be lauded and cited as the means by which an end was put to those particular religious wars and conflicts. It continues to be invoked to preclude any effective religious influence on society even though religion itself supposedly continues to be “tolerated.” Conveniently left aside and rarely mentioned, of course, are the more recent nationalistic and ideological conflicts and wars which disfigured and devastated the West to a much greater extent than the post-Reformation religious conflicts and wars ever did. Still, it is to prevent “religious wars” that tolerance must continue to be the rule.

Meanwhile, in more recent times, Islamic extremism, jihadism, has come upon the scene. Islam has always posed a special problem for the West, whether the formerly Christian West, or the contemporary secularist West. Islam, in fact, on its part probably represents Exhibit A, or one the most salient of all examples, of believing in the need to impose truth simply because it is truth. Islam, of course, was originally propagated by the sword. And while it is regularly and mostly correctly argued today that the vast majority of Muslims today are not violent, the fact also remains that so long as even a tiny minority of them take up arms while invoking Islamic principles, no responsible society or government can legitimately fail to act against that minority, whatever the consequences might be for their “peaceful” co-religionists. Moreover, the latter often do fail, and significantly so, to oppose or condemn with very much conviction their violent Muslim brethren.

We are currently faced with a situation where while most Muslims are not terrorists, most terrorists are Muslim, and meanwhile the great majority of Muslims do not disavow the terrorist acts carried out by their extremist co-religionists. In this situation, the idea that all “religions” must simply be “tolerated” *cannot* provide the rule.

The late Samuel P. Huntington of Harvard, among others, notably spoke of Islam’s “bloody borders,” and in his 1996 book, *The Clash of Civilizations*, noted that today “the overwhelming majority of fault-line conflicts...have taken place along the boundary that separates Muslims from non-Muslims...[Muslims] have been far more involved in intergroup violence than the people of any other civilization. The evidence is overwhelming.”⁴

Of course, until recently the historic conflict between Islam and the West had long been dormant, and for a long time most Muslim countries were in any case under the effective control of Western colonialist powers. Yet Islam was only dormant not dead. As the British Catholic author Hilaire Belloc presciently noted in a book published in 1939, Islam, in spite of its material weakness, “as a body of doctrine is flourishing still. ... Mohammedanism has survived and vigorously survived. Missionary effort has had no appreciable effect upon it. It converts pagan savages wholesale. It even attracts from time to time some European eccentric, who join its body. *But the Mohammedan never becomes a Catholic.* No fragment of Islam ever abandons its sacred book, its code of morals, its organized system of prayer, its simple doctrine...” (emphasis in the original).⁵

Because of its material weakness, however, the weapon of choice of those within Islam determined to carry on the battle against the West and everything that is not Islam, or not sufficiently Islam, as they understand it, has almost necessarily had to be—*terrorism*. As Samuel Huntington, again, pointed out, “terrorism, historically, is the weapon of the weak.”⁶

However that may be, as America learned on September 11, 2001, the results of terrorism can nevertheless be both devastating and far-reaching. The United States, along with other countries, has had to struggle to develop a means and a strategy to combat the terrorist or jihadist war that has been launched against us. It has raised novel questions not easily answerable within the terms of conventional military or legal doctrine.

While the United States has responded quite vigorously to the challenge—some would say rather *too* vigorously!—the fact remains that even while it conducts its “war against terror,” the country’s leaders, strangely and even incomprehensibly, exhibit an unwillingness to identify clearly and label the source of today’s terrorism for what it is—namely, as a product of jihadism, of Islamic-motivated extremism.

Following the 9/11 attacks by Muslim extremists on the twin towers of Manhattan and the Pentagon, the Bush Administration promptly launched what it designated as a “war on terror.” But the first thing to notice about this designation is how inexact and even awkward it is: we are *not* engaged in any war on a mere abstraction, “terror”; we are engaged in a war against groups of organized *terrorists*, Muslims, in fact, who in this case invoke Islamic religious principles as the motive and justification for their actions. Yet no doubt at least in part because tolerance, especially tolerance of religion, remains a principal foundation of the democracy that the United States claims to represent, the response to terrorist attacks by extremist Muslims apparently had to be designated as a war on terror itself, not on *them*. As most people remember, President George W. Bush himself even went far out of his way after 9/11 to declare publicly that Islam was a “peaceful religion.”

Obedient to this same imperative of tolerance, the Obama Administration goes farther: it refuses to characterize the anti-terrorist activities in which the United States is now inescapably involved as a “war.” It treats terrorist attacks not as acts of war but as simple “crimes.” This approach is characteristic not only of the top leadership, from the president on down, but even on the working level of law enforcement officials, who typically and even obstinately try to maintain against

the evidence that jihadist terrorist incidents are the work of isolated individuals acting alone.

In March, 2009, the Obama Administration Office of Management and Budget even issued guidance to U.S. government agencies requiring that the “war on terror” should henceforth be characterized as “overseas contingency operations.” Similarly, Eric Holder, the Attorney General of the United States, explained to Congress that “enemy combatants” were merely “individuals detained at Guantanamo Bay,” while the Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, declared that she preferred the term, “man-caused disaster,” to “terrorism.”⁷

III.

One source engaged in the study of contemporary terrorism has calculated that as of May, 2010, there had been no less than 15,247 recorded Islamic terrorist incidents.⁸ Some of these incidents were no doubt minor or otherwise unsuccessful, and some got thwarted as well; but all of them were “religiously” motivated, that is, they were based on an interpretation of Islam and Islamic principles. While such interpretations may not truly reflect the nature and teachings of Islam, the fact remains that today’s terrorist-perpetrators nevertheless apparently believe that they do, and these terrorist-perpetrators are, unfortunately, also prepared to act on these interpretations.

On November 5, 2009, a U.S. Army officer stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, a Muslim, who was preparing for deployment to Iraq, Major Nidal Malik Hasan, opened fire with two pistols while shouting *Allahu Akbar* (“God is great”) and expended over 100 rounds killing 13 and wounding 38. Prior to this rampage, Major Hasan had announced to neighbors to whom he was handing out Korans that he was “going to do good work for God.” His military colleagues and superior officers had been aware for some time of his increased Islamic militancy; he was known to have been in contact by e-mail with a notorious jihadist leader and theorist in Yemen; yet the army saw no reason to question his suitability for continued military service, and he was even in the process of being re-assigned for service in Iraq.

What was perhaps even more extraordinary than that such an incident could take place on a U.S. military base was the reaction to it. Within hours after the incident, a spokesman for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) roundly dismissed any suggestion that the act was one of jihadist terrorism; this FBI spokesman

expressly stated that whether Major Hasan had anything to do with any terrorist organization “was not being discussed.” A later statement issued by the FBI stated that “the investigation to date has *not* identified a motive, and a number of possibilities remain under consideration” (emphasis added).

Various press accounts suggested that this Muslim U.S. Army major’s violent actions perhaps stemmed from his “mental problems,” or from “the harassment he had received as a Muslim.” One newspaper headline read: “Mind Set of Rogue Major a Mystery.” President Obama himself publicly opined that the cause of the Fort Hood shootings would probably remain a “mystery.”⁹ Only months later did the Department of Homeland Security admit that the Hasan killings indeed represented “violent Islamic terrorism.”

On Christmas day, 2009, a young Nigerian Muslim, Umar Farouk Abdulmuttalib, on a flight from Amsterdam to Detroit, attempted to detonate an explosive concealed in his underwear as the airplane approached its destination. The explosive failed to ignite, and the would-be suicide-martyr was quickly subdued by a fellow passenger, a young man who was a European tourist. Upon the landing, the failed terrorist was placed under arrest—but not, however, as a terrorist: he was arraigned before a judge, provided with a lawyer, and told that he had a “right to remain silent” (in accordance with the American “Miranda rule” implementing the U.S. constitutional provision that no person may be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself).

This Abdulmuttalib case instantly became—and remains—famous as illustrating the ineptitude of the U.S. government in either understanding or in combating today’s jihadist terrorism. For it turned out that this Nigerian Muslim terrorist had been issued a visitor’s visa to enter the United States in spite of the fact that U.S. authorities had been specifically warned by the terrorist’s own father that his son had adopted extremist views and had disappeared into Yemen—where he spent four months being trained to carry out his assigned terrorist task. This Muslim “visitor” had paid cash for a one-way ticket to the United States and had boarded the airplane without luggage—regular giveaways that should have immediately raised security questions.

Our interest here is not so much in the U.S. government’s blunders, however, but in the unwillingness exhibited by government authorities, from President Obama on down, to recognize that Abdulmuttalib *was* a terrorist belonging to a global Muslim terrorist organization, Al Qaeda, which had trained, equipped, and

directed him and had dispatched him to America on a terrorist mission. President Obama’s first public statement on the incident—three days after Christmas—still characterized him as an “isolated extremist.” The Secretary of Homeland Security at first declared that there was “no indication” that the attempt was part of “anything larger,” and then later she expressed “surprise” that Al Qaeda was sending “individuals” to America on terrorist missions. Only weeks later did U.S. authorities finally admit that the attempt was a part of a long-declared global jihad against the United States.¹⁰

On May 1, 2010, a street vendor in New York’s Times Square noticed smoke coming from a parked vehicle and reported it to the police, who quickly disarmed the source of the smoke. It turned out to be a combination of gasoline canisters, propane tanks, and fertilizer wired to cause a massive explosion inflicting maximum casualties in the crowded square. In this instance, law enforcement personnel proved to be highly efficient in neutralizing the explosives as well as in identifying and locating the purchaser of the car who had loaded it with the explosives and attempted to blow it up. He had fled from the scene, but in a little more than fifty hours he was apprehended at the airport trying to board a flight back to the Middle East. His name was Faisal Shahzad; he was a Muslim who was a naturalized American citizen; he had immigrated to the United States from Pakistan in 1999. But then he had become radicalized, returning several times to Pakistan, and finally returning there to undergo training; he had also been supplied with ample cash to carry out his assigned terrorist task.

In spite of the fact that the Pakistani Taliban immediately claimed credit for the attempt—indeed, the Taliban had publicly announced that an attack was coming *before* the fact!—the initial reactions in the United States again included efforts to deny or downplay any Muslim or jihadist connection. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano once again declared the next day that there was “no evidence” that the whole thing was anything but a “one-time affair.”¹¹ The Mayor of New York City announced that the Times Square bomb could have been placed by “somebody with a political agenda who doesn’t like the healthcare bill or something. It could be anything.” An Associated Press headline reported an opinion apparently shared by many, at least initially: “NY Car Bomb Suspect Co-operates, but Motive a Mystery.”¹²

Two weeks later, the Attorney General of the United States, Eric H. Holder, Jr., in testimony before a

congressional committee, repeatedly declined to admit that “radical Islam” was behind the Times Square car bomb incident or other recent terrorist attacks. He was specifically invited no less than six times in the course of being questioned to make this obvious connection, but he pointedly refused to do so each time, admitting only that people holding radical religious views might possibly have had “an ability to have an impact on Faisal Shahzad.”¹³

The fact is that the Attorney General’s reluctance to blame “radical Islam” on this occasion was completely consistent with the unwillingness that both he and other U.S. government officials have shown generally to concede that the United States truly might be *at war* with an implacable religiously motivated enemy, whether we like it or not. So the question remains: why this reluctance? Why this unwillingness? There is an incoherence in the official U.S. *tolerance* for Islamic extremism that cries out for an explanation.

IV.

It may be that secular-minded U.S. officials, like present-day Americans generally, simply do not know how to deal with terrorist acts claiming a “religious” motivation or justification. Whatever the reason, U.S. officials have quite regularly and consistently tried to deny or downplay the role of Islam in recent terrorist acts, ascribing these acts to “disturbed individuals” or “lone wolves,” “acting alone,” perhaps in the manner of the domestic, homegrown American terrorist, Timothy McVeigh, who blew up the federal building in Oklahoma City back in the 1990s. Only reluctantly and belatedly do U.S. officials admit the Islamic connection in the face of overwhelming and irrefutable evidence.

As we have now seen, however, this is the pattern that was followed in the case of the killing rampage carried out by the Muslim U.S. Army officer in Fort Hood, Texas, in November, 2009; in that of the failed attempt of the Nigerian Muslim to blow up a packed U.S. airliner on Christmas day in 2009; and in the case of the naturalized American-citizen Muslim in May, 2010, to set off a car bomb in Times Square.

It is hard to understand why denying or downgrading the true facts about today’s Muslim jihadist terrorism should constitute such a pattern. It is difficult to understand, that is, unless we understand that, for the modern secularist mind, the validity of religious-based motivations must be excluded lest it be admitted that religious-based motivations of any kind could possibly be valid.

For the modern secularist, religion was long ago relegated to the realm of the private and the irrational. Some benighted individuals might continue to believe religion to be true, and they should, of course, be *tolerated*, that is, allowed to believe and affirm whatever they might want so long as there is no attempt on their part to influence or impose it on anybody else. Tolerance thus became the practical rule, and in secularist eyes it must remain so. Religious truth, in particular, cannot be admitted because, as we have noted, the danger would then arise of its having to be *imposed*.

Today’s Muslim terrorists, of course, are trying to do just that, so in order to maintain the democratic system of tolerance intact, it becomes necessary to deny that they *are* religiously motivated! This is to be far out of reality, of course, but it unfortunately still constitutes what the cultural climate in America typically calls for today.

What if it were the case, however, that truth, including religious truth, need *not* necessarily have to be imposed just because it is the truth? What if tolerance, or the imposition of truth, are *not* the only alternatives? Too many people, including too many whole societies, have unfortunately believed this to be the case for far too long a time. In our own day, however, the Catholic Church, at Vatican Council II, dared to formulate another and different principle which, properly understood and practiced, could save the human race and human societies from some of the griefs and wars and conflicts and even absurdities that have so often resulted from the old belief that the truth must be imposed simply because it is the truth.

Thus, the Second Vatican Council, particularly in its Decree on Religious Liberty, *Dignitatis Humanae*, established instead a rational and principled basis on which to practice *tolerance* against those considered to be “in error”—but without elevating tolerance into a universal principle of indifferentism. This rational and principled basis was the concept of the primacy of *human dignity*. Even those who effectively *are* “in error” still possess human dignity, and hence the truth need not—and should not—be imposed on them by force, even if it *is* truth.

Human dignity thus constitutes the Church’s principled basis for tolerance as well as for religious liberty generally; and in the years since the Council in decreeing *Dignitatis Humanae* established this principled basis so firmly, both Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI have fruitfully developed it further. It is something that the modern world, so confused and misguided and even

incoherent about the nature and function of tolerance in human affairs, as we have seen, might profitably take a closer look at.

As the conclusion to this paper, then, allow me to quote two summary paragraphs from a recent book of my own on the subject of religious freedom:¹⁴

...Vatican II consciously decided to adopt a different approach to religious liberty, one based on affirming the human dignity of the religious believer. This new emphasis was reflected in the title of *Dignitatis Humanae* itself, which means “on human dignity.” In the document, the Catholic Church, speaking through the Council, teaches that “the human person has a right to religious freedom.” What is entailed by this right is “that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of every human power in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, within due limits...”

This fundamental right to be free from coercion is based on “the very dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself.” Moreover, this “right of the human person to religious freedom is to be recognized in the constitutional law whereby society is governed and thus it is to become a *civil right*...”

Certainly, the world would be a much better place not only if such principles came to be accepted and observed by those who currently believe that their “truths” can and must be imposed by force; it would be a better place if modern governments that claim to respect religious liberty also recognized and observed the same principles to a greater degree than is unhappily currently the case.

In summary, then, we need not and indeed must not try to impose religious truth, nor, *a fortiori*, should we ever be tempted to adopt the relativism that says that religious truth, supposedly being “absolute,” can never be credited but only tolerated. At the same time, we most definitely must not “tolerate” truth claims that lead to harmful or immoral action (e.g., jihadist terrorism) on the grounds that “religion” must always be “tolerated” (at the same time that it is excluded as the source of any real truth). The criteria governing what can, and perhaps must, be tolerated, moreover, must be based on whatever truth is correctly apprehended in any given case, including, if necessary, religious truth. However, out of respect for the human dignity even of those truly and objectively in error, even truth that is real and authentic need not and should not be imposed

on them coercively, that is, by force.

This last point must be insisted upon, and must be declared and repeated to Muslims and the Muslim world on every appropriate occasion and by every appropriate means: imposition of Islamic-motivated truth claims *cannot* be tolerated. ✠

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ENDNOTES

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- 7 McCarthy, Andrew C., “Obama Afraid to Call It a ‘War on Terror,’” in *The Washington Examiner*, May 24, 2010.
- 8 See www.thereligionofpeace.com.
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- 10 See “Obama’s Twelve Days of Christmas,” by William Kristol, and “An Isolated Extremist?” by Stephen F. Hayes, in *The Weekly Standard*, January 18, 2010.
- 11 See “Don’t Mention the War,” by Stephen F. Hayes and Thomas Joscelyn, in *The Weekly Standard*, May 17, 2010.
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- 13 See “Holder Balks at Blaming ‘Radical Islam,’” in *The Washington Times*, May 14, 2010.
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Wisdom and Joy in the Truth: Catechesis in the Third Millennium

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In October of 2005 our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, had some very blunt words regarding catechesis:

Be under no illusion. An incomplete Catholic teaching is a contradiction in itself and cannot be fruitful in the long term. The proclamation of the Kingdom of God goes hand in hand with the need for conversion and love that encourages, that knows the way, that teaches an understanding that with God's grace even what seems impossible becomes possible. Only think how the teaching of religion, catechesis at various levels and preaching can be gradually improved, deepened and as it were completed."¹

In this Benedict XVI is echoing John Paul II who in his magisterial Catechesis in Our Time went to the heart of catechesis. Allow me to quote at length:

In the first place, it is intended to stress that at the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, "the only Son from the Father...full of grace and truth,"(9) who suffered and died for us and who now, after rising, is living with us forever. It is Jesus who is "the way, and the truth, and the life,"(10) and Christian living consists in following Christ, the *sequela Christi*.

"The primary and essential object of catechesis is, to use an expression dear to St. Paul and also to contemporary theology, "the mystery of Christ." Catechizing is in a way to lead a person to study this mystery in all its dimensions: "to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery...comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth—know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge...(and be filled) with all the fullness of God."(11) It is therefore to reveal in the person of Christ the whole of God's eternal design reaching fulfillment in that Person. It is to seek to understand the meaning of Christ's actions and words and of the signs worked by Him, for they simultaneously hide and reveal His mystery. Accordingly, the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion,

in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity."²

What catechists, preachers, and teachers of the Catholic faith do is proclaim the living Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever. Catholic truth is a Person, Jesus Christ, who was sent by the Father with the Holy Spirit. It is their divine, visible and invisible missions from the Father that are carried forward by his sending of the apostles—"As the Father sent me, so I send you"—and their successors in unbroken continuity down for the past two millennia.

Let me outline a few important elements in this two millennial tradition. For as catechists and pastors and teachers we are being challenged by John Paul II and Benedict XVI to embark on an evangelization of unprecedented urgency. We cannot teach and preach what we have not learned. Learning and the cultivation of intelligence are impossible except as cooperative enterprises down the ages. Everything we have, we have received, both naturally and, a fortiori, supernaturally. There are no Robinson Crusoes or Cartesian universal doubters in the realm of mind. As Cardinal Newman astutely observed traditions are crucial, not just for believers, but for all human learners. Belief and knowledge processing down the ages are symbiotically cooperative in the realms of mind, heart, and imagination. Catholic catechists, pastors, theologians today are within a long, two millennial procession of teachers, preachers, catechists, learners.

Why is it so difficult for us today to experience the beauty and wisdom of Catholic tradition? Why do so many millions of baptized Catholics fail to live their faith and drift away from any regular practice of their faith? Why do all modern popes call us to evangelizing the baptized as well as the unbaptized? Why does it sound so strange to proclaim "joy in the truth" at the dawn of the third millennium? Why does it seem that most have wandered so far from the procession? And why does the procession of faith seem, to use Flannery O'Connor's wonderful image, to be so poor and bedraggled in comparison with all the modern secular victory marches and parades?

Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI have provided a most important answer to these questions. Their answer plunges us into the two millennial traditions of Catholic intellectual life and catechesis. John Paul II in his *Catechesis in Our Time* begins the first section with a title taken from St. Augustine, “We Have But One Teacher, Jesus Christ”. The Pope elsewhere invoked St. Augustine as one so committed to catechesis that he often spent the whole day at it, forgetting even to eat. The present pope by his very name invokes the great St. Benedict and the importance of monasteries in the evangelizing of Europe. With his predecessor he warns us about a tyranny of relativism and the historicism and nihilism that spring from it.³ To meet these challenges, the popes direct our attention to the two millennial processions from which we must learn if we are to carry it forward at the dawn of the third.

We find the notion of a continuous procession of creation and redemption going forward in history difficult because we no longer experience history as presence, as the presencing of generations down the centuries. Indeed, as Fr. Bernard Lonergan has studied at length, we find it most difficult to experience and correctly understand and responsibly live in our self-presence that is the “*imago Dei*” in us. Instead we tend to experience and misunderstand our self-presence as isolated, monadic selves peering out at a more or less hostile world. What Alexis de Tocqueville wrote of America applies elsewhere as well today: “Nowhere is Descartes so little studied, yet his precepts so rigorously applied.” We have much to learn from the many saints and scholars processing before us—much to learn about history and ourselves as created and redeemed by the Triune God.

Pope John Paul II in the first paragraph of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* calls all Catholics, especially teachers and learners to “that *gaudium de veritate*, so precious to Saint Augustine, which is that joy of searching for, discovering and communicating truth.” Truth is knowledge of, and appreciation for, the realities signified by words, the beauty embodied in great art. Indeed, the Pope sees the “honor and responsibility of” Catholic teachers and learners “to consecrate themselves without reserve to *the cause of truth*.” Catholic teaching and learning should be distinguished by its free search for “the *whole truth about nature, man and God*.” The pope states that we need a “wisdom without which the future of the world would be in danger.”

The responsibility to explore “the whole truth about nature, man and God” means that today at the dawn of the third millennium we have a daunting chal-

lenge. Overcoming historicism, relativism and nihilism in modern and postmodern cultures is the work of generations. Just as the secularist Enlightenment took centuries to become rooted in the West, so now the challenge of John Paul II and Benedict XVI is truly a millennial challenge to those who teach the teachers that carry forward a dedication to “the whole truth”. Recovering wisdom in our day is a most demanding intellectual apostolate for all teachers and learners in the Church. In brief, we at the beginning of the third millennium of Catholicism have the task in our teaching, preaching, and catechizing of integrating the first millennial achievements of wisdom and holiness with the second millennial achievements of scholarship, technology, and science. Only then will the “whole truth about nature, man, and God” be evident in a renewed Catholic intellectual and artistic culture. Only then will the fragmentation so evident in relativism, historicism and nihilism no longer tyrannize the minds and hearts of so many. Historicism treats of history as no more than measurable extrinsic movement, as we shall see.

I. The Procession during the First Millennium and Catechesis:

During the first millennium of Christianity the task of nurturing learning and intelligence found stable homes or institutions—as much as any stability could be found in those turbulent centuries—in the thousands of monastic, cathedral, convent, and catechetical schools where hundreds of thousands of men and women kept alive the sacred word of scripture, the writings of the fathers of the church, as well as the classic literature of East and West. Teaching and learning was integrated within the orientations of the monks, nuns, clerics and lay students towards wisdom and holiness. Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI direct us to study the works of the ancients in order to overcome the shortcomings and detours of the moderns. They single out the Greek and Latin fathers, and in the West St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. Among twentieth century theologians, they draw especially on those Catholic theologians known for their extensive study of the fathers, Cardinals Henri de Lubac and Hans Urs von Balthasar.

I should like to highlight two points from Augustine; a third from St. Thomas Aquinas, then some remarks about the bright and dark sides of the Enlightenment and finally some concluding reflections.

Contrasting Confessions: Presence versus Self-Assertion.

Where some contemporary scholars project onto Augustine a Cartesian dichotomy between knowing one's self and knowing the world, others argue that Augustine's notion of eternity involves a negation of time.⁴ Such readings of Augustine tend to obscure the wisdom perspective so fundamental to his vision. Augustine was never lost in realms of abstraction or mere ideas cut off from reality. Indeed, his approach to eternity, time and history was profoundly interpersonal and concrete. A striking difference between modern and ancient notions of identity may be glimpsed in how moderns fall into a dualism between their own identity and the reality of space and time. For moderns the sense of reality is given by references to dates and places, whereas for biblical and patristic writers the sense of reality is conveyed by interpersonal conversation. St. Augustine's *Confessions* and Rousseau's *Confessions* illustrate well these differences. In some ways Augustine's *Confessions* modeled the Christian genre, still operative over a millennium later in St. Teresa of Avila's *Life*. Rousseau's posthumously published *Confessions* set the modern genre.

Augustine praises God, so that his work is an expression, as all created beings are, of God's goodness. Evil is evidence, not of any failure on God's part, but of the pride and sin of intellectual creatures. Specific dates and places do not figure significantly in Augustine's *Confessions*. Rather, his entire life, with all of its stages, is woven into an intensely interpersonal dialogue or conversation with God. The interpersonal dialogue has moved from a Platonic framework of the wise philosopher and his students, to a transcendent Divine Lord who created the entire universe by His Word and then sent His Word to redeem us. There is the incredible intimacy that only an infinitely knowing and loving God has with every conscious person, and this intimacy is with One who created the entire universe in all its extension and duration. From the fourth through the sixteenth centuries this orientation was consistent. Teresa of Avila's *Life* has many passages of direct dialogue with God. While there are more references to interpersonal relations with family and friends than in Augustine's *Confessions*; there is a similar attention to those realities and relations without dwelling on specific times and places.⁵

In the eighteenth century Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions* set a typically modern genre of autobiography beginning each section with the relevant years, starting with his birth at Geneva in 1712. Every few

pages specific places and dates are provided. At the opening the appeal to God is not a preview of a recurrent dialogue between Rousseau and God, for that does not occur in the twelve long books. Rather it is more like an oath invoking "my Sovereign Judge" and attesting that "I have bared my secret soul as Thou thyself hast seen it, Eternal Being!" God is not a conversation partner in Rousseau's life, but rather a judging spectator.

Both the *Confessions*, along with the *Life*, begin with confessions of personal sins and wickedness, but in Augustine and Teresa sin and evil are understood as contractions of their conscious living, as sad and ignorant meandering from the Divine Presence with whom they are now friends. Confession is primarily praise and joy, and the honest admission of their sins is only to manifest how gracious and compassionate God is in continuing to love and redeem them. Their most intimate identity is graced, opened as it is now into the very life and love of Father, Son, and Spirit. Personal identity is experienced as conversational, and the most profound conversation is that between Augustine, Teresa, and God. History is much more than movement in space and time. It is fundamentally conscious conversation and communion. History is at its most profoundly interpersonal in prayer and worship.

For Rousseau the confession of his wretchedness and sins is quite different, almost contrary. He is going to trump his detractors by revealing his sins in a dare with all others: "But let each one of them reveal his heart at the foot of Thy throne with equal sincerity, and may any man who dares, say 'I was a better man than he.'" In effect, Rousseau initiates the modern, secular confessional genre. If a god is invoked at all, it is very much *in loco judicis*. There is no hint of a real friendship with God, only that "He" is on a judging throne. Interpersonal relations are confined to space and time as containers and markers. Nature with its geography and chronology become the context in which Rousseau performs his egophany—to use Eric Voegelin's apt term:

My purpose is to display to my kind a portrait in every way true to nature, and the man I shall portray will be myself. Simply myself... I am made unlike any one I have ever met; I will even venture to say that I am like no one in the whole world. I may be no better, but at least I am different. Whether Nature did well or ill in breaking the mould in which she formed me, is a question that can only be resolved after the reading of my book."⁶

Rousseau concludes his *Confessions* with the egophanic assertion that if anyone disagrees that he is an honorable man, that person ought to be “stifled”. For Rousseau there is the impersonal “nature” which commands all. God is but another cipher of this cold nature. This is also an excuse mechanism. Rousseau is no longer responsible. Nature made him the way he is.

These contrasts illustrate a major difference in human self-understanding. In Rousseau there is a contraction of self-presence and interpersonal conversation to those persons physically present in space and time. The dead are remembered, but they are not addressed as present in the Mystery of eternal life, as they are in Augustine and Teresa. Reality seems increasingly restricted to what can be dated and placed. Humans are hardly made in the image and likeness of anyone else, let alone God. Rather, humans are all locked into a solipsistic individuality, which in turn is locked within an impersonal “nature” that minimizes personal responsibility. Presence of self and others tends to become merely epiphenomena, less real than the rocks, mountains, rivers, planets, and so on that makes up the material universe. Conscious presence is reduced to brain events as only material things are accorded the status of being real and objective. The times and places of human history are accorded a reality that the conversations and interpersonal communion are not. Where the reality of history is profoundly interpersonal for Augustine, Rousseau initiates an approach that demotes the interpersonal aspect, a tendency that leads to historicism and a de-personalization of history. Thus, as Hans-Georg Gadamer insists, to overcome historicism we must realize that there are important lessons to learn from the great classics of the past.⁷

St. Augustine’s theology of history as the Presencing of Creation-Redemption:

The salvation of intelligence and desire or will is fundamental in Augustine’s religious conversion. Far from blinding his mind and heart, faith in Jesus Christ assisted Augustine in discovering the higher, more sublime dimensions of his mind for our hearts are restless till they rest in God. The theological is the salvation of the theoretic-contemplative and the practical-political ways of life. From the great Greek and Roman philosophers, Augustine glimpsed the importance of striving for wisdom, attuning his mind and heart to the whole of reality and ordering his appetites and emotions intelligently toward the truly good. Yet he also saw

how these philosophers were unable to give adequate accounts for why so few—and Augustine knew he had not—attained the life of speculative wisdom. Moreover, they could not account for evil and injustice to Augustine’s satisfaction. The philosophical agnosticism stated by Socrates at the end of *The Apology*: “I go to die, you to live; but which of us goes to a better reality is unknown to all but God,” was no match for the disorder and evil of human history and of Augustine’s own wayward living.

In Jesus Christ, God has made known to us how death and evil are overcome. Reason is enlightened and strengthened by faith towards a full understanding and knowledge in God. Without the light of faith, the heart of reason is darkened by the shadows of widespread evil and injustice. With the other fathers of the Church Augustine showed that without the light of faith the intellectually excellent or virtuous were led by all the evil and malice in human history to resort to a cynicism stifling the love of wisdom and truth. Every page of human history is bloodied by countless acts of violence and injustice. Without the light of faith, the morally excellent or virtuous slide into either a stoic withdrawal from the suffering of others or into an epicurean distraction from the pain of the world. So his conversion to Christ, his graced realization that Jesus Christ is risen and is indeed the Word Incarnate who founded, and by His Spirit guides “our mother the Catholic Church,” actually enable Augustine to cultivate the intellectual and moral virtues that previously had eluded him. Jesus reveals to us the Kingdom of God in eternal life, and so we can in the face of all the evil and injustice of this world continue to strive for the wholeness of truth and the justice of the good life.

Living a disordered and sinful life blinds one to the higher aspects of one’s reason, to the wisdom needed to order one’s senses, imagination, and actions toward the truly good. Unlike Greek and Latin philosophers, Augustine affirmed how the whole of material creation is iconic of Divine Beauty. To rightly ordered knowing and loving all things sensible are transparent in the light of the Triune creating and redeeming God. Augustine could fully appropriate the classical importance of the intellectual and moral virtues only in the context of his own religious conversion to Jesus Christ with the attendant theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. All sin is basically a de-personalization of created goods, violently tearing them from the good and beautiful order in which God creates and sustains them. This privation of the good order, this de-personalization,

Augustine dramatizes in the first four books of his *Confessions* where he gives no personal names of his mistress or friends. For he realized that he was not loving them for who they are in God, but that he was abusing them to satisfy his own disordered desires.

What is more, all the violence in the world is rooted in the violent and prideful refusal of God's loving presence. His *City of God* lays out the horror of the constant wars fueled by the "libido dominandi"—the disordered desire for domination. Hell is everlasting warfare and violence rooted in pride and arrogant disordered love of one's own idolatrous glory. In his *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, (II, 15, no. 20) Augustine articulates the two contradictory and opposed loves:

one love is holy, the other disordered; one turned towards the neighbor, the other fixated on self; one looking to the common good, keeping in view the society of saints in heaven, the other trying to force the common good under its own power, arrogantly looking to domination; one subject to God, the other rivaling Him; one tranquil, the other tempestuous; one peaceful, the other seditious; one preferring truth to false praise, the other eager for praise of any sort; one friendly, the other envious; one wishing for its neighbor what it wishes for itself, the other seeking to subject its neighbor to itself; one looking for its neighbor's advantage, the other looking only for its own advantage."

From the fall of the evil angels to the massive totalitarianisms and tyrannies of our times, disordered love seeks to depersonalize and destroy the beauty of God's creation. But Jesus Christ has risen! We must keep the eyes of our heart on the communion of saints where we shall come into the new heavens and the new earth. Christ's revelation of eternal life enables Augustine to dedicate himself to the good life of the intellectual and moral virtues. What we do in this life affects how we shall be for all eternity. Death and injustice do not have the last word—the Word Incarnate does. That is why the foundation, for St. Augustine and all the Church fathers, is Jesus Christ. He is more intimate to each and every human being than they are to themselves. So he laid it upon catechists and priests and religious in his *On Christian Teaching* to first discover the reality of the Triune God within their hearts and minds, only then would they know the realities signified by the Words of Scripture and the writings of the saints.

St. Augustine and countless other men and women in the first millennium manifested the many ways that

a vibrant and loving faith in Christ fosters the intellectual apostolate of unifying wisdom and holiness. They evangelized Europe by uniting in their many communities worship and contemplative holiness and wisdom with the tasks of cultivating the intellectual and moral virtues, as well as all the skills, crafts, and art so manifest in the towering beauty of so many cathedrals, churches, and monasteries. By the end of the twelfth century there were some forty thousand monasteries, convents, cathedral schools throughout Europe.

II. The Procession in the Second Millennium and Catechesis

To thwart knowledge of the truth in religion as in reason is to thwart human nature. St. Thomas Aquinas affirms "It is actually natural to man to strive for knowledge of the truth." *Fides et Ratio* devotes a whole section to the perennial "novitas" of the work of Aquinas (43). The English "originality" does not capture the meaning of "novitas" as newness, surprising unfamiliarity. Pope John Paul II sees that Aquinas offers an approach to wisdom that heuristically attunes those studying his work to the patterns of the whole of creation and redemption (#44). Indeed, if we are to bring together the quest for wisdom and holiness with the quest for science and scholarship, the Pope stresses the foundational importance of metaphysics for both Catholic theology and the sciences, humanities, technologies and arts, if these are to overcome fragmentation and the isolation that hinders wise interdisciplinary collaboration.⁸

Metaphysical wisdom provides a comprehensive heuristic framework capable of attuning the mind to the intelligibility of the whole of reality (being). Metaphysics requires a profound intellectual "turning around" or conversion. Aquinas clearly grasped how wisdom is both a divine gift and a natural aspiration of the human mind that sets the acquisition of speculative and practical wisdom as intellectual excellence or virtues. Divine gifts neither deny nor denigrate human abilities. For these natural capacities are themselves the gifts of God's creative love. So the theological virtues call forth and encourage the journey of acquiring the human intellectual and moral virtues.

With Augustine and the fathers Aquinas distinguishes between the orientation of the mind toward the sensible and imaginable and the orientation of the mind to know itself, and through understanding its own spiritual

nature, to reach a true analogical knowledge of angels and God. By attending to its own operations of knowing and loving, Aquinas grasped the central importance of this immaterial image of God as the highest created analogue to understand the central mystery of the Triune God.

As the human mind longs for correct answers, so this desire for truth leads to wisdom. Wisdom is acquired, according to Aquinas, insofar as the human mind moves from knowing sensible objects (e.g., physics), through imaginative objects (e.g., mathematics), to attending to spiritual or immaterial realities (e.g. metaphysics of being). The higher in no way negate the lower. Metaphysics provides a wise understanding of the intelligible order in the whole range of beings, material and spiritual, as well as in the range of sciences and mathematical disciplines (*In Boethius de Trinitate*, 5-6). Theology needs metaphysics in order to understand properly the analogical achievements of the great schoolmen.

To understand what Pope John Paul II in *Fides et Ratio* calls “the surprising newness” of Aquinas is to grasp how Aquinas links the way of wisdom with judgment. Thinking and concepts are not enough. We know in the act of correctly judging; and true judgments are not limited to sensible and imaginative beings. Aquinas states: “There are realities that transcend both the senses and the imagination, namely, those that are entirely independent of matter both with respect to their being (*esse*) and with respect to their being understood. So, when we know realities of this kind through judgment, our knowledge must terminate neither in the imagination nor in the senses.” (*In Boethius De Trinitate*, 6, 2c).⁹ This is the natural basis for his theological affirmation about the faith that is fundamental.

There is no antinomy between the universal and the particular, no contradiction between the singular and the species and genus to which it belongs. Aquinas states how by that light of active intelligence we can know truly and unchangeably very changeable and contingent things and events. He states: “For the light of agent intellect is needed by which we can know unchangeable truth in changeable things, and distinguish the things themselves from the likenesses of things” (ST I, 84, 6 ad 1).

The fact is that we do know God by both reason and faith. By reason we can come to know that God exists. By faith we know that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We know all the mysteries of divine and Catholic Faith. The assent or judgment of faith, as

Aquinas repeats, ends not at expressed statements but at the realities themselves (ST II-II, 1, 2 ad 2). Why does Holy Mother Church have us pray the creed every Sunday? Why is the Magisterium entrusted with guarding the depositum fidei? These are mere abstract statements, these are the sacred realities themselves. We do not pray to our concepts or ideas of God. We pray and worship God. We do not just know our concepts or ideas about God, as if we were locked up in a Cartesian or Kantian subjectivism. We know God! But we in no way comprehend God—comprehensibility regards the first act of the mind as understanding. Even in the beatific vision no created intelligence can comprehend the Triune God.

A Truncated Enlightenment without Faith enlightening Reason

In Catholic wisdom later genuine developments never negate earlier ones. As Fr. Bernard Lonergan has remarked, the development of doctrines were in complete fidelity to the Word of God in the Bible as true. The true Word of God was then, in the second millennium seen as intelligible in the great scholastic developments. In his criticisms of Abelard and the new “scientia dialectica”, St. Bernard voiced a concern that the new developments in teaching and learning might lead science and scholarship to succumb to pride and so end up in opposition to wisdom and holiness. New forms of religious life emerged to meet this concern. The mendicant Dominicans and Franciscans, and later the Jesuits and other religious and lay organizations in the Church, took up the challenge of keeping the burgeoning sciences, humanities, and arts from being cut off from the quest for wisdom and holiness. Yet, as Pope John Paul II’s analysis of historicism and nihilism, as well as Pope Benedict XVI’s comments on the tyranny of relativism indicate, post-Enlightenment cultures with their universities pursue science, scholarship, technology, art divorced from wisdom and holiness. With the loss of wisdom traditions, modern cultures cultivated empirical sciences of the particular in ways that led to the fragmentation of culture. There is no heuristic attention to the intelligibility and pattern of the whole; instead there is attention only to the individual things, and any effort to pattern or order them are taken to be conventional and arbitrary. Wisdom is replaced by the will to power. History is no longer interpersonal “presencing” down the generations but rather just extrinsic plotting of movements and human behavior in the struggle for

domination and control. No longer the whole Christ, head and members, but the “machine” becomes, as Peter Gay remarks, the master metaphor of the Enlightenment.

Alasdair MacIntyre has chartered how contemporary universities and cultures take their bearings from two Enlightenment traditions: the Encyclopedists and the Genealogists. The Encyclopedists attend carefully to the endless particularities open to human study, but lack any internal intelligent ordering of the whole. The alphabet provides scholars, as it does all administrations, with a substitute for an intrinsic or wise order: the filing system. God is filed under “G” along with “gold” and “gorillas.” The Genealogists then come along to claim that any language is only a dialect with an army and a navy, so that all orders are only conventions imposed by dominative power. All order and pattern are merely conventional, so whatever pattern is operative is due to those in power deciding it is so. Truth as a noun becomes just another name for dominative power. In theology faith becomes an act of the will, of blind obedience, and any effort to engage in the question of truth is dismissed as exercises in dominative power. The wisdom tradition has been silenced in the halls of academe.

Scandalized by the so-called wars of religion, Enlightenment *philosophes* rationalized a flight from faith by criticizing religion, relegating it to the private sphere of individual conscience, and inscribing violence and war into all of nature, including human nature. Thus they defined both religion and nature by their abuse rather than their proper activities. This was a fateful case of keeping the bath water (war) and throwing out the baby (religion). Little wonder, then, that the final century of the millennium had the most horrendous wars in history, made possible by an empirical science and technology at the service of the culture of death. A very brilliant physicist, engaged in secret research for our government, remarked to me how struck he was by the Pope’s warnings about the growing shadows of a culture of death. Why, he asked, is so much scientific and technological expertise spent in developing more effective ways of killing rather than giving life? Some German Jewish philosophers have analyzed how the horror of the Holocaust uncovers how reason can be so easily deformed when science is severed from wisdom, goodness, holiness. Reason is deformed into a mere instrument in the service of dominative power—Augustine’s “libido dominandi”—rather than being true to its own dignity and nature

as a seeker of truth and an image of God. We have to recover history as participatory presencing.

A long procession of saints, scholars, scientists and artists in the last two centuries of the second millennium sought to defend the dignity of human life and to overcome the fragmentation of an instrumentalist degradation of human reason. Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI call our attention to these saints, martyrs, holy scholars, and artists who have kept alive the intellectual apostolate that proceeds from the heart of the Church. It would be a lack of faith in the Lord of history to despair because of the dark side of modern and postmodern cultures.

III. Wisdom and Joy in the Living and Proclaiming the Truth

Who is Jesus Christ, the Lord of History

Theology and divine worship have been relegated to the margins of the post-Enlightenment university and cultures. Along with philosophy the temptation for theology has been to abandon the study of the ancients, the fathers, and the medievals with their commentators. The habit of theology is not infused but acquired, and graduate theological education (like royalty) has fallen on hard times; the handmaidens have long since taken over the universities and the secularists dominate the mass media. As metaphysics declined, wisdom waned. A secularist “study of religion” has generally replaced theology with a comparative textology. When the truth of judgment is eclipsed, wisdom disappears. One sees at Catholic universities in North America, and on Catholic faculties of theology in Europe, a very liberal use of “critical thinking,” or “critical reflection” etc.

What is the challenge facing Catholic catechesis and religious education in the light of the need to develop new integrations of science, scholarship, technology and art with wisdom and holiness? One of the greatest challenges is to overcome the superficiality of the mass media categories of “conservative versus liberal” that has wrought immense harm to Catholic theology and Church life since it was first used on a mass level during the second session of Vatican II. What this did was to sever what all the Popes from Blessed John XXIII to Benedict XVI affirm to be the twofold orientations of Catholic theology and central to the Council: *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*. Journalists

identified *ressourcement* with “conservative” and an almost immediate effect of the Council was a drastic drop in doctoral dissertations done at Catholic theology faculties in patristic, medieval, and counter-reformation traditions. In the four decades since the Council less than twenty percent of all doctoral dissertations done in those faculties have been on the first eighteen centuries of Catholic theological traditions. Over seventy percent are done on twentieth century thinkers.

A very recent book by Agostino Marchetto demonstrates that this popularized superficial dichotomy has influenced the multivolume history of Vatican II by the Bologna Institute under the direction of Fr. Dossetti and now Dr. Alberigo. An overriding principle of this history is that the “event” of the Council is more important than the “texts” of the Council. Here we see the poisoned fruit of historicism. The “spirit” or “style” of the Council is not the Holy Spirit but the ideological importance of adopting new, more liberal and progressive teachings and practices in the Church. The texts are not giving us truths that lead us into the Divine Realities of Creation and Redemption, but are horizontal playgrounds where the conservatives get this passage and the progressives get that one. The solid and well-balanced presentations of conciliar teachings by the Popes and Synods is not presented as guides to most holy and wise revealed truths, but as retrogressive opposition to the progressive “spirit” of the Council. The effects of the mass media paradigm of “conservative versus liberal” was most effective in making “authorities” out of those theologians who conformed to it. After the Council Bishops and religious superiors turned to these popular “authorities” on how to implement the Council. Many were very influential in setting up and expanding graduate programs in theology and religious education. A complex set of circumstances led to a situation in which far too few graduates of these programs had any in depth formation in the two millennial traditions of patristic, medieval, counter-reformation theologies.

There are many consequences of this contraction of Catholic learning and teaching. One is that the reception of Vatican II has not been in the light of the two millennial tradition of Catholic theology. *Aggioramento* has been severed from *ressourcement*. That is why Benedict XVI called for the implementation of the Council “in faithful continuity with the two millennial tradition of the Church.”^{10*} The next time you read the documents of Vatican II note the many references to wisdom, holiness, science, scholarship, art, and

technology. The significance of Vatican II is, as Benedict XVI put it following John Paul II, that it provides a “compass” as we set out into the third millennium of Catholicism. The challenge is developing new ways of integrating science and scholarship with wisdom and holiness in the theological life. Doing theology is a way of life. Theology cut off from wisdom and holiness, from contemplation and worship degenerates into a professional study of religion in which “critical reflection” avoids at all costs any self-criticism.

As grace perfects nature, so the Divine Processions of the Word and the Holy Spirit from the Father have through the Missions of the Word Incarnate and Holy Spirit redeemed the processional aberrations of our sinful human race. Holy Mother Church continues these invisible and visible missions in the procession of sacramental sanctifying, hierarchical governing, and faith-filled infallible teaching. The procession meanders in this world, but its destination is no less than the eternal Kingdom of God. Because the kingdom towards which we are processing is not of this world, we can dedicate ourselves to the creative and redemptive transformation of this world in the new evangelization.

If we are both faithful and intelligent, we may discover that the great intellectual tradition of which Professor Hutchins and recent Popes have spoken is, in fact, a vast and wondrous cathedral of the mind of the Whole Christ to which each generation is called to contribute. This cathedral of the mind of Christ is far more enduring than even those of stone. The procession of Catholic education is leading us to this Cathedral of the new heavens and new earth. The challenge facing graduate theological education today is to develop new integrations of wisdom and holiness with science, scholarship and art. Such a task in this life will take centuries and many generations of faculty and students and staff to achieve, so we have not a day to lose! The entire procession of redeemed creation from God is, by the Cross and Resurrection, returning to that wondrous eternal Cathedral wherein the Word and the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father. In that Cathedral there are no more tears or sufferings, no more injustice and evil. In that Cathedral the blessed understand how the long procession of time and history overcomes the powers of darkness and evil by the glorious Risen Christ. Take all the joy of all the insights and discoveries of the entire human race, take all the ecstatic joy of all the experiences of love and friendship throughout human history—all these would be but a small spark compared to the “*Gaudium de veritate*” when the

intelligence and hearts of the blessed participate with the light of glory in Infinite Understanding generating Infinite Wisdom spirating Infinite Love. This is the most intense joy in the truth. To the Triune God be all honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. ✠

ENDNOTES

- 1 Address to Austrian Bishops 5 November 2005.
- 2 John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae* Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, 16 October 1979, #5.
- 3 John Paul II, *ibid.* and “St. Augustine of Hippo” 28 August 1986. Benedict XVI’s first statement as Pope and discourse in Cologne.
- 4 On reading too much of Descartes back into Augustine, cf. Stephen Menn, *Descartes and Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) and Charles Taylor, *The Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989) 127–158. Paul Ricoeur in his *Time and Narrative*, trans. K. McLaughlin & D. Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984–1988), vol. 1, 5–30, vol. 3, 12–22 contrasts Augustine and Aristotle, while giving a Neo-Kantian reading of Augustine in which the dialectic of interiority and exteriority is lost in favor of “enigmas within enigmas within paradox”. What for Augustine is the fullness of life becomes for Ricoeur a “limit idea” which is replete with “ontological negativity” (vol. 1, 25–6). Indeed, Ricoeur terms Augustine’s notion of God’s eternity as “Totum esse Praesens,” “the highest form of negativity.” But for Augustine this notion of eternity is creative, not negative.
- 5 An interesting difference is St. Ignatius Loyola’s so-called “autobiography” narrated to Cámara and written in third person with many dates and places. The reality of interpersonal communion is fostered by his *Spiritual Exercises* and his own life of prayer is chronicled in his *Spiritual Diary*; cf. Harvey Egan, S.J., *Ignatius Loyola the Mystic* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1987).
- 6 Jean-Jacques Rousseau *Confessions* translated by J. M. Cohen (New York: Penguin, 1985), 17, 606; on egophany, cf. Eric Voegelin, *Anamnesis* trans. & ed. Gerhart Niemeyer (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978) 97–118. On Rousseau’s distortions of Augustine, cf. Paul J. Archambault, “Rousseau’s Tactical (Mis)reading of Augustine,” *Symposium* 41 (Spring 1987), 6–14.
- 7 For a critique of historicism, cf. Hans-Georg Gadamer’s “Hermeneutik und Historismus” in *Wahrheit und Methode: Band II Ergänzungen* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1986) 387–424; also Joel Weinsheimer, *Gadamer’s Hermeneutics: A Reading of Truth and Method* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985) 133–212.
- 8 “We face a great challenge at the end of this millennium to move from *phenomenon* to *foundation*, a step as necessary as it is urgent. We cannot stop short at experience alone; even if experience does reveal the human being’s interiority and spirituality, speculative reflection must penetrate to the spiritual substance and the foundation on which it depends. Therefore, a notion of philosophy which denies any room for metaphysics would be radically unsuited to the task of mediation in the understanding of revelation” (#83).
- 9 While our spiritual minds can know—not just think about—spiritual realities, our minds begin with knowledge of material realities. The higher in no way negates the lower. There is here neither a Platonist nor a Cartesian opposition between the spiritual and the material, between mind (*res cogitans*) and bodies (*res extensa*). Aquinas analyzes in detail how the light of active intelligence illumines the human imagination, grasping the intelligibility in the phantasm (*species qua*) and understanding the universal in the particular (*species quae*), then intelligently formulating the universal common to many in the concept (*species in qua*). The intelligible is not a kind of “looking” with the senses alone, or an imaginative looking at images alone. All the senses and the imagination provide the mind with givens to be understood. It is the light of active intelligence that grasps the intelligible and so the universal in the particular.
- 10 Pope John Paul II indicated the [Second Vatican] Council precisely as a “compass” with which to orient oneself in the vast ocean of the third millennium (cf. apostolic letter “Novo Millennio Ineunte,” Nos. 57–58). In his spiritual testament he noted: “I am convinced that the new generations will still be able to draw for a long time from the riches that this council of the 20th century has lavished on us” (17.III.2000). Therefore, in preparing myself also for the service that is proper to the Successor of Peter, I wish to affirm strongly my determination to continue the commitment to implement the Second Vatican Council, in the footsteps of my Predecessors and in faithful continuity with the two millennial tradition of the Church.”



Gray Matters: Rights and Responsibilities

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Like most people, I remember only bits and pieces of the training I received as a child. Growing up Lutheran, my religious education outside the home consisted of Sunday School and young adult groups. I distinctly remember having “drilled” into me as a young teen the following mantra of basic Lutheran belief:

Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone)

Sola Gratia (Grace alone)

Sola fide (Faith alone)

I am not sure why it was taught to me in Latin but, nonetheless, I learned how fundamental these formulas were to Protestant belief.

In an attempt to verify my memory, I recently consulted the official Missouri Synod Lutheran Church website (www.lcms.org) where a summary of Lutheran beliefs was given by Dr. Samuel Nafzger, the Executive Director of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Dr. Nafzger wrote: “Standing firmly in the tradition of the trinitarian and Christological formulations of the 4th and 5th centuries, we believe that sinners are justified (declared right) with the Creator God by grace alone (*sola gratia*), through faith alone (*sola fide*) on the basis of Scripture alone (*sola scriptura*). These three great “Reformation solas” form a handy outline of what Missouri Synod Lutherans believe, teach and confess.” In this case, at least, my memory had served me well.

I do not wish to refight the major debates of the Reformation here. Indeed, I am quite pleased that many of the most contentious theological issues are well on their way to resolution as evidenced, for example, by the October 31, 1999 “*Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*” signed by the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church (although I have to admit that the Missouri Synod Lutherans refused to sign this Declaration). However, I am still struck by the stark use of alone (“sola”) to describe fundamental beliefs.

Catholic theology has a different approach. Entering into full communion with the Catholic Church, I came to appreciate the Catholic “and.” Rather than

“scripture alone,” Catholics believe that God’s revelation comes to us in both scripture *and* tradition. Since nowhere in scripture does it tell us what books are in the Book, we must rely on tradition at least to tell us what books should be viewed as Sacred Scripture. Historically much Lutheran theology of grace tended (and still tends) to emphasize grace as extrinsic to the person, “covering” him or her in righteousness (thus the famous metaphor of Luther’s that a justified sinner is like a dung heap covered in snow). However, Catholic theology emphasizes grace *and* nature. In fact, Catholic theology teaches, in the famous Thomistic adage, that “grace builds on nature,” enhancing and perfecting it. In other words, God’s saving grace penetrates, heals, transforms and elevates our human nature. We are transformed into sons and daughters in the Son.

I trust you see the point. Traditionally, Catholic theology tends to emphasize a “both/and” approach rather than an “either/or” or “sola (alone)” approach. And for good reasons—much of the mysteries of our faith require this type of inclusive, holistic approach. Perhaps, as a convert, I am more sensitive to this than most. But the more I study, teach and meditate on the faith, the more this approach seems crucial to me. God is both imminent and transcendent. Jesus is both fully God and fully man. The Church consists of both Jews and Greeks, slaves and free, males and females (cf. Gal 3:28), the universal priesthood of all believers and the sacramental (ministerial) priesthood of holy orders.

The Catholic “and” is essential to understanding Catholic Social Thought. For example, it is both justice *and* charity that is required of the Christian. We must give each person his or her due and “go the extra mile” when needed. While we are called to meet the immediate needs of those who are in distress (acts of charity such as feeding the hungry and sheltering the homeless), we are also called to act to transform society so that the root causes of poverty and injustice are overcome (action on behalf of social justice). The old adage holds: if you give a man a fish he eats for a day (an act of charity), but if you teach him to fish, he eats for a lifetime (an act of justice). In fact if you teach him to teach others to fish you can start to cure world hunger.

Please note the “and.” In the United States, we tend to focus so much on our rights. To some extent, this is natural. We were the first modern nation that was

explicitly founded with a focus on human rights. Our founding documents clearly inscribe many of these rights making them part of the foundational law of our land. But a complete understanding of rights must include the fundamental truth that with rights come duties—rights *and* responsibilities.

In Catholic thought, the language of human rights is a way to codify moral truth. There is a fundamental human right to life. This flows from the moral truth that it is always and everywhere wrong directly to attack the innocent. Thus the phrase “a right to life” is shorthand for the moral principle behind it— that one ought never to directly attack innocent human life.

Because rights are “relational” in the sense that they deal with the interaction of two or more persons, rights language attempts to codify the requirements of justice. Thus another way of speaking of rights is to speak of the responsibilities or duties that flow from rights. For example, to say that Martha has a right to life is to also say that all others have the duty not to kill Martha. To say that children have the right to be educated implies that parents have the duty to educate their children. To say that all human persons have the right to religious freedom means that others have the duty not to impinge upon their free exercise of belief. But it also means, as *Dignatatis Humanae* teaches, that all have the duty to seek religious truth and to live that truth once found.

Magisterial Teaching on Rights and Duties

In many ways the *Magna Carta* of modern Catholic thought on human rights is Blessed John XXII’s masterful document *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*) published in 1963. In this encyclical letter, Pope John was not interested in a precise analysis of the different types and levels of rights. Thus, he enumerated a number of rights without differentiating between entitlements and immunities, natural and positive rights, etc. Rather he attempted to make a strong moral stand for human rights at the height of the Cold War when so many nations and peoples were being deprived of them by totalitarian regimes. Today, many of these basic rights are now trampled upon by so-called “liberal democracies” in the name of a false understanding of freedom as license. Thus, in 1991 (two years after the fall of the Berlin Wall) in *Centesimus Annus* 47, John Paul II again provided a general list of rights as a reminder to all that an authentic democracy is grounded in a respect for the dignity of the human person and a pursuit of the common good:

Among the most important of these rights, mention must be made of the right to life, an integral part of which is the right of the child to develop in the mother’s womb from the moment of conception; the right to live in a united family and in a moral environment conducive to the growth of the child’s personality; the right to develop one’s intelligence and freedom in seeking and knowing the truth; the right to share in the work which makes wise use of the earth’s material resources, and to derive from that work the means to support oneself and one’s dependents; and the right freely to establish a family, to have and to rear children through the responsible exercise of one’s sexuality. In a certain sense, the source and synthesis of these rights is religious freedom, understood as the right to live in the truth of one’s faith and in conformity with one’s transcendent dignity as a person. Even in countries with democratic forms of government, these rights are not always fully respected. Here we are referring not only to the scandal of abortion, but also to different aspects of a crisis within democracies themselves, which seem at times to have lost the ability to make decisions aimed at the common good.

This teaching seems most relevant in our times.

Rights must be protected. But for this to happen, men and women must recognize that rights flow from moral truth. The “Dictatorship of Relativism” that Pope Benedict XVI spoke of in the homily delivered right before the conclave that elected him, endangers the very idea of rights. Without moral truth, there is no “deep theory” upon which to ground human rights. This is why Pope John XXIII in *Pacem in Terris* reminded us of the connection between rights and the natural moral law that can be known by all men and women of good will. He also emphasized the link between rights and responsibilities:

These rights and duties derive their origin, their sustenance, and their indestructibility from the natural law, which in conferring the one imposes the other. . . . Once this is admitted, it follows that in human society one man’s natural right gives rise to a corresponding duty in other men; the duty, that is, of recognizing and respecting that right. Every basic human right draws its authoritative force from the natural law, which confers it and attaches to it its respective duty. Hence, to claim one’s rights and ignore one’s duties, or only half fulfill them, is like building a house with one hand and tearing it down with the other (28, 30).

Thus, we see in the modern Magisterium of the

Church the recognition that the promotion and protection of human rights (with their corresponding duties) is part of the mission of the Church as she proclaims and lives the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Distorting Talk about Rights

Before she was Ambassador both for and to the Vatican, Mary Ann Glendon was (and is) a legal scholar at Harvard. Twenty years ago she wrote in her masterful work *Rights Talk: The Impoverishment of Political Discourse* of the dangers associated with a political culture focused on “rights talk” that had lost its moorings in moral truth, a common vision and the pursuit of the common good. In her analysis, Ambassador Glendon saw the dangers of self-centeredness and short-term thinking that would ensue. Coupled with consumerism, she foresaw a drastic decline of public life and discourse. One only needs to

“surf” for a short time today’s 24/7 cable “news” channels or peruse the headlines to see how prophetic Professor Glendon was.

However, Professor Glendon’s prescription was not to abandon rights talk but to renew it. This too is the desire of the Church’s Magisterium. What is needed today, more than ever, is a robust understanding of the origins, meaning and purpose of human rights and responsibilities. As the United States Bishops wrote in their 1998 message *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching*: “The Catholic Tradition teaches that human dignity and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met.” With due acknowledgment to the Los Angeles police department, it would seem that when it comes to human rights, our Christian responsibility is “to protect and serve.” ✠

Reflection on Vlassios Phidas’s “The Authority of the Primate and the Conciliar Institution During the Period of the Ecumenical Councils”

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Professor Vlassios Phidas, Lecturer at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Athens (Greek Orthodox Church of Greece) and the *Institut de Théologie Orthodoxe d’Études Supérieures* of the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Switzerland has written an important article on the Roman primacy. It appears in *Episkepsis* (No. 709, January 2010, pp. 10–18) and is entitled “*L’autorité du Primat et l’institution conciliaire durant la période des conciles œcuméniques*” (“The Authority of the Primate and the Conciliar Institution During the Period of the Ecumenical Councils”). The essay is clearly intended as a contri-

bution to the discussion now being held in conjunction with the International Joint Catholic-Orthodox Theological Commission,² as was his previous essay “Papal Primacy and Patriarchal Pentarchy in the Orthodox Tradition,” published in *The Petrine Ministry: Catholics and Orthodox in Dialogue* edited by Cardinal Walter Kasper.³ In his more recent essay, Prof. Phidas resumes some of the themes and conclusions of “Papal Primacy and Patriarchal Pentarchy in the Orthodox Tradition.” It is my intention here to comment only on selected points in the Jan. 2010 essay and only in so far as it covers the period up to the so-called Great Schism (1054).

The Pentarchy

The main thesis of Prof. Phidas (considering both essays) is that authentic Orthodox ecclesiology is linked to the pentarchial concept of Church government in which the

equal (or virtually equal) status of the five great ancient Sees-Patriarchates (Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem), while having independence in their own territorial patriarchates, collaborated or were held to collaborate and reach consensus in all major decisions concerning the universal Church. Rome, which unquestionably held the “first” rank among the great sees, had nevertheless only one additional function, that of coordinating the decision-making process for the group. No superior decision-making authority or universal jurisdiction attached to the Roman Church and its bishop. All diocesan bishops received the same sacrament and the same authority at their consecration. But the necessary organization of the Church (local, metropolitan, regional, universal) legislated by the ancient conciliar canons brought it about that a greater measure of authority accrued to primates on this higher level (e.g. metropolitan and patriarchal) but always in a manner limited by the canons.

Furthermore, Prof. Phidas does not admit the following: 1) any superior authority or jurisdiction of the Roman bishop directly linked to the office of Peter in the New Testament, 2) or the related conviction that Peter’s ministry and martyrdom in Rome constitute the basis for the primacy of the Roman Church, and 3) any succession in the Roman See to Peter’s leadership of the universal Church originally given him by the Lord as an office to be perpetuated in a Church that would last until the end of time.

Origins of the Pentarchy⁴

In designating the pentarchial form of Church government as the only orthodox, in the sense of *correct*, God-intended form, Prof. Phidas, I think, mistakenly or at least unconvincingly, dates this development to decisions at Chalcedon (451), when, he contends, the five major sees existing as such (and, indeed, existing centuries earlier as great Sees in the case of Rome, Alexandria and Antioch) began to function as a form of organized, collaborative Church government. In his *The Idea of Apostolicity in Byzantium and the Legend of St. Andrew*, (pp. 163–291)⁵, Prof. Dvornik, for example, places the pentarchial theory, its mature formation and acceptance, in the mid-8th century at the time of II Nicaea (787). The major sees, which began as three in 325, became four in 381 and five at Chalcedon, were so identified as the “five” by the Emperor Justinian (527–65). In that sense the Emperor established the pentarchy as an ecclesial

governmental unit. But at no time until the 8th and 9th centuries was the opinion seriously put forward that one of the four Eastern Patriarchates was equal or superior to Rome. Rome was always “the first,” which was not simply a chronological designation but one that indicated superior authority and responsibility.

Although Justinian I declared the “five-sees” concept, reflecting the ecclesiastical geography of his Byzantine Roman Empire, where they were the principal church centers, both he and, later, the Emperors Phocas (602–10) and Justinian II (685–95, 705–11) strongly upheld the superior primacy of the Roman bishop, apart from whom no major decisions were to be made.⁶ Moreover, the Church had already existed and functioned without this concept for roughly five hundred years.

With the Persian and Arab invasions of the 6th, 7th and 8th centuries, however, the Eastern patriarchs (Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem), now in Muslim-dominated areas and troubled by continuing Monophysite controversies, were less able to collaborate actively. Constantinople gained superiority over the other Eastern patriarchs and from some quarters began to send out signals that it was equal to Rome, not “after Rome” but in a kind of dyarchy with Rome because it was the New Rome, the new (since 381) capital of the Empire. Thus the linking of an authentic ecclesiology to the pentarchial concept originating in Justinian’s time reached a new expression in the latter part of the first millennium, to be further developed in various ways in the centuries to follow.

The patriarchates have since, as all know, multiplied in number; some established and later discontinued (Grado-Aquileia–Venice, Pec); others permanently added (Russia, Serbia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Georgia); autocephalous and autonomous churches have emerged. New forms of the “conciliar institution” have developed in the (Latin) Church – in dioceses, archdioceses, provinces, national and regional conferences of Religious/Monastic superiors, national synods, regional synods and the International Episcopal Synod.

Long before the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire collapsed (1453), Constantinople had established its (ecclesial) superiority in the East and continued to exercise that authoritative leadership (with the consent of the Caliphs) into the second millennium.

A Model or the Only Model

It must be asked whether the pentarchial concept so described, linked to a specific area and time in church history, offers an indispensable model for a global church today or whether it is rather an exemplar of the conciliar institution that needs strengthening in the universal Church of our day.

Prof. Phidas seems concerned mainly, however, to limit the final, decisive authority of the Roman bishop and the universal jurisdiction claimed for him as the *protos* of the universal episcopate and of the universal communion of local churches.

A Sweeping Dismissal

In this connection Prof. Phidas makes the astonishing assertion that the testimonies⁷ (of various kinds and from various sources), singly or collectively, from the first millennium, even the first five hundred years, regarding the special authority and jurisdiction of the Roman bishop are “fictive,” imagined, supposed, and are deprived of all significance in attempting to “emancipate,” free or separate the Roman bishop’s authority from the patriarchal system. They have no value of proof in themselves, he says, because they acquire their true canonical value only from their function in ecumenical councils and in the ecclesiastical practice of the first millennium in conformity with the conciliar decisions.

On the contrary, we must say that the scores of testimonies, including conciliar discussions and events, from the first millennium, East and West, to the special authority and jurisdiction of the Roman bishop are overwhelming in number and in no way conflict with conciliar decisions or canons. The proper interpretation of some of these testimonies can be debated but merely asserting one’s own interpretation as right without allowing it to be submitted to careful examination in academic debate (for example, Prof. Phidas’s interpretation of Irenaeus and of the context and import of the Sardican canons) suggests an *ipse dixit* theological method. Summarily sweeping these testimonies off the table as irrelevant cannot be admitted by those who judge them to have importance, indeed key importance, in evaluating all the evidence.

Prof. Phidas relies completely and exclusively on the canons of ancient local and ecumenical councils as regulating the inter-relationships of bishops, metro-

politans, regional exarchs or patriarchs, which customs and canons, however, had themselves to be revised as the church expanded and developed in the designated period of church history under examination. Moreover, these canons do not specifically address the basis, nature and extent of the Roman bishop’s authority.

The linking of the Primate and the conciliar institutions has merit and cogency if this interrelationship is not linked exclusively to the pentarchy and respects other conciliar institutions, particularly those of our own day. The conclusions of our author with regard to the Church of Rome and the Bishop of Rome must be judged seriously incomplete if they omit, as they do, all consideration of the leadership position of Peter in the Scripture and the transmission of that office to the bishop of Rome, as widely attested to in the first millennium.

At the conclusion of his essay, Prof. Phidas does not make clear whether his vigorous affirmation of the pentarchy is intended as an exclusive framework for the reconciliation of the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches today or only an exemplar, not an exclusive model, of the “conciliar institution” which he sees as dominant in that time (the first Christian millennium) and place (the Roman Empire) for the resumption of full communion in our day.

In any case, whatever intermediate and universal levels of government may exist for the good of the universal Church, the authority and jurisdiction they have, Prof. Phidas maintains, must be based on the agreement of bishops in an ecumenical council. That authority does not rest only or at all on any Petrine office schematized in the Scriptures and held to be transmitted by the providence of God to the bishop of Rome, the city in which Peter (and Paul) last ministered and were martyred. If that is Prof. Phidas’s basic thesis, I must conclude that he has not defended successfully his ecclesiological position which is challenged by the numerous testimonies from various sources in the first millennium to the Petrine basis and the final, decisive authority these testimonies ascribe to the bishop of Rome. ✠

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ENDNOTES

1. *Episkepsis* is the Bulletin of Information (*bulletin d'information*) published by the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, 37 Chemin de Chambésy, 1203 Chambésy-Geneve, Suisse.
2. This commission was established in 1978 by agreement of the then Bishop of Rome, Pope Paul VI, and the then Patriarch of Constantinople, Archbishop Demetrius. It will hold its 12th meeting in Vienna September 20–27, 2010.
3. This collection of essays derives from Catholic-Orthodox symposium held in Rome under the auspices of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity in 2003.
4. It is striking that a recent church history * series by Orthodox scholars has no mention in their index of *Pentarchy*. See *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions: The Church 450–680*, John Meyendorff, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 1989; *Greek East and Latin West: The Church AD 681–1071*, Andrew Louth, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007; and *The Church, The Christian East and the Rise of the Papacy*, 1071–1453, Aristeides Papadakis in collaboration with John Meyendorff, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1994. But see *East and West The Making of a Rift in the Church: From Apostolic Times to the Council of Florence*, Henry Chadwick, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003 where the pentarchial concept is amply treated.
5. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1958.
6. See Francis Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy*, New York, Fordham University Press, 1966, pp. 81, 93, 130, 145, 164; and Scott, S.H., *The Eastern Churches and the Papacy*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1928, pp. 231ff.
7. Many of these testimonies have been collected in volumes such as *Documents Illustrating Papal Authority AD 96–451*, edited and introduced by E. Giles, London S.P.C.K., 1952; *The Eastern Churches and the Papacy*, S. Herbert Scott, London, Sheed and Ward, 1928; *The See of Peter*, James T. Shotwell and Louis Ropes Loomis, New York, Columbia University Press/Octagon Books, 1927/1965, and Martin Jugie, *Le Schisme Byzantin*, Paris, Lethielleux, 1941, Part I, especially Chapter II.

Maritain in the Company of His Peers

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It is well known that Robert M. Hutchins as president of the University of Chicago, three times attempted to have Maritain appointed to the faculty of philosophy. The faculty at that time was headed by James Hayden Tufts. Three times Maritain was rejected on various grounds, once because he was proclaimed to be “an apologist.” On another occasion he was rejected because he was thought to be “not a good philosopher.” Hutchins shot back, “Do you have a good philosopher?” The answer, “No, but we will recognize one when we see one.” He was similarly regarded by contemporaries such as Sidney Hook of New York University and Ernest Nagel of Columbia University, both of whom dismissed him with a derogatory remark in one forum or another. One must admit that there is ample ground for regarding him as an apologist. Maritain worked as a philosopher, but he worked within the context of the Catholic faith, devoting much of his work to issues that affected the faith in one way or another.

In an often neglected work, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, a treatise on the nature of scientific explanation, Maritain discusses divine grace, specifically the Western world's abuse of divine grace. In that work, he speaks of

the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and of the rationalist's flight from God as metaphysical suicide. Drawing upon Hilaire Belloc's famous dictum, “Europe is the Faith, the Faith is Europe,” Maritain writes, “If Hilaire Belloc means that Europe would be nothing without the faith and that its very reason for being has been and still is, to dispense faith to the world, he is right in saying Europe is the faith. But absolutely speaking, No, Europe is not the faith and the faith is not Europe. Rome is not the capital of the world. *Urbs caput orbis*. The Church is universal because it is born of God. All nations are at home in it.”¹ He speaks of St. Thomas in a similar vein, suggesting that Thomas is a gift to the whole world by medieval Christianity “who belongs to neither one continent, nor to one century, whose doctrines are as universal as the Church is universal.” All true enough, but one does not expect such remarks in a treatise on the nature of science. Ernest Nagel, whom I just mentioned, was the author of the most widely used textbook in the philosophy of science in the mid-decades of the 20th century and the author of a work entitled, *Sovereign Reason*.² From Nagel's vantage point as a naturalist, or rationalist, Maritain could rightly be seen as an apologist, and indeed he was. Mortimer Adler, speaking of *The Degrees*, offered this defense “I discern in it,” he wrote, “the outlines, at least, of a synthesis of science, philosophy and theology which will do for us what St. Thomas did for philosophy and theology in the Middle Ages. . . . Maritain seems to me to be the only contemporary philosopher who has deeply sensed the

movement of history, and the point at which we stand.”³

On the positive side, Etienne Gilson, while a prisoner of war in Germany, acquired a respect for Maritain from having read two articles by him. Maritain had found a home in the Institut Catholique de Paris that attracted scholars who, like Maritain, wanted to work as Catholics within the Aristotelian and scholastic traditions. Within the institute, professors were free to address such topics as the existence of God, teleology in nature, free will, and moral obligation as a basis of faith, issues which received scant attention in the state universities of the time. Maritain’s work came to the attention of the French bishops, who in their effort to restore Catholic higher education, commissioned Maritain to prepare a series of college-level textbooks for use in the seminaries. Of a projected seven volumes, he completed two. His *Formal Logic* was subsequently translated into Italian and used as a seminary textbook by Giovanni Montini, later Paul VI. While working in the Vatican, Msgr. Montini also translated into Italian Maritain’s *Three Reformers; Luther, Descartes and Rousseau*. As Pope, he quoted Maritain’s work in his encyclical, *Populorum Progresso*, and later, at the end of Vatican II, it was to Maritain that he delivered his papal message to the intellectuals and scientists of the world. At the end of the ceremony, the Pope embraced the aging philosopher in the front of the crowd at St. Peter’s Square.

But I am getting ahead of myself. Leo XIII on becoming Pope in 1878 was quick to endorse a fledgling Thomistic movement with his encyclical, *Aeterni Patris* (1879). Maritain contributed significantly to the movement. It was under Leo’s patronage that the Institut Superior de Philosophie at Louvain opened in 1893 and the School of Philosophy at The Catholic University of America in 1889. Simon Depoloige, as president of the Institut Superior, in 1911, published a critique of Lucien Levy-Bruhl’s *La morale et les science des moeurs*. Well received in Catholic circles, the book immediately enjoyed a second printing, and after the war, was deemed worthy of a third printing (1923) in a series edited by Maritain, much to the chagrin of Etienne Gilson who early on had approvingly called it “an incredible book.” Gilson by that time had become a professor at the Sorbonne, and Lucien Levy-Bruhl was a colleague. From that fortress, Gilson kept a polite distance from the neoscholastics at the Institut Catholique de Paris. As a professor within the University of Paris, Gilson worked primarily as an historian of philosophy, somewhat detached from the polemics of his co-religionists. He was not yet the Thomist of *Being and Some Philosophers*.

Maritain, it may be noted, had passed his *agregation* in 1905 and was entitled to teach in one of the state lycées, but he decided to remain independent of any state affiliation, much to the satisfaction of his friend Ernest Psichari. Given his independence, Maritain proved to be a harsh critic of the prevailing philosophy of his day, the positivism of Comte and the Vienna Circle; he even wrote an unkind critique of the philosophy of his mentor, Henri Bergson. *Three Reformers* was an unmerciful attack on its subjects. But Nicholas Berdjaev in his autobiography had this to say in defense of Maritain, “When he wrote about the opponents of Roman Catholicism or of Thomism, he was harsh and caustic, but in reality he was extremely gentle, urbane, and generous and possessed a remarkable poise of mind and character. Maritain instantly won my heart. There was something irresistibly attractive for me even in his appearance.”⁴ Raïssa would say the same of Jacques, all tooth and claw in attacking doctrine in the abstract but kindly in dealing with the persons who actually held those doctrines.

T.S. Eliot once called Maritain, “the most conspicuous of figures and probably the most powerful force in contemporary philosophy.” That may have been an exaggeration, but the wide-ranging interests of the Maritains in the arts and sciences attracted a wide circle of friends: philosophers, theologians, painters, and poets who would gather at the Maritain home on a Sunday afternoon. Among them were Garrigou-Lagrange, Jean Cocteau, Etienne Gilson, Ernest Psichari, Nicholas Berdyaev, Emmanuel Mounier, François Mauriac, Marc Chagall, and Georges Roualt. Edith Stein was an occasional participant. Eliot in his celebrated Cambridge lecture, subsequently published as *The Idea of a Christian Society*,⁵ acknowledged a debt to Maritain as well as to Christopher Dawson. They had no doubt written to each other for Maritain corresponded widely. Among those correspondents was Thomas Merton, who showed me some letters that Maritain had written shortly after the death of his beloved Raïssa. Merton found them unintelligible and so did I, not the least because of my limited French. I don’t know what to make of a comment by the Protestant theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, “Maritain possessed a quality of character that one would define as saintly, if that word had not such various connotations.”⁶

I could continue in this vein indefinitely for Maritain touched the lives of many, pupils and colleagues to be sure, and countless others through his numerous books. We will give Yves Simon, who studied under Maritain at the Institut Catholique in the 1920s, the last

tribute. He said of his professor, “Maritain’s books bear the decisive characteristics of Great Books which is inexhaustibility. There is no end to the teaching you can draw from a Great Book. That is what we realize every time we read a book of Maritain.”⁷ The same could be said of Simon’s own works.

I now turn to the unfavorable reception by his co-religionists of Maritain’s last complete book, *De l’Église du Christ*, a work published in English translation in the year of his death.⁸ It was ignored by the secular media and given scant notice in the Catholic press. It followed by seven years the publication of *Le Paysan de la Garonne*,⁹ which had earned Maritain the enmity of the Catholic left for its critique of some of the theology developing in the wake of Vatican II. John Courtney Murray in *We Hold These Truths* (1960) noted happily that the Church in North America was not divided between left and right as it was with destructive consequences in Europe. By the close of Vatican II, the European virus had spread to North America. Maritain, who had been the darling of the liberal Catholic intelligentsia because of his social philosophy, was suddenly ostracized, his later works ignored. For Maritain a liberal social policy did not presuppose a liberal Catholic theology, certainly not one at war with the intellectual heritage of the Church.

In none of his critical studies does Maritain present himself as a theologian. He writes as a Catholic layman, as a philosopher, noticing the ambiguities, inconsistencies, and repudiations of key elements of the Catholic faith by prominent and influential theologians, who still called themselves somewhat dubiously “Catholic.” No stranger to debate, Maritain challenged deviant positions with his customary acuity but without much success. Hardly surprising; the left characteristically avoids debate, preferring to ignore or ridicule its critics, which it easily does with the aid of a willing secular media. In the case of Maritain, he was simply ignored although one can find snide comments in the writings of a number of Catholic authors.

Maritain’s ill treatment aside, his work proved to be prescient in a number of ways. John Paul II’s *Fides et Ratio* and Benedict’s *Dominus Iesus*, carry elements of the debate, emphasizing the importance of philosophy to theology and the tendency of the ecumenical dialogue to blur irreconcilable differences in the interest of accommodation.

In *de l’Église du Christ* Maritain speaks of the “profoundly troubled historical moment” at which he was writing. Recognizing the need for an ecumenical out-

reach, he nevertheless decries the search for a spurious universalism whose first condition seems to be indifference with respect to truth. It is foolish, he holds, to attempt to unite all Christians in spite of their dissidences and all men in spite of the diversity of their beliefs. The great utopian ideal—unity of all Christians—can only be achieved with a complete disregard for the truth. One hears of “ecumenical dialogue” but not “ecumenical friendship.” Is it not friendship, he asks, which is first required, well-established habits of friendship, created by fraternal banquets, eating, drinking, and smoking together, conversing at random, and joking? Such is far more useful than “the meetings of commissions with their definite programs, their reports, and their speeches. . . . The meal taken in common is a natural rite of human friendship.”¹⁰

The subtitle of *On the Church of Christ: The Person of the Church and Her Personnel*, is indicative of a distinction that is crucial, Maritain believes, to an understanding of the Church. “Churchmen will never be the Church,” he writes. One can take a detached view, making positive and negative assessments of the activity of Churchmen throughout the centuries while remaining confident of the holiness of the Church itself. This fundamental distinction runs throughout the book, the difference between the “person of the Church” and “her personnel,” that is, between the Church visible to the intellect and the Church as visible to the eyes. “The person of the Church,” writes Maritain, “can be holy while being composed of members who are all sinners to some degree.”¹¹ Indeed, members who are holy can be guilty of gross error in their prudential judgments. Noble purposes can be pursued by ignoble means or frustrated by actions gone awry or by miscalculation and adverse circumstances.

That distinction made, Maritain defends the person of the Church while admitting the evils perpetrated in her name. No critic or cynic is likely to draw a longer list of the “sins of the Church,” but those sins exist for the most part only in the popular mind, and it is surprising that Maritain took some of those alleged sins at face value. Serious scholarship in recent decades has challenged the popular take on most issues. Etienne Gilson, as a careful historian, would have been slow to apologize for sins of the Church that she or her Churchmen did not commit.

There is one area where Maritain forcefully comes to the defense of the Churchmen—namely, the treatment of the Jews. “The hatred of the Jewish people in the Middle Ages was the deed of the populace and of

many in the bourgeoisie and in the nobility and many in the lower clergy. The high personnel of the Church, the Papacy above all, remained free from it.”¹² He continues, “The Popes, even the ones most severe in their legislation, never knew this hatred.”¹³ It was in the papal states that the Jews fared best. “During the whole of the Middle Ages and the darkest periods of the latter, it was the Popes who were their greatest protectors and defenders.”¹⁴

Maritain recognized that he was writing in “the midst of a tempest of widely diffused foolish ideas”¹⁵ and that much of what he says will displease many. Yet he hoped that however poorly he has said it, that in 50 years time the judgment may be made that “after all, it was not so stupid.” In fact, Maritain could be read as a preamble to Benedict’s declaration, *Dominus Iesus*,¹⁶ which calls to mind certain indispensable elements of Christian doctrine by providing a clear description of the nature of the Church and its mission. The document proclaims, “God has willed that the Church founded by Him be the instrument for the salvation of all humanity . . . This truth does not lessen the sincere respect which the Church has for the religions of the world.”¹⁷ Yet the fullness of Christianity, Benedict insists, is to be found only within the Church, in Christ Himself who is “the way, the truth, and the life.”

One is tempted to compare the work of Jacques Maritain with that of Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900).¹⁸ While Maritain makes an important distinction between the Church and her personnel, Soloviev advances a similar distinction between the Church of Rome and the Latin Church, that is, between the functions of the Pope as Bishop of Rome and as Patriarch of the West. “It is the Church of Rome, not the Latin Church, that is the *mater et magistra omnium Ecclesiarum*: it is the Bishop of Rome, and not the Western Patriarch, who speaks infallibly *ex cathedra*. And Soloviev adds, “We ought not to forget that there was a time when the Bishops of Rome were Greeks.”¹⁹ One could find additional parallels between the thought of Maritain and Soloviev, especially on the role of religion in society, on law and morality, and on the treatment of the Jews.²⁰ Two laymen, philosophers, united by the Catholic faith and a common love for classical philosophy, especially Aristotle, writing across the divide wrought by the Great Schism, contribute by virtue of

their professional skills to a common understanding of the Church, later taught magisterially in *Fides et Ratio* and *Dominus Iesus*. ✠

ENDNOTES

- 1 Jacques Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, trans. from the 4th French edition by G.B. Phelan (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1959), p. 17.
- 2 Cf. the widely used textbook by Ernest Nagel, *The Structure of Science: Problems in the Logic of Scientific Explanation* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961). Also *Sovereign Reason* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1954).
- 3 Donald and Idella Gallagher, *The Achievement of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain: A Bibliography, 1906–1961* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1962), p. 16.
- 4 Gallagher, op. cit., p. 11.
- 5 T.S. Eliot, *The Idea of a Christian Society* (London: Faber, 1939).
- 6 *Washington Post*, April 29, 1973.
- 7 Gallagher, op. cit., p. 26.
- 8 Jacques Maritain, *De l’Église du Christ*, Trans. By Joseph W. Evans (*On the Church of Christ: The Person of the Church and Her Personnel*) (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973).
- 9 *Le Paysan de la Garonne* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1966).
- 10 Ibid., p. 111.
- 11 Ibid., p. 138.
- 12 Ibid., p. 167.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid., p. 168.
- 15 Ibid., p. 241.
- 16 Promulgated June 16, 2000, with the approval of John Paul II and signed by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.
- 17 Ibid., p. 14.
- 18 Cf. *Politics, Law, Morality: Essays by V.S. Soloviev*, ed. and trans. by Vladimir Wozniuk (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
- 19 *Untranslated Collected Works of Vladimir Soloviev (SSVS)*, Vol. 13, p. 188, as quoted by Gregory Flazov “Vladimir Soloviev and the Idea of Papacy,” *Communio*, 24, Spring 1997, p. 130.
- 20 Cf. *Politics, Law, Morality: Essays by V.S. Soloviev*, ed. and trans. by Vladimir Wozniuk. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

Some Observations Relating to Pope Benedict XVI's Comments about Business Theory and Practice in His Third Encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, Charity in Truth

by Philip Crotty, Professor Emeritus, Northeastern University

In June of 2009 Pope Benedict issued the third encyclical of his pontificate, *Caritas in Veritate*. The encyclical was intended as a further development of the Church's social teaching with particular reference to Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, *Progress of Peoples*, which addressed the question of Third World economic and social development. *Caritas* is sober in tone and seems to reflect disappointment at the rate of fulfillment of Paul VI's hopes for development during these past 40 years. The new encyclical has a number of comments relating to business policy and practice as they relate to economic development. I propose in this article to extract these themes and make my own comments on them.

1. On International Finance: Along with just about everyone else the pope decries the “damaging effects on the real economy of badly managed and largely speculative financial dealing” (Section 21). This can be seen in tightened credit, massive bailouts of financial institutions, the housing market in turmoil, etc. Pope Benedict XVI wants the financial system to be geared to true development without the abuse of sophisticated financial instruments which can lead to the betrayal of the interests of savers. Finance should go back to being “an instrument directed toward improved wealth creation and development” (65). It is hard to quarrel with any of this. This section was supposedly added in the aftermath of the world financial crisis.

2. On Profit: There are several references to profit and the tone is unenthusiastic. Section 21 concedes that profit “is useful if it serves as a means toward an end that provides a sense of how to produce and how to make good use of it.” The meaning here is obscure. Of course, profit is a measurement of the success and health

of a business. The economist Milton Friedman always advocated the maximization of profit by legal and ethical means since then the resulting resources would be available to accomplish several kinds of goals: personal (stockholder), social (through producing desirable products and taxation for distribution), and economic (interactions with the wider economy). This is at least clear, even if controversial, in contrast to the statement in the encyclical above. The section continues, “Once profit becomes the exclusive goal, if it is produced by improper means, and without the common good as its ultimate end, it risks destroying wealth and creating poverty.” This essentially is a truism with which I suspect even Milton Friedman would agree.

3. On Capital and Capitalism: The encyclical reiterates a point made by Pope John Paul II (cf. *Centissimus Annus* 24) that “the primary capital to be safeguarded is man, the human person in his or her integrity” (25). It is important to be reminded of this essential truth but this is hardly new to the American corporate scene which in recent years has given considerable emphasis to the “human capital movement” and “the human potential movement.” It is true that these “movements” have had their origins in human resources (personnel) circles and have not always penetrated to the core of corporate values, but at least at some level they have been fairly widespread.

4. On the Short-Term Economy: The pope points out that it is important “to distinguish between short and long-term economic and sociological considerations. . . . Moreover, the human consequences of current tendencies toward a short-term economy — sometimes very short-term—need to be carefully evaluated” (32). Certainly the current crisis has brought out the frequent pressures on executives, especially financial executives, to maximize short-term profits, but it is true of the

non-financial sectors as well. It is not the present economic situation that has given rise to criticisms of short-term emphases. For some years now this has been a constant refrain in business schools, not only in Finance courses but in Business Policy courses as well, but recent events have reinforced what for a long time had been Cassandra-like warnings from business theorists and other academics.

5. On Social Responsibility and Stakeholder Management: The encyclical asserts that there is increasing need for greater social responsibility on the part of business. “There is nevertheless a growing conviction that business management cannot concern itself only with the interests of the proprietors, but must assume responsibility for the other stakeholders who contribute to the life of the business: the workers, the clients, the suppliers of various elements of production, the community of reference” (40). It is a bit of a delicious irony that Enron enjoyed a very felicitous reputation in its community for its contributions to the local society. In fact, a firm will be “socially responsible” whether it likes it or not. For example, the public-be-damned attitude of the late 19th century was modified by the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 regulating the rapacious railroads, the dominant business enterprise then, and later on by Teddy Roosevelt’s Food and Drug regulations. What is missing from the “stakeholder responsibility” thesis is where shareholders fit into all of this. Are they just one of several equal constituencies or are they still the premier stakeholder? If they don’t remain #1 it remains unclear that they would invest in the first place. Interestingly, Theodore Vail, famous President of AT&T in the 1920s, saw what had happened to the rapacious railroads under the Interstate Commerce Commission. He structured a three-legged stool of social responsibility—consisting of shareholders, employees, and customers. He provided a nine dollar annual dividend to shareholders, which kept them satisfied, and then gave the rest of the company’s concern to the two other stakeholders, an early stakeholder approach. Thus the stakeholder emphasis is not of recent vintage. This writer has taught courses on “Business & Society” and “Managing Social Issues” for 40 years. To illustrate the role of social pressures by nongovernmental groups, currently the oil companies in Nigeria have joined the government in “contributing to the society” under enormous pressure from the “reformed rebels” who have been harassing the oil companies by vandalism and violence to persons for some years now. It is clear

that “social responsibility” is going to take place one way or the other: by law, by pressure, or by a socially responsible attitude of management.

6. On Social Security and Unions: The pope decries downsizing of social security and lack of union strength. “as the price to be paid for seeking greater competitive advantage in the global market, with consequent grave danger for the rights of workers, for fundamental human rights, and for the solidarity associated with the traditional forms of the social State. ... Through the combination of social and economic change, trade union organizations experience greater difficulty in carrying out their task of representing the interests of workers, partly because governments, for reasons of economic utility, often limit the freedom or the negotiating capacity of labor unions” (25). This strikes this writer as overstated. In First World countries there has been in recent years some minor trimming of worker benefits, which often can be overly generous, and tend to lock workers into immobility and unwillingness to change as the dynamism of the economy requires, although the Thatcher Government in Britain did institute sweeping labor-union changes many years ago. There is no question that union influence has waned under the pressure of economic and social change, but using the United States as an example, I note that labor laws and regulations have remained essentially intact, but the economy has changed and circumstances encouraging union membership and activity have fundamentally altered. One may regret the disinclination of today’s workers to form unions but there is little preventing them from doing so if they wish. The “card check” campaign now in Congress is as much a sign of union desperation as it is a sign of political strength. This writer has little knowledge of unions in the Third World.

7. On Ethics: The pope points out quite properly that contemporary ethical concepts can be vague and so flexible as to allow almost any definition. In the pope’s mind, “*The economy needs ethics in order to function correctly*—not any ethics whatever, but an ethics which is people-centered. ... The Church’s social doctrine ... is based on man’s creation ‘in the image of God’ (Gen 1:27), a datum which gives rise to the inviolable dignity of the human person and the transcendent value of natural moral norms” (45) The pope then adds, “When we consider the issues involved in the relationship between business and ethics it would appear that

the traditionally valid distinction between profit-based companies and non-profit organizations can no longer do full justice to reality, or offer practical direction for the future” (46). He advocates a “new composite reality embracing the private and public spheres” which does not exclude profit but considers it a means of achieving human and social ends. There have been some initiatives along these lines but more as cooperative ventures rather than full-blown combinations. The full consequences

of this idea are not yet clear and also unclear is whether this is an ethical idea or a practical idea with ethical consequences. At any rate, the proliferation of business ethics courses in recent years seems not to have dampened down the many instances of unethical business behavior. Finally, Benedict advocates fraternal reciprocity since “[s]olidarity is first and foremost a sense of responsibility of everyone with regard to everyone” (38), which is perhaps the ultimate ethic. ✠



BOOK REVIEWS

Writing the Way: The Story of a “Classic.” Russell Shaw. New York: Scepter Publishers, 2010. 102 pages.

Reviewed by William E. May, Emeritus Professor Pope John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family and Senior Fellow, Culture of Life Foundation.

Purpose and contents

Shaw wrote this short but excellent book in order “to introduce new readers to *The Way*” and “to help people who already know and admire *The Way* to understand it better” (p. 13). Shaw begins with a description of *The Way*: It is a small volume, often published in pocket- or purse-sized editions, consisting of 999 short “points” intended to serve as starting-points for meditation and personal prayer (p. 2). Here are two examples: No. 2. “May your behavior and your conversation be such that everyone who sees or hears you can say: ‘This man lives the life of Jesus Christ.’” No. 5. “Get used to saying No.”

To achieve his twofold purpose Shaw takes a “closer look” at this spiritual Classic and at its author. It was

necessary to consider that St. Josemaría Escrivá, its author, wrote *The Way* as one friend to another. Shaw says that it embodies, as it were, Cardinal Newman’s motto “*cor ad cor loquitur*.”

Shaw gives an initial and important glimpse of the personality of St. Josemaría in his first chapter, entitled “A Book of Fire and the Universal Call to Holiness.” Shaw finds the expression “Book of Fire” in an “Intimate Note”¹ the founder of Opus Dei penned on August 7, 1930. In it he said he would like to write a “book of fire” and described the category as “books that can race across the world like burning flames and set people ablaze with their light and heat, turning poor hearts into red-hot coals to be offered to Jesus as rubies for his royal crown” (p. 1). He did not himself consider *The Way* that kind of book, regarding its aims too modest and its origins too humble to meet the standards of a book of fire. But that is the kind of book it is. Shaw notes that since its first publication shortly after the end of the Spanish Civil War until today worldwide sales of *The Way* total more than 4.5 million and it has been translated into 43 languages.

The Universal Call to Sanctity

A central message of this “book of fire” is that *all Christians*, lay as well as clergy and religious, are called by God in Christ to become saints—canonizable saints. St. Josemaría realized this clearly years before Vatican Council II opened everyone’s eyes to this truth. *The Way* makes it clear the ordinary laypeople, husbands, wives, their children, doctors, lawyers, teachers, truck drivers, janitors, etc. are called to sanctity and called to sanctity not by leaving their ordinary everyday work but precisely in and through that work. St. Josemaría was adamantly opposed to clericalism, a false and anti-Catholic idea unfortunately still operative in the minds of many priests and laity.

A Profitable Lesson for Our Soul

On October 2, 1928, when he was 26 and a priest for only a few years, while making a retreat, Josemaría “saw” Opus Dei” or the “Work” of God. Describing his experience the Saint wrote: “I received an illumination *about the entire Work*. . . . Deeply moved, I knelt down—I was alone in my room—and gave thanks to the Lord” (p. 20). Shaw

writes that Escrivá had not received a blueprint—even the name came later. “But what he had received was...a compelling vision of the vocation shared by all Christians to reach sanctity in and through the circumstances of their ordinary lives, and most naturally lived in the midst of the secular world doing secular work...” (p. 20). Shaw goes on to describe in detail the meager resources Escrivá had at his disposal to get the “Work” off the ground, in particular in the Spain of his day, a country whose unity was fragile and at that time on the verge of a savage civil war.² Father Josemaría himself was a hunted animal, and Shaw relates his escape from Nationalist Spain through the Pyrenees to Angora and then into Republican Spain (pp.37-38).

How The Way Was Written

I earlier noted that St. Josemaría had compiled 9 substantive “notebooks,” and that many of the spiritual reflections found in them are later found, almost verbatim, in *The Way* (see footnote 1). But between the “notebooks” and *The Way* we find a pamphlet entitled *Consideraciones Espirituales* or “Spiritual Considerations.” On December 27, 1932 St. Josemaría finished a 17 page pamphlet under that title. It contained 246 “points” thematically arranged. In the summer of 1933 Escrivá mimeographed a second set of 87 points for another pamphlet of seven pages and this was later assimilated into the *Consideraciones Espirituales* and later still into *The Way*. In 1934, the first printed predecessor of *The Way* was printed. Its contents were the two earlier pamphlets plus 107 new points from the sixth and seventh notebooks. “The major advance of this 1934 text was its division into 22 chapters that paralleled the structure of the 46 chapters in *The Way*” (p. 43). Josemaría then began thinking of the possibility of a wider audience and thus revised points that dealt specifically with issues of concern to Opus Dei. Despite some obstacles presented by opposition and misunderstanding of Opus Dei in Spain and the horrible Civil War, St. Josemaría managed to bring the work to completion in 1939, with the final text readied on the Feast of St. Joseph of that year.

Up the Inclined Plane

This is the title of the 4th chapter of Shaw’s work. Shaw discovered that St. Josemaría used this expression himself in describing *The Way*: He said he had “tried to construct a very long inclined plane that souls would climb, little by little, gradually understanding God’s call, until finally they became contemplative souls in the middle of the street” (p.52). Relying on the studies of Father Pedro Rodriquez, Shaw uses this concept as a way of showing how *The Way* is organized. Its 999 points are arranged in 46 chapters. According to Rodriquez these chapters are organized into 3 parts which in turn are subdivided into 2 sections. Part One, on following Christ the way, considers in its sections prayer, atonement, examination, and interior life, work, and love, and includes chapters 1-21; Part Two, on moving toward sanctity in the Church, devotes its sections to the Church, the Eucharist, communion of saints, and faith, virtues, and interior struggle and comprises chapters 21-35; Part Three, on being fully in Christ, focuses in its sections on the will and glory of God and spiritual childhood, and vocation and apostolic mission and embraces chapters 36-46 (p. 53). Shaw acknowledges that there are other ways of organizing the contents of *The Way* and that the organization Rodriquez suggests is not given by Escrivá himself. Nonetheless, he thinks it makes sense and he thus makes use of it in this chapter.

It is most important to keep in mind that *The Way* is not a textbook in spiritual or ascetical theology but a book written passionately, heart to heart. Its approach is “existential and practical” (p. 54). By examining some of *The Way*’s 999 points, Shaw then illustrates how this existential and practical approach, given *The Way*’s historical and personal background, supports Rodriquez’s way of organizing it. But before examining a small number of those points, Shaw first emphasizes that for his sources, St. Josemaría turned to “his experiences with students, soldiers, bishops and priests, sick people, men and women in all social strata, and, most remarkable of all, to God’s intervention in his life.” He then calls attention to what Escrivá himself said about the “inclined plane” in a homily

in 1970, where he insisted that a Christian’s struggle to become a saint must be unceasing, beginning anew each day, demanding that one with God’s help get up from one’s falls, for our Lord “was moved as much by Peter’s repentance after his fall as by John’s innocence and faithfulness.” In short, Jesus “understands our weakness and draws us to himself on an inclined plane. He wants us to make an effort to climb a little every day” (cited on p. 56).

The balance of the chapter examines points from the different sections of each of the three parts. There are 516 points in Part One, 237 points in Part Two, and 246 in Part Three. As can be seen, Part One is the longest and of its 516 points 264 points are found in section one, and of these 55 belong to Chapter 1, “On Character,” whose points challenge the Christian to rouse from his stupor and laziness and answer the call to become a saint. Chapter 2’s 24 points focus on Direction, and the need for any Christian who seriously wants to become a saint to put himself under the direction of a spiritual advisor who can help him in his daily struggles in order to get moving up the inclined plane. Shaw then shows how section 2 of Part One examines the conditions for continued progress in the interior life on the part of those who have begun to get moving. He does the same for sections 1 and 2 of Part Two and for sections 1 and 2 of Part Three, insofar as progressing in the interior life for a Christian requires him to go up the inclined plane *in the Church*, strengthened by the Eucharist, supported by the communion of saints, growth in the virtues, not only the supernatural virtues of faith, hope and charity but human virtues like amiability, etc, and finally (Part Three) culminates with deeper and fuller union with God, whose will and glory we are to manifest and to do so by becoming like little children, who have a sublime vocation and who are summoned to be Christ’s apostles *in the secular world in which we live* (pp. 56-81). Here I have tried to capture what Shaw does in these pages, but readers need to read the work to appreciate properly his development of all this, illustrated by his examination of specific points and historical conditions

Originality of St. Josémaría Escrivá

In his final chapter Shaw takes up this matter. He begins by citing John Allen of the *National Catholic Reporter* who wrote an excellent book on Opus Dei and its founder. Allen writes that the idea embodied in Opus Dei is “an explosive concept, with the potential for unleashing Christian energy in many areas of behavior” (p. 85). This is true, but Shaw wants to show in this chapter that Escrivá drew on a wide variety of sources, but did so in a way that he left his own personal print on them and in doing so brought into being something quite original.

Take the idea that people working in the world are called to be saints. This was surely the message the great St. Francis de Sales sought to spread in the 17th century, that St. Vincent Pallotti promoted in the 19th, and that Pope Pius XI sought to spread with his call for the laity to be involved in “Catholic Action.” And obviously the idea of spiritual childhood, central to Part Three of *The Way*, was fundamental to the teaching of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. Certainly our Saint used these sources. But he was still quite original. He was so first because he reshaped these ideas and made them something new, and second because the something new he made of them was the Work itself, or Opus Dei (pp. 86–87).

Shaw then goes on to show in depth how St. Josémaría’s ideas about the apostolate and lay sanctity transformed those ideas as understood by de Sales, Pallotti, the little Flower and Pope Pius XI. First of all, for the founder of Opus Dei the apostolate of the laity is not, as was Pius’s understanding of “Catholic Action,” a participation in the apostolate of the hierarchy. Lay people do not need a mandate from bishops or others to act as apostles in the world. That is precisely an essential aspect of their vocation by virtue of their baptism to follow Christ and to participate in the redemptive mission of the Church and in doing so in Christ’s own redemptive work. His idea of the apostolate of the laity wondrously preceded the same idea as found in key documents of Vatican Council II—the dogmatic constitution on the Church and the decree on the apostolate of the laity (p.87).

Secondly, Josémaría emphasized the unity of the Christian life. Vatican

II noted with sadness that too many Christians dichotomized their lives—they were Christian believers on Sundays but put their faith aside when they went to work each day. The Founder of Opus Dei was keenly aware of this problem from the very beginning of his vision of Opus Dei and the absurdity of living in this way. With St. Paul and Pope John Paul II later, Josémaría understood clearly the need for unity of life and that the key principles for achieving such unity are commitment and vocation. By commitment he meant a choice that puts one’s life into a framework into which other choices must be integrated. Thus when one marries, one commits oneself to his or her spouse and to be willing to do all that is essential for deepening their love day by day; one marries one’s spouse and not one’s job. Well, for the Christian, the most fundamental commitment is the baptismal commitment to be a saint precisely because of our divine filiation—through baptism we now become truly “children of God,” members of the divine. Thus we must struggle to make all that we choose to do or not do contribute to making us the saints we are called to be. And that leads Shaw, and us, to consider the second key principle of the unity of life, namely vocation,

Our vocation for Escrivá is apostolic and evangelistic, an aspect of our divine filiation as children of God. It is also unique to each person: while many have the common vocation to be mothers or fathers, each mother and father has a unique vocation because they are given unique children, each different from the other with his or her talents, difficulties etc. Thus we must see how we can personally answer the common vocation to parenthood, marriage, and sanctity.

Conclusion

Shaw has written a most helpful work. I highly recommend it.

ENDNOTES

1 Shaw later explains “Intimate Note.” St. Josémaría did not keep a diary because he didn’t like one. But he always kept slips of paper in his pocket on which he wrote notes every day, at his confessor’s command, of persons, stories of events, exercises etc. and later he polished up these brief notes and recorded them in a bound notebook of *Apuntes Intimos*

(*Intimate Notes*). Eventually he filled 9 such notebooks packed with all kinds of material falling into 4 broad categories: those dealing with the spirit, mission and structure of Opus Dei; those of autobiographical, spiritual nature; those reporting everyday events and activities such as visits, pastoral work, family concerns etc; and “considerations” drawing on the first three categories and offering practical lessons for Christian life. Saint Josémaría, himself, burned the first of these notebooks in the mid-1930s. Many passages from them appeared almost verbatim as “points” in *The Way* (see pp.39-41).

2 The war, one of the most savage in history, lasted from 1935-1939. The militia of revolutionary parties, especially the Communist, violently attacked Catholic churches and priests. George Orwell, a man of the anti-Stalinist left, wrote in a book about his experiences in that war. In it he dismissed as a “pitiful” lie the claim that leftist attacked churches only if used as bases for enemy troops. Orwell declared: “Actually, churches were pillaged everywhere and as a matter of course. . . . In six months in Spain I saw only two undamaged churches, and until about July 1937 no churches were allowed to reopen and hold services, except for two Protestant Churches in Madrid” (cited on p. 35).

What Happened to Notre Dame?

Charles E. Rice. South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2009, 192 pages, \$15.00

Reviewed by D. Q. McNerny, *Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary, Denton, Nebraska*

Already there has been much written on the subject of the University of Notre Dame’s fateful decision to invite President Barack Obama to deliver its 2009 commencement address and to confer upon him an honorary law degree, but to date the most complete and informative account of that event, along with a very informative discussion of the full range of its implications, is to be found in Charles E. Rice’s *What Happened to Notre Dame?* As a long time member of the University of Notre Dame’s Law School faculty, Professor Rice addresses us as a knowledgeable and sensitive insider, and as one who has deep affection for the institution about which he writes.

Even a passing acquaintance with history tells us that a really significant

event rarely comes as a bolt out of the blue; it is invariably preceded by any number of tell-tale preliminary events, a knowledge of which makes the really significant event, if not precisely predictable, at least the kind of thing which was not totally unexpected. To cite an image Professor Rice uses in his book, if one takes note over time of the steady and neglected erosion of a dam, its eventually bursting does not come as a complete surprise. Let the Obama invitation to Notre Dame represent the bursting of the dam; Professor Rice's book tells us of the steady process of erosion that led up to it.

Before getting into the book proper, it would be appropriate to say a few words about its Introduction, written by Alfred J. Freddoso, for thirty years a professor of philosophy at the University of Notre Dame. He tells us candidly that he was neither shocked nor scandalized by the Obama invitation, and that is because, like Professor Rice, he saw it as just the type of happening which, if not strictly inevitable, had become almost typical at Notre Dame. The institution has lost its proper focus, as evidenced by its "steadily intensifying and often frustrated aspiration to be regarded as a major player on the American educational scene," and this resulting in, among several other problems, "the concomitant segregation of faith from reason" (xii). Notre Dame has become more concerned—to the point of obsession, it would seem—with gaining worldly prestige than preserving an authentic Catholic identity, so that it has now become one of those many institutions which can be called Catholic only in a qualified sense. What Notre Dame is not, Professor Freddoso insists, "—and has not been since I have been here—is a *Catholic university*," that is, a place "where the Catholic faith pervades and enriches, and is itself enriched by, the intellectual life on campus" (xii). And this is explained by the fact that for several decades "the university was being led by pragmatists who did not have a comprehensive philosophical vision of Catholic higher education." (xxiii) So, what price the peculiar kind of glory that Notre Dame seemingly has achieved? What is the real worth of a six billion dollar endowment if only five percent of the institution's student body can be identified as seriously commit-

ted Catholics? Professor Freddoso ends his assessment of the status quo at Notre Dame with the sobering observation that "the present situation is inherently unstable" (xxix).

The first five chapters of Professor Rice's book recount the particulars surrounding President Obama's visit to Notre Dame. We learn that it was only after the invitation was extended, and accepted by the White House, that Bishop John D'Arcy of Fort Wayne-South Bend was informed of the fact by university officials. And this was but one of the rude and disrespectful ways by which the local ordinary was treated by the Notre Dame administration throughout the entire affair. Not surprisingly, Bishop D'Arcy vigorously opposed Notre Dame's decision. This, in itself, was nothing new, for over the years he had opposed any number of erratic moves made by the institution. In this instance, he broke a long-standing precedent and notified the university that he would not be attending the commencement ceremonies.

The thunderous nation-wide negative response to the invitation is not to be wondered at, especially in light of the particulars of President Obama's consistent and comprehensive anti-life record as a politician, which Professor Rice carefully records. Could it really have come as a surprise to Notre Dame officials that so many thousands of people, many of them alumni, reacted as vigorously as they did when the institution decided to bestow its highest honors upon a man who was accurately characterized by Notre Dame graduate Lacy Dodd as "the most pro-choice President in our history." (38) If indeed they were surprised, that would only indicate the highly selective manner in which they have attuned themselves to the temper of the times.

In reaction to the reaction, the university made two vain attempts to justify its decision. First, it floated the suggestion that abortion is best regarded as just another issue, about which sincere people could disagree, thus denying a stark reality: that abortion is a gross violation of the universal moral law, a law by which all human beings, if they are to retain their humanity, must abide. The effort to politicize abortion in this way, to pretend that it is anything but a defining issue, was disconcerting

enough, but, as Professor Rice points out, it represented a strategy which Notre Dame had been following for a number of years. He forthrightly sets the record straight: "Abortion, however, is a defining issue, because it is the state-authorized intentional killing of an innocent human being." (11)

Notre Dame's decision to make President Obama its commencement speaker and to grant him a degree was a clear and direct violation of a mandate published by the U.S. Bishops' Conference: "Catholic institutions should not honor those who act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles." (18) The second tack taken by the Notre Dame administration by way of trying to justify their decision—one which was as brash as it was ill-advised—was to twist and turn the episcopal statement in such ways so that it should be read as having no application to Notre Dame and its decision. Bishop D'Arcy promptly issued a detailed statement which thoroughly demolished Notre Dame's self-serving efforts at *ad hoc* exegesis. The American hierarchy have not been particularly noteworthy in recent decades for speaking out unambiguously and forcefully on issues of real moment, which makes all the more remarkable the fact that in this case no fewer than eighty-three bishops declared publicly and decisively against Notre Dame. This was a telling indication of just where that institution now stands in relation to the teaching authority of the Church.

The commencement ceremony itself, which "had the air of a political rally," (34) and during which Notre Dame officials "behaved like sycophantic courtiers," (29) would doubtless have been regarded by those officials as a smashing success. The President received a standing ovation for a speech in which he made no compromises in his anti-life positions (so much for the "dialogue" the event was supposedly to engender), the graduating class showing itself to be especially enthusiastic in their response to the guest speaker. But this should not surprise us, for these young people are, after all, but the products of the essentially non-Catholic education which has been the standard product of our institutions in the post-Vatican II era. But May 17, 2009 was by no means an entirely dark

day for the University of Notre Dame. There was the official commencement ceremony, with some 12,000 people in attendance, but there was also an alternative ceremony which took place, attended by 3,000 people. This impressive event had been set up by a student-generated movement called ND Response. Bishop D'Arcy, who had boycotted the official ceremony, was present at the alternative ceremony.

So, President Obama gave his address and received another law degree, and Notre Dame, despite all its disclaimers, by thus honoring one of its most adamant and uncompromising advocates, gave its official sanction to the culture of death. The hearty applause Notre Dame received from the AAUP shows a right reading, on the part of that organization, of the real meaning of the university's actions. Though from an entirely different perspective, Mary Ann Glendon, professor at Harvard Law School and former U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican, also read those actions rightly, prompting her to turn down the prestigious *Laetare Medal* which Notre Dame had offered her, and which she was scheduled to receive at the commencement ceremonies. "The problem," Professor Rice writes, "is that Notre Dame cannot have it both ways. It cannot be Catholic without accepting the role of the Church as defined by the Church." The last phrase in that statement is critical. Notre Dame may say that it wants to be Catholic, but it wants to be Catholic on its own terms, not on the terms which are set down, and can only be set down, by the Church herself.

One of the central theses of this book, forcefully argued by Professor Rice, is that the highly problematic state of affairs in which Notre Dame now finds itself is to be traced back to the fateful Land O'Lakes conference of 1967. This was a conference convened by Father Theodore Hesburgh, then the president of Notre Dame, held at a retreat center in Wisconsin, and which was attended by the presidents and chief administrators of the country's leading Catholic institutions of higher learning. Out of this conference came what is commonly known as the Land O'Lakes Statement, which can be properly described as nothing less than

a declaration of independence from the Catholic Church on the part of the institutions represented at the conference, whose spokesmen doubtless believed they were speaking on behalf of all Catholic institutions. That action marked a critical turning point in the history of Catholic higher education in the United States; from 1967 to the present we have borne witness to a steady, seemingly irreversible descent, by what were once clearly identifiable Catholic colleges and universities, into total secularization. It represented, among other things, a surpassing act of ingratitude: a crude rejection, on the part of a petulant progeny, of the mother from whom they had sprung.

The battle cry of Land O'Lakes, raised under the gaudy banner of "academic freedom" (that most slippery of notions, which has fostered a multitude of sins) was "autonomy," an autonomy which it was imperative that the university should enjoy vis-à-vis any extramural authority whatsoever. Such, at any rate, was the heady theory as then propounded. But that was so much "hollow rhetoric," as Professor Rice would put it. The only authority these institutions wanted to be free from was the authority that is represented by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. It was that authority and that authority alone to which they would not bow. As to other authorities, such as government and private funding agencies, well, that was quite another question. To those authorities these same institutions would show themselves to be embarrassingly obsequious.

In the wake of Land O'Lakes, we have seen—apart from a very few honorable exceptions—the once unambiguously Catholic colleges and universities of this country increasingly distancing themselves from the teaching authority of the Church, and if Notre Dame was not the singular leader in this tragic movement, she was certainly among its most prominent pace-setters. The year 1967 also saw the Congregation of the Holy Cross surrender ownership of and administrative control over Notre Dame, an institution which had been founded by one of the congregation's most illustrious members, Father Edward Sorin. Certain actions on the part of Notre Dame previous to Land O'Lakes gave clear

hints as to what was to come, such as the institution's decision to cozy up to the Rockefeller Foundation and give tacit approval to its various anti-life policies, a bit of accommodativeness which, incidentally, redounded to the financial benefit of Notre Dame. Planned Parenthood International, by the way, was one of the participants in a semi-secret conference hosted by Notre Dame in the summer of 1965.

Notre Dame's idea of striving for excellence was for it to become a major "research institution," which meant that its administrators dreamily longed for the day when Notre Dame could be mentioned in the same breath with places like Harvard, Yale, and Princeton—not with respect to their football programs, however. In order to keep up with what were regarded as the "big boys," Notre Dame had to prove to the world that it was not to be considered as inconveniently Catholic, that is, not as Catholic in a way that would in the least bit hinder the promotion of the secular agenda, and so it embarked upon a policy of pick-and-choose "openness." It was this policy which, in 1984, brought Governor Mario Cuomo to Notre Dame and allowed him to explain to the world how it was possible to be a split-personality Catholic public official, i.e., by being "personally against" abortion, while doing nothing to combat it. He promoted the totally erroneous view that abortion is a parochial issue, rather than one which has to do with the universal moral law. For Cuomo, majority opinion trumps the objective moral order. Three years later Notre Dame again effectively endorsed the culture of death mind-set by giving welcome to the militantly pro-abortion Daniel Maguire. And then there was the tawdry business related to Notre Dame's providing a convenient venue for the disgusting and dehumanizing *Vagina Monologues* and that totally dishonest bit of anti-art called *The Last Temptation of Christ*. In its pathetic attempt to justify these abominations, the Notre Dame administration found itself indulging in the most comically convoluted kind of Orwellian language.

The clarion call of Land O'Lakes, as we saw, was autonomy, of a highly selective sort, to be sure—in reference to the Catholic Church only. Professor Rice devotes five chapters of his book

to reflections on that peculiar brand of autonomy. He shows that the institution has in fact succeeded in achieving it, but by doing so it has been slowly expending its spiritual capital. Notre Dame now proudly, and a bit too self-consciously, identifies itself as a “modern research institution” (which means, according to Professor Edward Cronin, that it has become “a small Purdue with a Golden Dome”), but, presuming it to be real, who are the beneficiaries of this marvelous transformation? In its passionate efforts to keep up with the academic Joneses, Notre Dame’s tuition costs have skyrocketed (from \$5,180 per year in 1979 to \$48,850 in 2010), and the value of the undergraduate educational experience has been markedly depreciated. Much time is now spent, by administrators and faculty alike, in the demeaning pursuit of grant money. An institution cannot seriously be called Catholic if the preponderance of its faculty is not Catholic, which is now the situation at Notre Dame. Four decades ago, Catholics made up over 80% of its faculty; today they compose around 50% of the total.

One of the most disconcerting effects of Notre Dame’s so-called autonomy is that it has now effectively set itself up as an alternative magisterium. Professor Rice devotes three chapters to arguing just why Notre Dame needs the authentic Magisterium, upon which it has summarily turned its back. The plain matter of fact is that Notre Dame has no hope of ever recovering itself, as a genuine Catholic institution, without the Magisterium. If it continues to go its own benighted way, it will succumb more and more to what Pope Benedict XVI has poignantly described as the dictatorship of relativism, which bears a close relation, Professor Rice interestingly points out, to the kind of legal positivism promoted by Hans Kelsen. Notre Dame needs the Magisterium as a preventative against its giving itself over to erroneous and self-destructive notions of conscience and of freedom, both of which hold commanding influence in today’s society. In the final part of the book Professor Rice devotes a chapter each to four signal papal encyclicals—*Deus Caritas Est*, *Spe Salvi*, and *Caritas in Veritate* of Benedict XVI, and *Humanae Vitae* of Paul VI—productively relating the doc-

trines they contain to what has been going on at Notre Dame over the past four decades.

If Notre Dame’s troubles began with Land O’Lakes, they have their solution in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, “On Catholic Universities,” the apostolic constitution published by Pope John Paul II in 1990. It is Professor Rice’s eminently tenable contention that if Notre Dame could unreservedly commit itself to the principles laid down in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, it would find itself once again steering the correct course. The Land O’Lakes concept is “incoherent” and “indefensible,” and it has put Notre Dame in the position where it is “substituting for obedience to the Magisterium a subordination to the standards of the secular and academic political establishments.” (101)

If there is any one man who is responsible for what has happened to Notre Dame in recent years, that man would of course be Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., for, not only was he the institution’s president while the eroding events which Professor Rice describes were taking place, he was effectively the chief engineer of Land O’Lakes. His autobiography, *For God, Country, and Notre Dame*, makes it evident that he would not be prepared to admit that Notre Dame’s radical change of course was a wrong one. Professor Rice takes sharp but respectful exception to the point of view fostered by Notre Dame’s former president. He analyzes an address which Father Hesburgh gave in 1967, on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of Notre Dame’s founding, in which he sought to defend the Land O’Lakes concept. But the address, according to Professor Rice, rather than providing a convincing defense, “confirms instead that the autonomy concept of Land O’Lakes is fatally flawed” (144). In that address Father Hesburgh contends that Cardinal Newman’s classic, *The Idea of A University*, is no longer applicable to modern times. Calling in Cardinal Avery Dulles as a supporting witness, Professor Rice quite rightly contends that the basic principles found in Newman’s book are timeless, and therefore are as applicable today as they were when first articulated. Professor Rice takes pointed exception to Father Hesburgh’s view that an institution must first establish itself as a

bonafide university before it can be a specifically Catholic university, for this would make the Catholic identity of the institution a mere superfluity, something having only accidental, and not essential, relation to the institution. Finally, he rejects Father Hesburgh’s notion that “the best and only traditional authority in the university is intellectual competence.” (148) This is a problematic stance for many reasons, one of which has to do with the very definition of “intellectual competence.” Furthermore, supposing that the question of definition could be satisfactorily settled, who will be the judges as to which persons are and are not intellectually competent? In sum, Professor Rice concludes that the Land O’Lakes concept “is unworkable because that concept does not, cannot work.” (15)

Earlier in the book Professor Rice had appropriately taken exception to Father Hesburgh’s incremental approach to abortion, to which he gave public voice in 1984, in the aftermath of Governor Cuomo’s Notre Dame address (which he had described as “brilliant”), an approach which allows for abortion in “cases of rape, incest, and serious threat to the mother’s life.” (86) Understandably, Professor Rice, one of the country’s most consistent and articulate pro-life champions, could not countenance a position of that sort. (See his 1991 book, *No Exception: A Pro-Life Imperative*.) In responding to an incremental approach to abortion, he writes: “For abortion opponents to advocate a compromise allowance of abortions contributes to the culture of death by fostering the impression that abortion and other ‘life’ issues are negotiable.” (86)

I am afraid that I have severely overextended myself in this review, and yet, for all that, I feel I have not done full justice to this very fine and very important book. There is no remedy for my deficiency, then, but for you to get hold of the book as soon as you can, read it, and, indeed, give it serious study, for it is a rich source, not just of information about an important event in recent American Catholic history, but also provides pointed analysis of that event and its many ramifications. What happened at Notre Dame in May of 2009 is significantly meaningful, not simply for Catholics, but for

everyone who has a concern for the ominous drift of contemporary culture. In the book's *Postscript* Professor Rice writes: "The Obama fiasco was shocking because it seemed like a sudden collapse of a dam. It resulted, of course, from four decades of erosion. That collapse is a microcosm of the erosion and collapse of American culture. And here is where Americans other than Catholics have a stake in what happened at Notre Dame and what can be done to fix it." (154)

If the specific solution for Notre Dame's problems is the implementation of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, may we not propose that the solution to the larger problem of the erosion of American culture (I am reluctant to admit that, precarious though its state, it has actually collapsed) is to be found in our once again being prepared to take seriously the noble and challenging proposition that we are "one nation under God"?

Pope Benedict XVI and the Sexual Abuse Crisis. Gregory Erlandson and Matthew Bunson. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc. 2010. 207 pp. \$12.95.

Reviewed by William E. May, Emeritus Professor Pope John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family and Senior Fellow, Culture of Life Foundation.

This timely and helpful book consists of a foreword, introduction, three parts divided into eight chapters, and a conclusion. The text is followed by appendices, statements and commentary, reproducing key church documents concerned with the crisis.

Foreword and Introduction

These sections set the stage for the book's three parts by first describing the anger, depression, and disgust that Catholics (and others) experience because of the sexual abuse by Catholic clergy and the attempts by their superiors to cover matters up. During the past year major U.S. news media week after week and month after month

have leveled charges claiming that Pope Benedict XVI was and is part of the problem. A twofold theme has emerged and is now commonplace: "First, that no progress has been made with regard to the Church's handling of the sexual abuse crisis—that, if anything, it is getting worse. And, second, that Joseph Ratzinger, as an archbishop in Germany, as head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and now as pope, has committed acts of neglect, cover-up, and disregard for the plight of the victims of sexual abuse by the clergy." But, the authors say, "Both assertions are false and the result has been the defamation of one of the Church's officials over the last decade who has understood clearly the scale of the crisis and who has labored to end it and reform the Church in such a way that it can never happen again" (*Pope Benedict XVI*, 12).

The authors then identify seven major themes or theses their text will present, namely:

1. The Church has always been confronted by the problem of sexual sin and failings among its clergy, and while the number of abusers has never been large, the Church has labored over centuries to curb such abuses.
2. Although modern Church leaders have made grievous mistakes, and the criminal acts of certain clergy have been overlooked or unaddressed in the past in too many dioceses, the Church is dedicated to redressing these wrongs and making sure that every safeguard is in place to protect children and families.
3. Cardinal Ratzinger became increasingly convinced of the need to rid the Church of what he called the "filth" of abuse, and emerged as one of the Vatican's most dedicated leaders in confronting the growing crisis.
4. Pope Benedict's actions in the first years of his pontificate showed a forthright desire to address the sexual abuse crisis in word and deed. He has continued to address the topic repeatedly and directly in a variety of situations.
5. The U.S. Catholic Church, which was for several years at the epicenter of the scandals, is now leading the way in establishing norms and pro-

viding guidelines for dealing with priest abusers, assisting the victims, and preventing further crimes.

6. As Church leaders throughout the world confront the sexual abuse crisis in their own countries, they are looking to Pope Benedict for leadership and the U.S. Church for a roadmap to reconciliation, reform, and authentic justice.

7. Pope Benedict is not only dedicated to ending abuse among the clergy but also sees that the Church must seek spiritual renewal if it is to be purified (13-14).

Part One: A Growing Awareness

This part has two chapters: (1) "The Rise of Joseph Ratzinger," and (2) "The Cardinal's 'Conversion.'" Chapter 1 summarizes Ratzinger's life and career from his birth in April 1927 until his appointment in 1981 to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (17-23).¹ The second, "The Cardinal's 'Conversion,'" addresses the third theme listed above.

Prior to May, 2001 issues of sexual abuse by the clergy were handled mainly by the Congregation for the Clergy (and at times also by the Tribunal of the Roman Rota), not the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. When U.S. dioceses were initially in the throes of lawsuits regarding sexual abuse, Vatican officials too often dismissed the magnitude and turpitude of the cases (e. g., Cardinal Dario Castrillon de Hoyos, then president of the Congregation for the Clergy, in 2002 blamed the clergy abuse scandals not on the clergy but on an (American) culture of "pansexuality and sexual licentiousness").

Pope John Paul II's apostolic letter *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela* (*The Safeguarding of the Sanctity of the Sacraments*) in essence required bishops to report cases of clergy sexual abuse to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), not to the Congregation for the Clergy or Tribunal of the Roman Rota. Thus Ratzinger himself became the Holy See's person most responsible for disciplining and punishing clergy sexual abuse. In fact, the *New York Times*, in a 2005 report, noted that Ratzinger "found the work so disturbing that he called it 'our Friday

penance” (28). John Allen, in a March 17, 2010 column for the *National Catholic Reporter*, wrote that Cardinal Ratzinger soon came to know more about the scale and scope of the scandals than anyone else in the Church and that the Cardinal, with his staff, “seemed driven by a convert’s need to clean up the mess” (28). Ratzinger was disgusted with this “filth” and resolved to bring it to an end and to take steps to prevent such filth from occurring in the future.

Erlandson and Bunson think that Ratzinger expressed his understanding of the profound nature of clergy sexual abuse poignantly in his Good Friday 2005 meditations on the Stations of the Cross at the Colosseum in Rome when he substituted for the frail John Paul II who was to die. Ratzinger’s meditation on the Ninth Station (Jesus Falls the Third Time) used words widely interpreted to refer to the abuse scandal: “How much filth there is in the Church, and even among those who, in the priesthood, ought to belong entirely to him!” (29). Later, in the section of the book devoted to statements and commentary, the first statement and commentary is Ratzinger’s Good Friday 2005 meditation on the Stations of the Cross (154–158). There we find Ratzinger’s own meditations and commentary on the Third, Seventh, and Ninth Stations—concerned with Jesus’s first, second, and third falls. Reading them is enough to convince anyone that Ratzinger’s explicit reference to the “filth” found in the Church among priests who ought to belong entirely to Christ undoubtedly refers to clergy sexual abuse.

Chapter 2 develops the theme that under Ratzinger the CDF has led the way to punish severely priests guilty of sexual abuse. It defuses the claim by the *New York Times* on March 25, 2010, that the “Vatican declined to defrock priest who molested boys” (32).

This is the infamous case of Fr. Lawrence Murphy who from the late 1950s through the mid 1970s was alleged to have molested more than 200 deaf boys in the archdiocese of Milwaukee, WI. But the evidence makes it clear that Ratzinger and the CDF were not part of a cover up. Bishop Jerome Listeki, the current bishop of Milwaukee, has stated publicly that “the mistakes in the Murphy case were

not made in Rome in 1995, 1997, and 1998. The mistakes were made here, in the archdiocese of Milwaukee, in the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s by the church, by civil authorities, by church officials, and by bishops. And for that, I beg your forgiveness” (35). And Cardinal William Levada, current president of the CDF, published a highly unusual critique of the allegations made by the *New York Times*. He wrote that instead of blaming Ratzinger for belated steps taken by the Milwaukee archdiocese in 1996—twenty-two years after the archdiocese acknowledged becoming aware of the case—he should be acknowledged for what he has done to make the Church more responsive to abuse cases and their victims.

In the weeks following the *Times*’s headline story the Associated Press and other news organizations had a field day with stories about a future pope who stalled a pedophile case. One of the worst calumnies was an article published on the MSNBC website with the title “Pope Describes Touching Boys: I Went Too Far.” To support this charge it linked to an article on the internet. However, that article had nothing to do with the pope, and the MSNBC was forced later to issue an apology when challenged by the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights (35–36).

The Associated Press and other news media also claimed to have unearthed a wealth of “smoking gun” documents alleging Ratzinger’s and the Vatican’s willingness to “stall” cases of clergy sexual abuse. Erlandson and Bunson provide evidence to show the inaccuracy of such claims (36–38).

Part Two: A Global Crisis

This Part has the following chapters: (3) “A ‘Festering Disease,’” (4) “The Modern Sex Abuse Crisis,” and (5) “A Worldwide Scandal.”

Chapter 3 is fundamentally a defense of theme 2. After noting that scandals caused by the clergy are not unique to our day but have always been with us, it provides a brief historical discussion of the way the Church, through Councils, saints, reforming popes and others, has grappled with the issue of clerical sexual abuse of minors or children from the earliest days of Christianity. The authors summarize the historical

record they provide by emphasizing that in the past and today,

The sin and crime of sexual abuse did not occur in large numbers, nor has it been endemic to the institution of the priesthood in the Church. Such is the heinous nature of the act, however, that clergy sexual abuse has been the subject of decrees and canons of councils, the source of worry for saints, theologians, and reforming popes; and a fixture in Church law for many centuries. These offenses are *graviora delicta*, crimes viewed by the Church as the most serious, as well as sacrileges against the faith. The abuse of minors is condemned under the Sixth Commandment and is ranked in gravity with sacrilege against the Eucharist and the violation of the sanctity of the Sacrament of Penance....the historical efforts...are a testament to the Church’s commitment to living as we are called by Christ and to bringing reform and renewal in every age of the world” (47–48).

Chapter 4 gives the reasons why the current crisis is so different—and so disgusting and scandalous—from those that have troubled the Church in the past. It is sad but necessary reading that sets forth in some detail the terrible problem that both Pope Benedict and the U.S. Bishops today are seeking to redeem by instigating a true reform in the Church. It is different because of 1) its vast *scale*, worldwide in scope; 2) *the way the crisis became public* through a veritable deluge of accusations, many false but others right on target and rightly disgusting millions of people; 3) the *attitude of civil authorities* to prosecute abuse cases that has changed dramatically from unwillingness to do so in the past to promptness to do so now; and 4) the unwillingness, understandable in some ways, of many bishops to believe that such a profound evil could lurk not only in parishes, schools, hospitals, and other Catholic institutions but in those sitting in the confessional and celebrating the Mass and the criminal behavior of too many church authorities to “cover up the abuses,” showing concern more for the church’s reputation than the terrible harm done to the victims and their families.

The authors point out that (a) from the 50s through the 70s psychiatrists commonly advised bishops and

religious superiors to place abusive priests into therapy and then reassign them. Many church authorities did so, erroneously believing that the priests no longer posed a threat. At that time too few in any profession understood the intensity of the sickness that leads to sexual abuse, “and this led to mistakes made by bishops who followed what was [then] considered sound psychiatric and legal advice.”

They also note (b) that after new research on sexual abuse emerged and after the torrent of filthy abuse by clergy and the treacherous behavior of many church authorities in Boston and elsewhere and in the wake of the scandal caused by Fr. James Porter of the Fall River, MA diocese the U.S. bishops first tried to deal with this problem as a collective body, and at a meeting approved five good principles for handling abuse accusations. Unfortunately, some bishops did not implement these principles but in the many dioceses where they were, clergy sexual abuse cases were limited and the bad effects of such filth were somewhat contained (55-62).

Chapter 5 continues the sad narrative begun in Chapter 4, summarizing the scandal of clergy sexual abuse worldwide, in traditionally Catholic countries as Ireland, Austria, southern Germany (Bavaria, Benedict’s home area), and in such English-speaking countries as Australia and Canada. Since a particularly odious example is that of “Catholic” Ireland, I will summarize the book’s description of it in some detail to illustrate the worldwide dimensions of the problem.

What has set Ireland apart is the degree to which the unimaginable abuse of children took place in the so-called “industrial schools” entrusted to the Church to run. . . . Few Catholics, if any, were prepared for the findings released in two reports in May and November 2009. . . . the first, the so-called Ryan Report, and the second. . . the Murphy Report. The five-volume Ryan Report. . . spelled out in stark and unrelenting terms the six decades of physical, sexual, and psychological horrors inflicted on children in Ireland’s residential institutions run by fifteen religious orders. . . . The Murphy Report [narrowed the focus to Dublin and found] a systematic willingness of

Catholic leaders to ignore terrible cases of sexual abuse and misconduct. . . from 1975-2004 (72-74).

Part Three: Benedict XVI and the Road to Renewal

This Part’s three Chapters are:

- (6): “Where Do We Go From Here?”;
- (7): The Way Forward; and
- (8): “I share in Their Suffering.”

Chapter 6 defends the fifth theme identified earlier regarding the role of the U.S. Church in leading genuine reform and to some extent also defends the fourth. The question it poses is the one the U.S. Bishops asked themselves in June 2002 at a meeting in Dallas. Out of it came what was called the Dallas Charter. The full title was *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young Adults: Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests and Deacons*, and it was approved by a vote of 239 to 13. The key provisions of the *Charter* were a big step in imposing effective norms to halt clergy abuse and cover-ups and in bringing real reform about. Nonetheless, some bishops regarded the Charter and related documents as an infringement on their legitimate authority some judged them unnecessary for their own dioceses (77-80).

Even before this meeting, which the Vatican closely monitored, Pope John Paul II had declared: “there is no place in the priesthood and religious life for those who would harm the young;” and in April 2002 convened a gathering of U.S. Cardinals and bishops and Cardinal Ratzinger and other Vatican officials to examine the issue (81).

The purpose of the Charter was to create clear and enforceable parameters in every diocese and Catholic institution to guarantee a “safe environment” for all children and young people who might have any contact with the Church or church-sponsored activities. And the Vatican closely monitored what was going on. This required “zero tolerance” for sexual abuse and sexual abusers and other strict requirements. Some bishops, however, did not vote for the document nor submit to its stipulations. The National Review Board created by the bishops commissioned a thorough study of the full dimensions of the crisis; what resulted was the “John Jay Report” carried out

by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and this “remains as the most significant effort to document all the relevant details of the sex abuse problem. . . and is also one of the very few comprehensive studies of its type undertaken by any organization and perhaps the most thorough.

Because the *Essential Norms* imposed laws and regulations on all the dioceses of the US they had to be reviewed by the Holy See to determine whether any conflicted with the universal law of the Church. Thus the Bishops submitted these norms to the Holy See and a delegation of U.S. Bishops met in the Vatican with representatives of the Roman Curia, including Ratzinger’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in October 2002. The *Essential Norms*, which the bishops reapproved in 2006, were accepted as complementary to the universal law of the Church, which already stipulated strong penalties for grave sins and acts of sexual abuse against minors (81-83).

Immense progress has been made as a result. In 2010 he USCCB issued results of 2009 annual report on compliance with *Ethical Norms*.

The report was a striking testimony to the success of the Ethical Norms, the work of the bishops, and the achievement of Benedict XVI in bringing genuine hope for the future regarding the tragedy of sex abuse by the clergy. The numbers reveal the fewest number of victims, allegations, and offenders in dioceses since 2004. . . . In 2009 there were 398 allegations and 286 offenders reported to dioceses. Of the allegations reported in 2009, a grand total of six allegations (or a mere 2 percent) involving children under the age of 18 took place in 2009—out of a priestly population of nearly 42,000 and a Catholic population of nearly 70 million. . . . As quickly and thoroughly as the media descended on the Church when the abuse crisis surfaced, however, coverage of the efforts to address and remedy the situation. . . has not been nearly as thorough (83-84).

In addition, the U.S. bishops and the Vatican then initiated a visitation of US seminaries to straighten them out. Benedict approved this in 2005 shortly after becoming pope. Archbishop Edward O’Brien of Baltimore coordinated the visitation of diocesan

and religious community seminaries between September 2005 and July 2006 and later the Vatican issued a report listing areas where seminaries could and must be improved. Benedict discussed all this and its need with the bishops in his visit to the US in 2008 when he emphasized to the bishops the obligation for pastoral outreach to victims and families—an obligation he personally carried out to some extent while in the US. The Church in the U.S., under effective leadership from the bishops and Benedict, was now on the road to repentance, renewal, and redemption (86–88).

Chapter 7 begins by noting that European Catholicism today is experiencing the terrible revelations of clergy sex abuse that rocked the U.S. earlier in the decade. Europe's way forward is to follow the steps of the U.S. detailed in Chapter 6. The European churches, as Benedict emphasized in his October 2006 Pastoral Letter to the Irish Bishops (printed in the "Statements and Commentary," pp. 158–164), must carefully examine the factors that gave rise to the present crisis, diagnose their causes, and impose effective remedies. Many European leaders are already taking to heart the bitter lessons they have learned, working for healing with victims and families, rooting out and effectively punishing priest offenders. Among the places where this is already being done is in the UK, in England and Wales, in Austria, and in Germany.

In England Archbishop (now Cardinal) Cormac Murphy-O'Connor had allowed a pedophile priest to continue to serve in the 1980s when he was bishop of Arundel and Brighton. He has acknowledged his mistakes, apologized, and taken effective steps to put an end to such filth by forming an independent committee chaired by Lord Nolan whose report helped the English bishops create the Catholic Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults and gave directions for ways to enforce a firm policy in England and Wales. In Austria Cardinal Christoph Schönborn of Vienna has spoken of the need for the Church to make an "unflinching examination" of the causes of the scandal, held a "day of repentance," part of "an acknowl-

edgment of guilt in the name of the Church." Switzerland and Germany provide similar examples. The head of the German Episcopal conference, Archbishop Zollitsch, issued a report that the Church in Germany was committed to admitting the truth, helping victims, cooperating with ecclesiastical and civil authorities, and formulating a comprehensive set of guidelines for cases, care of victims, and prevention of future crimes.

In Ireland, which as we have seen, is perhaps the worst case of clergy abuse, the bishops have responded in different ways since the shock of the disgusting and mind-boggling reports of 50 years of systematic abuse and neglect. In February 2010 Benedict summoned all active Irish bishops to Rome for an unprecedented summit to discuss the situation, demand an explanation from them, and coordinate steps for reform. After 2 days of meetings the Vatican issued a communiqué indicating that at length the Irish bishops were beginning to take appropriate action. Cardinal Sean Brady, archbishop of Armagh and primate of Irish bishops, acknowledged that the Church's recovery in Ireland could not have a timetable because so much was needed but pledged that the bishops would make every effort possible.

Renewal and reform of the Church in Europe is following the example of the U.S. Church and Pope Benedict's firm resolve to rid the Church of this filth (89–97). Chapter 7 is a defense of theme 6.

Chapter 8 defends themes 4 and 8. One of Cardinal Ratzinger's first moves after his election as Pope Benedict XVI in 2005 was to appoint Archbishop William Levada of San Francisco, CA as his successor as Prefect of the CDF. This was significant because Levada had extensive experience with abuse cases and familiar with the steps then being taken in the U.S. to address the crisis, punish offenders, make reparations to victims and families, and initiate effective measures to prevent future abuse.

Moreover, in the first months of his papacy two lingering cases were resolved, one the celebrated case of Father Marciel Maciel Degollado, the founder of the Legionaries of Christ, some former members of whom had accused him of sexually abusive acts

going back to the 1980s. The CDF in 2001 began investigation of these accusations but no decision was made during the next 4 years and some felt his friendships in the Vatican, including Pope John Paul II, had protected him. In May 2006, only a month after Ratzinger became Benedict XVI, Joaquin Navarro-Valls, the press-secretary of the Vatican declared that the Church had investigated the charges and concluded that, taking into account Fr. Maciel's advanced age and health, no canonical process would be held but that he was ordered to cease all public ministry and to do penance and to lead a life of prayer, all with the approval of John Paul II. After his death in 2008 his followers were further shocked to learn that he had had many sexual liaisons and had fathered at least one child. Since then the Vatican has appointed bishops to visit the Legionaries' seminaries and centers. In March 2010 the Legionaries issued a statement admitting the founder's guilt and apologized for it. Pope Benedict definitely approved of all this.²

Benedict's action to rid the Church of this filth in Ireland has continued. In July 2006, addressing Irish bishops on their *ad limina* visit, he frankly addressed the Irish scandal and made them acutely aware of their grave obligation to establish the truth of what happened in the past, take the necessary steps to prevent it from occurring again, to make sure that principles of justice are fully observed, and above all bring healing to victims and all those affected by the heinous crimes of clergy sexual abuse (101–102). Later, after the Irish bishops had begun to examine the causes leading to the horrible situation described in Chapter Five, he called a summit of Irish prelates in February 2010. A communiqué issued after this meeting declared that the Holy Father had condemned sexual abuse of children as a heinous crime and grave sin and challenged the Irish bishops to make and implement effective steps to punish offenders and prevent future occurrences; the communiqué also acknowledged "errors of judgment and omission" by Church leaders (109–110). Finally, on March 19 2010 he released a Pastoral "Letter to the Catholics of Ireland" (the "Statement" ending the book, pp. 191–201).

In it he said he “could only share in the dismay and sense of betrayal that so many of you [the Irish faithful] have experienced on learning of their [the clergy’s and hierarchy’s] sinful and criminal acts.” He went on to say that in order to recover from this serious wound the Irish Church must first “acknowledge before the Lord and before others the serious sins committed against defenseless children.” He continued by apologizing to the victims and their families and he told the abusers that they “betrayed the trust placed in you...and you must answer for it before Almighty God and before properly constituted Tribunals,” and he told the Irish bishops that “grave errors of judgment” had been made, that there had been “a failure of leadership,” and that decisive measures absolutely must be taken. He issued six initiatives for the bishops to take, both spiritual and juridical (pp. 110-114). He has definitely exercised firm leadership and authority over the mess in Ireland.

In the U.S. the pope has continued his program of renewal and repentance. When he was in the U.S. in 2008 he met with journalists in order to answer questions truthfully and frankly, told the bishops at a Mass the next day the horrible shame the clergy abuse scandal brought on the Church in the U.S., acknowledged that in the past the scandal had been very badly handled, and made it clear to them that repentance and reform had to begin with them. He also met privately with victims and their families (pp. 102-106). His leadership and commands, along with the kinds of reforms in the U.S. Church described in Chapter 6, have borne good fruit and are an example for the rest of the world.

Conclusion

Here the authors summarize admirably the substance of their work. It fully shows that Benedict has been maliciously maligned and facts falsified by major media such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*.

There is no need to review the Appendices and various “Statements and Commentary” as these provide documentation for some material covered in the book’s text.

This is an important book, well worth reading.

ENDNOTES

- 1 This chapter shows that the claims that Ratzinger was a Nazi and supporter of Hitler are totally false. It also shows how he welcomed Vatican Council II and its reforms but, unlike many, saw it as a recovery of central truths that had been obscured and not as a repudiation of the past. It shows that after the Council, Ratzinger quickly realized that many theological colleagues gravely misunderstood the Council and its documents in an effort to remake the Church in their own image.
- 2 Several priest friends of mine, who were Legionaries of Christ, have now left the community and been incardinated into different dioceses; still others remain in the community and I know that they are holy and good priests, and their university in Rome is not only academically excellent but completely faithful in observing the moral law.

Affirming Love, Avoiding AIDS: What Africa Can Teach the West. Matthew Hanley and Jokin de Irala.

Reviewed by Arland K. Nichols, M.Div., Founding Faculty, Converging Roads: Bioethics, Health Care, and Catholic Teaching, Katy, Texas

It was quite a furor that erupted when, during an interview in March of 2009, Pope Benedict stated that condoms exacerbate the problem of AIDS in Africa, and that a more human vision of sexuality was necessary. The public outcry was swift and seemingly from every corner. Rebecca Hodes, head of policy, communication and research for Treatment Action Campaign in South Africa stated, “his opposition to condoms conveys that religious dogma is more important to him than the lives of Africans.” The development minister of the Netherlands, Bert Koenders, echoed these thoughts: “It is extremely harmful and very serious that this pope is forbidding people from protecting themselves.” Spain shipped one million condoms to Africa, and a Dutch company made “Pope Condoms” as a display of protest. It was claimed by experts the world over that Pope Benedict was misrepresenting science, harming Africans, and therefore they called on him to retract his ideologically driven statements. How could the Pope be so wrong?

In *Affirming Love, Avoiding AIDS: What Africa Can Teach the West*, Matthew Hanley and Jokin de Irala move beyond the slogans and rhetoric and present the facts concerning AIDS and condoms. Even though this may not have been their stated goal, their research substantiates the pope’s comments, and remonstrates with the “experts” who berated him. In the midst of so much misinformation about HIV and AIDS, Hanley and de Irala offer the reader a must-read text for those interested in the sober reality concerning the AIDS crisis. The authors bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the discussion: Matthew Hanley boasts years of experience working in Africa, and holds a Masters in public Health. Jokin de Irala hails from the University of Navarra in Spain, and holds two doctorates in medicine and a master’s degree in public health. Their text—with a foreword by Harvard’s Edward C. Green and concluding with an exceptional bibliography—is divided into 7 chapters, each of which is followed by footnotes to every cited study.

Their valuable contribution begins with a consideration of the “ABC approach:” Abstinence, Be faithful, and Condom use, with a strong emphasis on the “A” and the “B” and the recognition that “C” only reduces, and does not remove risk. The ABC approach to AIDS has enjoyed success because it recognizes that HIV/AIDS is primarily spread by human behaviors that are modifiable. Avoid risky behaviors, and avoid life threatening HIV. Studies reveal that when rates of HIV infection have dropped in populations, it was avoiding harmful behavior that brought about the decline. The authors introduce what will be a regular theme—the AIDS Establishment (WHO, UNAIDS, USAID etc) has ignored the ABC approach in favor of a technical approach which includes condoms, counseling, and testing. The AIDS Establishment reveals a strong Western cultural influence characterized by absolute autonomy, unbridled pursuit of pleasure, and “dogmatic non-judgmentalism” (p. 5).

Chapter two, “A Relentless Crisis,” provides the epidemiological characteristics of HIV/AIDS which contribute to the spread of HIV, and depicts AIDS as “a constellation of epidemics

with distinct transmission patterns” rather than a “monolithic global pandemic” (pg 13). Of over 30 million people who currently have HIV/AIDS, the strongest concentrations are in Southern Africa, Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia. The fallout from this “constellation of epidemics” includes massive societal consequences: increase in orphans, economic decline, proliferation of poverty, and tremendous strain on families. Even though preventative medicine is typically the ideal to be pursued, the AIDS establishment—as a whole—refuses to encourage preventative behavior change, and exclusively promotes the reduction of risk for inherently risky behavior.

In spite of the widespread belief to the contrary, “Abstinence and Fidelity” are not only possible, but are actually the norm for the majority of Africans. Hanley and de Irala argue that promotion of abstinence and fidelity is akin to any other public health campaign that is aimed at discouraging harmful behavior. For example, the public campaigns directed toward smoking encourage people to stop smoking. Governments do not encourage the smoker to “smoke, but use a filter.” Rather, the smoker is bombarded with the “Smoking Kills” message. However, when it comes to the sexual lives of Africans, Western leaders take a fatalistic approach. The assumption is that sexual behavior cannot change; such a change is simply unrealistic. However, time and again, the data reveals that when collaborative efforts by religious, political, and medical leaders are aimed at abstinence and fidelity, HIV infection rates drop significantly. On the other hand, when condom use (risk reduction) is emphasized, studies reveal that infection rates increase.

In chapters four and five, Hanley and de Irala analyze “The Failed Public Health Response” by “Confronting the Data.” They emphasize that the AIDS Establishment—in complete contradiction with the data—is motivated by sexual liberation ideology, and thus continues to promote technical solutions to what are, in reality, deeply human problems—problems that cannot be solved by technical interventions alone. In spite of the statistical evidence that modification of primary sexual behaviors (abstinence

and fidelity/“partner reduction”) will bring success, there is an institutional and ideological campaign to mislead and obfuscate the truth, including stone walling the publication of evidence that contradicts sexual liberation ideology. The authors provide evidence from a host of studies that indicate that condom promotion, voluntary counseling, testing, and treatment of other STDs have failed Africans. Hanley and de Irala acknowledge that use of a condom theoretically lowers the rate of transmission of HIV to 1.14%. However, they point out that theory rarely happens in practice; inconsistent condom use (which is the norm) actual leads to greater risk of incurring AIDS. Additionally, “risk compensation” further exacerbates the problem. The authors proffer evidence that condom promotion lulls people into a false sense of security, encouraging them to engage in more risky sexual behavior, more often. While use of a condom makes a particular sexual act less likely to transmit HIV, risky behavior is chosen more often, leading to an overall increase of risk and rate of infection in the general populace. “Therefore, from a purely pragmatic point of view, there remain large and serious concerns about the practical impact and efficacy of risk reduction strategies” (p. 75). Hanley and de Irala argue that the AIDS establishment is fully aware of this phenomenon of “risk compensation,” but repeatedly ignore it for the sake of a profit motive and sexual ideology.

Often times the claim is made that at the root of the AIDS crisis is poverty, and that poverty reduction—an admirable goal in itself—will ameliorate the AIDS crisis. They note, however, that while poverty can intensify AIDS, AIDS is not a disease of poverty. Among other data indicating this is that the highest rate of HIV infection is in wealthy African countries, while some of the poorest countries have the lowest rates of infection. Chapter five also includes a discussion of a number of African “cultural attitudes and practices” that encourage multiple sexual partners (p. 89). The modification of such practices, while simultaneously upholding the dignity of each person, should alleviate the crisis.

In the final two chapters, de Irala

and Hanley focus on “The Christian Perspective,” and “The Path to Progress,” arguing that the authentically Christian approach to AIDS and the approach indicated by the scientific data are mutually supportive of one another. They identify two opposing views of the world and of the human person. On one hand is “a lethal mix” of relativism, utilitarianism, proportionality, and individualism, which are the presuppositions of the AIDS Establishment. These philosophical tenets, made manifest in the risk reduction approach of the AIDS establishment, reveal an impoverished vision of the human person. Because relativistic philosophy, “more than anything else, shapes our poorly performing AIDS prevention policies, such scrutiny is long overdue” (p. 168.) As the solution to the crisis, de Irala and Hanley propose an authentic love and promotion of truth. This is a sensible proposal because HIV/AIDS is “an epidemic fueled by human behavior” (p. 118). Here they also discuss the personal experience of working with Catholics who have embraced the ideology of the AIDS establishment, and who emphasize condom use while giving little thought to abstinence and fidelity. They suggest that these Catholics are “surely motivated by a genuine sense of compassion. [However] adopting such a course ratifies alluring but flawed assumptions and unintentionally facilitates the very sorts of harmful behavior which then need to be remedied” (p. 130). Continuing with the theme of love and truth, the authors encourage “discordant couples” (married couples with one infected spouse) to abstain from intercourse as a sacrificial act of love for the sake of the beloved. Finally, they encourage the Western AIDS establishment to understand, foster and encourage the very many African cultural traditions that uphold the dignity of the person, protect the innocent, and encourage fulfilling and healthy sexual behavior. It is only behavioral change in accord with the dignity of the person that has had success in mollifying the crisis.

Here I would identify three weaknesses of this important book. The most evident flaw is admittedly stylistic: the tendency to be quite repetitive. However, since it is such a quick and otherwise enjoyable read, this is not too

terribly irksome. Another more significant weakness of the text is that all studies are presented as though they are of equal strength with seldom a mention of study size, controls, mitigating factors, whether data is causal or correlational, etc. Arguably, this is not inappropriate for a book that is meant to be accessible to the non-expert, but it is, nonetheless, important for the reader to know the methodological strengths and weaknesses of the primary studies cited. *Affirming Love, Avoiding AIDS* would be a more scholarly read, and more “academically tidy” if methodological analysis was provided. Failure to include the relative strength of statistical analysis limits the effectiveness of the author’s argument by leaving open—particularly for a reader who is hostile to the ABC approach—the possibility that the authors are “cherry-picking” studies that prove their thesis. (Please note that I am not suggesting that Hanley and de Irala are “cherry-picking”; I am only suggesting that their method of citation does not eradicate this possibility.) In the milieu of misinformation about HIV/AIDS, the authors would have done well to remove all doubt as to the quality of all cited studies. Furthermore, failure to do so hampers the ability of the reader to confidently convey the material to others.

A final criticism. I find Hanley’s and de Irala’s discussion (pg. 143–150) of condom use by discordant married couples to be inadequate. I do not hold that such couples may licitly use a condom; however, it must be acknowledged that the best arguments for such use are significantly stronger than indicated by the authors. Notably, De Irala and Hanley do not adequately characterize or refute the position of philosophers like Martin Rhonheimer, who argue that the *object chosen* by the couple is *not contraceptive in nature*. Rhonheimer believes he is consistent with *Veritatis Splendor* n. 78 and Thomas Aquinas, when he states “we cannot understand and define the object of a human act without including in this definition an intentional element that expresses the “why” one does what one (externally) does.” Applied to the question at hand, Rhonheimer argues that an evil object (contraception) is not being chosen, because, in his words, the couple “is not acting to render

procreation impossible, but to prevent infection.” According to Rhonheimer, this human act is good since he views the impediment to procreation as a side-effect of an otherwise good moral object and intention.

While I find both Rhonheimer’s notion of the human act, and his analysis of condom use for discordant couples to be wanting, in addressing the issue, Hanley and de Irala simply dismiss (without the requisite argumentation) all such arguments as proportionalism. If his argument is to be adequately refuted, it is vital that a more careful consideration be proffered, particularly as Rhonheimer’s position seems to be gaining traction. Such a refutation has been provided by William May in his *Catholic Bioethics and The Gift of Human Life* (2008). The reader would have benefited from a more serious consideration of the issue along the lines provided by May. With Rhonheimer’s argument in mind, May shows that regardless of intent, “[c]ondomistic or condomized sexual intercourse is not only inapt for generation, but it is also inapt for truly uniting the couple ‘as one flesh’” (pp. 151–152).

Matthew Hanley and Jokin de Irala have provided a solid, exhaustively researched, and easy to read scrutiny of the dominant vision and approach of the AIDS Establishment. In doing so, they have vindicated, from a humanitarian, theological, philosophical, medical, and scientific perspective, Pope Benedict’s plea to turn away from technical solutions, and turn toward authentically human solutions that recognize the dignity of the human person and respect the sexual act and marriage. They have offered compelling evidence that, in the words of Pope Benedict, “The solution must have two elements: firstly, bringing out the human dimension of sexuality, that is to say a spiritual and human renewal that would bring with it a new way of behaving towards others, and secondly, true friendship offered above all to those who are suffering, a willingness to make sacrifices and to practice self-denial, to be alongside the suffering. These are the factors that help and that lead to real progress.” De Irala and Hanley have articulated that Pope Benedict’s rich vision is the only one that can truly encourage those who are at risk to avoid AIDS and affirm love.

Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century. Vol. II, Part 2: Economic, Social and Cultural History. Irfan Shahîd. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2009, pp. xxiii + 391. (Cloth), \$50.00.

by Jude P. Dougherty
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This is one in a series of six volumes devoted to the study of Arab-Byzantium relations in late antiquity. Volume II can stand alone as a study of the Ghassânids, a *foederati* or a tribal alliance that migrated from the south of the Arab peninsula to the Diocese of Oriens (Bilād al-Shām) in the fifth century. Influenced by the gravitational pull of Byzantium in its tripartite structure of Romanitas, Hellenism, and Christianity, they created a unique and mature Christian culture in the Diocese of Oriens, in the shadow of the Roman Empire, a culture which, Shahîd reminds his reader, obtained only once in Arabic history. Sadly it came to an end in the seventh century with the Islamic conquest, but “Its flame,” Shahîd tells us, “independently rekindled some twelve centuries later, has been flickering fitfully and intermittently in present day Lebanon.”

Shahîd implies that historians of Oriental Christianity either tend to neglect its Arabic element or vaguely treat it. Arabic identity, he insists, contributed to the diversity of early Christian culture. The Ghassânids, profoundly influenced by their Christian faith, set about building churches and monasteries; their king even presided over church councils. Christianity opened the *foederati* to the larger outside Hellenic and Roman worlds. The Arabic king, Abgar the Great, is credited with making Edessa the spiritual capital of the Semite Christian Orient, just as Antioch had been established as its counterpart for the Greco-Roman Orient.

The Ghassânid military when employed by Byzantium defended the Diocese of Oriens, the Holy Lands, and fought the wars of the empire in the East. They and other *foederati* performed non-military duties in times of peace, just as the Roman legionaries

did in peacetime. Of the Ghassānid military, Shahīd speaks of their twin virtues—courage and endurance in battle. This was professionalized and sophisticated by the Roman element when the Ghassānid were trained to fight in the Roman manner. The new Romano-Arab warrior was inspired by the most powerful component of Byzantium, Christianity. The wars that the Ghassānids were called upon to fight became spiritualized and became more meaningful by being harnessed to the ideals of their religious faith as they undertook religious war in defense of the Christian Roman Empire, its Holy Land, and in campaigns against the Persians and the Lakhmid Arabs.

In their professional, social, cultural, and spiritual life the Ghassānid were intense in the profession of their Christian faith. That faith may have set them apart, but unlike the German tribes who were *foederati* in the Roman Occident, the Ghassānid were related ethnically and linguistically to the larger Arab component in the demographic landscape of Oriens.

Of all the venues of cultural life in the Ghassānid city, the monastery was the most important. By the sixth century, the monastery had emerged not only as a place for the *imitatio Christi*, but also as a cultural center where literary pursuits were encouraged. The monasteries promoted the creation of libraries and study groups, and their members provided instruction for both children and adults. Transcribing and reproducing manuscripts, both secular and ecclesiastic, and translating texts from the Greek into Syriac became common practice. Not only that, the monasteries produced original creative literary works. Sometimes the translations went the other way, from the Syriac into the Greek. The great figure in the golden period of Syriac literature, the fourth century Ephrem of Edessa, was translated into Greek. His metrical compositions, the *madrashē*, is said to have influenced hymnography in the Diocese of Oriens.

Worthy of note is that much of the Ghassānid achievement—economic, social, and cultural—persisted under the new Umayyad Caliphate after the Ghassānid were defeated by the Muslims in the *battle of Yarmūk* (636). Many of the traits that Shahīd attributes to

the Ghassānid are to be found in contemporary Islam, notably its spiritual intensity and its tendency to refer all things to Allah, similar to the *milites Christi* of the Ghassānid.

Whereas many volumes produced under the patronage of Islamic study centers at major universities and published by prestigious university presses seem little more than propaganda for one Islamic cause or another, this work has the mark of honest and probing scholarship. A short review cannot do justice to *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century* or to the scholarship on which it is based. Suffice it to say, the book opens the reader to a little-known but intensely interesting period in Arabic history.

Reason to Believe: Why Faith Makes Sense. Richard Purtill, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009. pp. 230. Paperback, \$14.95.

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

The recently revised edition of *Reason to Believe* is one of a number of recent books that have the New Atheism in their sights. Purtill tells us that this book is not a book of apologetics, but a book on the philosophy of religion. It is not a book for scholars, however, but rather is “aimed at the reader who wants to think seriously about religion, but who doesn’t know all the philosophers’ or theologians’ jargon and who may or may not be a committed believer” (back cover).

In the first section, Purtill addresses five kinds of objections to religious faith: 1) those coming from positivism, and views related to positivism concerning the meaningfulness of certain religious statements; 2) religious belief as simply wishful thinking; 3) belief in miracles as anti-scientific; 4) the problem of evil; 5) and the view that God can’t or doesn’t care about individual human lives.

In chapter 1, Purtill characterizes the view that science has debunked religion as incorrect by pointing out that philosophical questions cannot be

answered by using the scientific method. He also indicates how positivism is self-refuting, as the positivists’ view that truths can only be verified scientifically is itself not scientifically verifiable. Purtill then moves on to those who, influenced by Wittgenstein’s views on meaning, maintain that statements such as “God is good” or “the soul continues in existence without a body” are meaningless. So short a space certainly does not allow for a fair exposition and critique of Wittgenstein’s views. Moreover, I don’t think that the objections to the meaningfulness of religious statements that Purtill raises would occur to any non-philosopher, though perhaps this is due to my own lack of familiarity with the arguments of the new atheists.

One position that could have been more succinctly dealt with is that “the idea of disembodied survival is meaningless, for there can be no standard by which we could identify a disembodied soul and say it was the soul of a given person who had died” (30). What is most problematic about this position is that it assumes that if we cannot identify something using our senses, then that thing cannot exist, and thus we cannot meaningfully speak of it. If two disembodied souls exist, plainly there must be a difference between the two, a difference identifiable in principle, albeit not by the senses. Purtill does touch on this solution when he argues that people have identifiably different characters, and not just different sensible characteristics. However, if we understand character to be something that is formed through our own choices, then what Purtill says would not apply to infants. Purtill next brings up the view that “two souls might at different times animate the same body” (34) in the context of discussing whether the resurrection of the body is meaningful. However, his rejection of this view on the grounds that two souls could not be the soul of the same body as they could will opposing actions, only one of which the body could perform, ignores the qualification “at different times.” I think he should have left alone the question of how it comes about in the resurrection that we will have our own body, as he leaves it unanswered, and indeed the *Compendium of the Catechism of the*

Catholic Church suggests that understanding this is beyond our ken (see #205). When it comes to discussing the charge that it is meaningless to say that God is good and loving, for God could not love people while allowing great sufferings to be inflicted upon them, Purtill's short answer here is that "on the Christian view, great suffering in this life has a purpose—to create characters of a certain sort" (30).

The conclusion of this chapter is that we cannot reject statements about God's love or about experiencing life after death as meaningless. However, as Purtill notes, the meaningfulness of these statements depends on their being a God and an afterlife. "Centaur do not like to eat grass," is in some sense a meaningful statement; it is, however, ultimately nonsensical since there are no such things as centaurs.

In chapter 2 Purtill argues cogently against the notion that religion should be dismissed as being mere wish fulfillment. One of the points he makes is that the story religion tells is not entirely rosy; for example, it identifies us as sinners (it surprises me when people take umbrage at this, but some do). He also points out that if religion is to be dismissed as a mere projection of our hopes and fears, by the same token Freud's theories should be dismissed as a mere projection of his hopes and fears.

In chapter 3 Purtill takes up the view that Christianity with its affirmation of miracles is anti-scientific. He attempts to show that of various views as to what accounts for what happens in the universe (e.g., naturalistic determinism), that theism is the only one that is finally compatible with science, as it is the only one that does not undermine our confidence in reason. His basic argument is that if our minds are determined to be as they are by blind forces there is no guarantee that they in fact are capable of understanding the way things really are. It seems though, that one could think that the human mind was due to blind forces and still recognize from experience that human knowledge of the world is sometimes correct and sometimes incorrect, e.g., diseases are caused by germs not by evil spirits. Also, I've never been convinced—though it may be a good argument—that it is unreasonable to

think that the ability to reason theoretically has sufficient survival value to be selected. Simple technologies that presuppose some theoretical understanding of nature may have been conducive to survival, and perhaps gave early humans an edge over other hominids. I note that Purtill goes from saying that the claim that the mind is due to blind forces weakens our confidence in reason to saying later on "it is fatal to reason" (100).

In chapter 4 Purtill addresses the problem of evil. His discussion would have been easier to follow if he had initially distinguished moral evil from non-moral evil. His response to the claim that God is responsible for moral evil (insofar as this affects the evildoer himself) since God is responsible for creating beings capable of making bad moral choices is to say this claim is based on an unfounded assumption, namely, that "a good God would prefer sinless people to saints who were at some earlier time sinners" (64). He doesn't face up to what is a problem for many, namely, why God creates people whom he knows will do evil and not repent of it, and thereby end up in Hell. As for non-moral evils, his response is suffering can lead to a greater good, namely, that of becoming genuinely loving persons; true love is sacrificial.

In chapter 5 Purtill addresses a variety of science-driven objections to God's existence or providence. For example, he points out that the fact that science now explains things that people use to attribute directly to God or gods does not mean that the natural causes could not be secondary causes used by God to achieve his ends—though he makes no case that they must in fact be such.

Having rebuffed some of the common objections to theism and hence to Christian belief, in the next section Purtill develops positive reasons for accepting Christianity. Chapter 6 discusses the nature of faith. Purtill initially talks about differences between weak and strong belief, and puts religious belief in the latter category. He says that part of belief in the strong sense is being "prepared to take action appropriate to our stated belief." However, virtue is not knowledge. I may have a firm belief that more

exercise would be good for me, and still not act upon this belief. Similarly, those Christians who caved in and renounced the faith when tortured, didn't necessarily lose their faith when they did so. It would have been useful to consider the distinction that Aquinas makes between formed and unformed faith (see *Summa Theologiae* II-II 4.4). Purtill goes with C.S. Lewis's definition of faith: "assent to a proposition which we think so overwhelmingly probable that there is a psychological exclusion of doubt although not a logical exclusion of dispute." I don't think that the proposition "God is one in three persons" is overwhelmingly probable. There is no evidence that pushes me to thinking it is probable at all. Purtill would have done better to examine Aquinas's definition: "faith is an act of the intellect assenting to divine truth proceeding from the command of the will as moved by God through grace" (*Summa Theologiae* II-II 2.9).

Purtill fails to distinguish sufficiently motives of credibility from God's action in our soul moving us to faith. He does eventually point to the relevant distinction by quoting Lewis ("logic of speculative thought...logic of personal relations"), but this is liable to be missed by someone who is not already conversant with the problems surrounding faith's certitude. He mentions some of the motives of credibility, but does not discuss their logical force. He goes on to say that the evidence for faith is that it makes sense out of everything one knows, while admitting the same holds true for the Buddhist, the materialist, etc., as if motives of credibility had no objective cogency.

Chapter 7 is devoted to arguing that God exists. To my Thomistic eyes, this chapter is not very satisfactory. First, a minor point, the *Summa theologiae* is most certainly not a sort of "philosophical and theological encyclopedia" (92; see Aquinas's prologue). More problematic are the following claims: the typical reasons given for the existence of God are not independent, and the arguments in the *Summa theologiae* are based on notions of motion and cause that are used in senses no longer familiar (I can't remember ever having a student who didn't readily understand what the four causes are). Also, one of the main questions is poorly

formulated. We are offered the following options as responses to the question “how did the universe as we know it begin (if it did begin)?” (92): it popped into existence, it always was, and it was brought into existence in time by an immaterial being. This mixes together the question of whether the universe always was with the question of whether it has a cause. Purtill, at most, obliquely addresses the possibility that the world is eternal and yet caused (a position that Aquinas thinks cannot be ruled out by reason); at least he never clearly states this position.

In chapter 8 Purtill tries to convince us that “to reject the notion of a Person whose nature is the foundation of morality is ultimately to rob morality of any meaning” (112). After conceding that his initial arguments in favor of the existence of an objective moral law do not adequately treat so large a topic, Purtill goes on to ask where the moral law comes from. He never addresses the possibility that the objectivity of the moral law is due to the fact that humans have a determinate nature (or at any rate, one whose broad lines evolution will not change), and consequently that they cannot find fulfillment in just any kind of behavior (and we are capable of the self-reflection necessary to understand these things). Atheists are not always relativists, and Purtill acknowledges as much in chapter 10 where he says nontheists and theists recognize some form of the Golden Rule. Is Purtill arguing that atheists in principle should reject the notion of objective morality? He speaks as if guilt somehow indicated that a Person was behind the moral law. Yet people can feel guilty simply because they hurt a loved one, or didn’t live up to their personal code of ethics, etc.

In chapter 9 Purtill presents the argument that our natural desire for happiness cannot be in vain, and since this desire is not fulfilled on earth, it points to its fulfillment (for some) in an afterlife.

Chapter 10 puts together what has been said in the preceding three chapters to show differences between a theistic and non-theistic world view. I find puzzling Purtill’s claim that “for the nontheist...no life is of any importance and no destruction is prohibited” (128), especially when in the following

paragraph he acknowledges that the commandments on the second tablet “can be recognized by the nontheist as well as by the theist” (129). Again, he may think that atheists in principle should reject morality.

In the last section comprised of 5 chapters, Purtill intends to examine revelation’s “credentials...before the court of reason.” In chapter 11, “The Credentials of Revelation,” he begins by giving “a mere hint” as to the authenticity of accounts of Jesus’ divine acts (his miracles, his forgiving people). Indeed, what he says is pretty much limited to presenting the dilemma Lewis formulates (i.e., either Jesus is a liar or insane when he says he is God, or indeed he is God), and to pointing out that many see the Jewish Scriptures as witnessing to Christ. Purtill then goes on to argue that the Good News responds to our experience, i.e., to our need for forgiveness and our hope for true happiness. He then basically outlines the “divine dilemma;” no purely human being can make reparation for offenses against the infinite God, yet justice demands that reparation be made for sin instead of it simply being dismissed. God’s answer, as we know, was to send his Son to become one of us and make due reparation by his sacrifice on the Cross.

In the next four chapters Purtill intends to explain more fully certain Christian beliefs on the grounds that misunderstanding them is an obstacle to faith and increased understanding of them provides a positive motive for belief. In chapter 12 he presents a fairly standard analysis of the question of the compatibility of God’s foreknowledge with human freedom. He concludes by saying that if we really are faced with having to reject one or the other, we should abandon certain kinds of foreknowledge in God, this after having said that rejecting God’s foreknowledge of the salvation or damnation of each human individual “does seem incompatible with some parts of the Christian revelation” (150). In chapter 13, “The Son of God,” Purtill mainly highlights benefits of the Incarnation. Purtill denies divine simplicity maintaining “the Second Person of the Trinity has a divine will and divine knowledge but is not the same as that will or knowledge” (137).

He also rejects the expression “the death of God,” which Aquinas accepts, understanding of course, that the Second Person can only die in his human nature. In chapter 14 Purtill does a nice job of explaining the need for organized religion. He then points out that we should not be surprised that those in leadership positions sometimes succumb to the world, the flesh, and the devil. His advice for reforming the Church is to first reform oneself and then to make use of the “talents and opportunities he has to reform the Church around him” (173). In the final chapter, Purtill explains that the reason people go to heaven or hell is due to their own choice to submit to God’s will or to reject it. In this light, we can understand the need for suffering in this life: “we can only choose God over self only if there is some sacrifice of self in choosing God” (180).

To keep the attention of a lay audience, Purtill understandably does not engage in the type of thorough investigation one expects in a journal article or scholarly book on the philosophy of religion (an exception is the article on atonement that appears in the appendix). I leave it to the reader to decide how helpful this book might be to someone beguiled by the New Atheism or to someone wanting to face up to its claims.

Stewardship of Creation (Sub-title: *What Catholics Should Know about Church Teaching on the Environment*). (Indianapolis, IN: Saint Catherine of Siena Press, 2009) 144 pages, paperback. by Marie George, Ph.D.

*Reviewed by Sr. Mary Jeremiah, OP
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Professor Marie George teaches Philosophy at St. John’s University in New York, and also holds masters degrees in theology and biology. In her book, *Stewardship of Creation*, she puts all of her knowledge and skills to good use for the benefit of the Church.

This book is well-written and comprehensive. She explains various

principles used when considering the common good of human beings and the environment. The author also gives a very “hands on” book, by placing discussion questions at the end of each chapter, as well as using contemporary examples regarding the environment.

This book was published before the BP oil spill in the Gulf. After reading the text, you may want to try putting the theory into practice by evaluating the massive oil spill and its impact upon the environment and people.

George presents the Church’s teaching in four chapters, capped with an introduction and conclusion. After the brief Introduction, the author sets to work in Chapter 1, “Root Causes of Environmental Devastation.” She gives us 12 causes based on humanity’s misuse of creation: anthropocentrism, Christian otherworldliness, the Baconian view of nature; counter-reaction and environmental extremists, ignorance, greed, selfishness of private property, laziness and irresponsibility, consumerism, population, poverty, and corrupt political and social systems.

Chapter 2, “Creation: Its Meaning and the Place of Humans in It,” is a presentation of the Judeo-Christian vision of the world and creation. Her resources for this teaching are the Bible, *Gaudium et Spes* from Vatican II, the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

The Church’s teaching on the environment flows from its theological understanding of humanity’s place in nature. In a sense this Chapter explains the primary words of the book’s title: Stewardship and Creation. The Church’s theology of Creation is found in the Book of Genesis.

A steward is someone “who is employed in a large household or estate to manage domestic concerns.” Now, the word “ecology” comes from the Greek word “oikos” which means “home” or household.” Humans are thus like stewards insofar as God has charged us to keep the household or the ecosphere which is the earth in good order (p. 31).

Chapter 3, “Christian Morality in the Environment” deals with the prin-

ciples of ethical treatment of the earth. Here, George offers various moral principles which should inform our consciences and decision-making.

The first principle is “the universal destination of goods.” Everyone has a right to the things necessary for full development as human persons. Thus, we are dealing with a life-issue.

The second norm is the human respect and care for creation as a reflection of God’s goodness. God gave man the duty of protecting and caring for the integrity of creation. Humans do not have the right to manipulate and exploit creation for selfish or utilitarian reasons.

There are also the “basic Jewish principles of balance and middle path.” This teaches one not to destroy things without a good, or even, better purpose.

Finally, there is the “precautionary principle” when faced with situations of uncertainty or contradiction. Here decisions may be temporary, proceeding with caution and continual monitoring of the risks and benefits to people and the environment. “The precautionary principle makes explicit the need for special care in prudential decisions, where relevant information is either not entirely reliable or is lacking” (p. 50-51).

Chapter 4, “Christian Solutions to Environmental Problems.” Christianity does not give prepackaged answers to ecological problems. Rather, it has a worldview and principles that can guide one who is sincerely seeking God’s intention for creation. Christianity offers attitudes and virtues to implement; science and technology have the task of working out the specific solutions, enlightened by the Christian worldview.

In this chapter, George presents the Catholic response to the “root causes of environmental degradation that were enumerated in chapter 1 by looking to the Church’s theology of creation and the moral principles emanating from it,” as presented in chapters 2 and 3 (p. 11-12).

The author raises many good issues and debates, showing both sides of some dilemmas. There are no easy an-

swers in this field and plenty of room for faithful Catholics to disagree. The issues of the environment are not usually on the same level as the life-issues of abortion, euthanasia, etc.

She quotes a number of people, from Pius XII, John XXIII, John Paul II, and even once from Benedict XVI, the book was written and published before many of Pope Benedict XVI’s statements. He has even received the title, “the Green Pope,” from the mainstream media because of his concern for creation. But, Benedict XVI goes beyond a mere “green” concern” for the environment, by calling for a “human ecology” as well. (cf. p.95, especially note 89)

Stewardship of Creation concludes with a good, balanced presentation of Catholic theology concerning creation. The Church’s “ecological teaching” is situated within the full Gospel proclamation of a “true knowledge of God revealed in Christ.” (p. 103)

What is new in the current teaching is broadening the concept of Christian virtue from simply one’s personal life to the environment and society. The last pages of the conclusion end with some practical tips of what the Catholic laity can do today to preserve God’s gift of creation.

This is an excellent book and Marie George has done the Church a great service. She is always well-balanced and fair. Let me conclude with her own words that show some of this balance.

While it is important for us to be more conscious of how God speaks to us through creation, this should not become a reason to forget that he speaks to us most clearly through his Son. Thus, while it is right and just to be grateful for the fruits of the earth, we owe God a greater debt of gratitude for the Eucharist. And while it is a good thing to sing hymns thanking and praising God as Creator, it would be a serious mistake to then omit singing hymns praising and thanking Christ as Redeemer. It is one thing to become more aware of creation as God’s handiwork; it is another to neglect reading the New Testament in order to spend more time communing with nature (p. 104).

NOTICES

SPEAKERS FUND

This past year the Fellowship was able to match an anonymous challenge grant of \$10,000 for the development of a special fund to support the travel and lodging expenses of the speakers at our annual conventions. So, I am happy to report that we now have some \$20,000 in this fund. Needless to say, such a fund could be easily exhausted, and so we need to continue to build it up. I am happy to report that one of our previous beneficiaries who wishes to remain anonymous recently sent me another check for \$1000.00. We are deeply grateful for that donation and yet we need to keep holding out our hat for this cause.

If you would like to make a donation or suggest someone whom we could approach, please contact me at: koterski@fordham.edu

Rev. Joseph. W. Koterski, S.J.
President of the Fellowship

SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE ISSUES OF THE QUARTERLY

Issue #	Scheduled publication date:	Manuscripts are needed by:	Special topic
33/4	Winter 2010	Nov. 1, 2010	Adult apologetics
34/1	Spring 2011	Feb. 1 2011	Nature of episcopal authority in general
34/2	Summer 2011	May 1, 2011	Role of episcopal authority in regards to religious orders
34/3	Fall 2011	Aug.1, 2011	The ecclesiology of <i>Communio</i> and the demands of loyalty
34/4	Winter 2011	Nov. 1, 2011	Reiki, Healing Touch, the New Age

BOOKS RECEIVED

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

Chosen: How Christ Sent 23 Surprised Converts to Replant His Vineyard.

Donna Steichen, Editor. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009.

Edith Stein and Companions: On the Way to Auschwitz. Father Paul Hamans. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010.

Christian Ethics and the Human Person: Truth and Relativism in Contemporary Moral Theology. Peter Bristow. Oxford: Family Publications, Maryvale Institute, 2009.

Who Really Wrote the Bible? And Why it Should Be Taken Seriously Again.

Eyal Rav-Noy & Gil Weinreich. Minneapolis: Richard Vigilante Books, 2010.

The Turn to Transcendence: The Role of Religion in the 21st Century.

Glenn W. Olsen. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010. Hardcover.

The Audacity of Spirit: The Meaning and Shaping of Spirituality Today.

Jack Finnegan. Dublin: Veritas, 2008.

New Proofs for the Existence of God: Contributions of Contemporary Physics and Philosophy. Robert J. Spitzer. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010.

The Three Marks of Manhood: How to be Priest, Prophet, and King of Your Family.

G. C. Dilsaver. Charlotte: Tan Books, 2010.

Bleeding Hands, Weeping Stone: True Stories of Divine Wonders, Miracles, and Messages. Elizabeth Ficocelli. Charlotte: Saint Benedict Press, 2009.

The Essential Bellow: A Prophet for Our Times. Rev. C. John McCloskey, Scott J. Bloch & Brian Robertson, Editors. Charlotte: Saint Benedict Press, 2010.

The Judas Syndrome: Seven Ancient Heresies Return to Betray Christ Anew.

Thomas Colyandro. Charlotte: Saint Benedict Press, 2010.

The Mystery of Predestination: According to Scripture, the Church, and St. Thomas Aquinas. John Salza. Charlotte: Tan Books, 2010.

The Resistance Speech of Archbishop Charles Chaput

On August 24, 2010 Denver's archbishop, Charles J. Chaput gave an address in Slovakia, entitled "Living Within the Truth: Religious Liberty and Catholic Mission in the New Order of the World." The address especially focuses on the growing restriction of religious liberty both in the United States and Europe. The archbishop notes that the state and society promote an understanding of religion as a private affair, rather than as a faith that could and should have an impact on the public morality of a nation. Freedom of worship is perfectly acceptable as long as it doesn't have any political or social consequences. "Efforts have been made to discourage or criminalize the expression of certain Catholic beliefs as 'hate speech.'" The ultimate aim of these restrictions on religious liberty is "to exclude the Church and individual believers from influencing the moral life of society." Archbishop Chaput believes that the freedom of the Church to speak freely in the public square will become more and more difficult in the years to come.

This restriction of religious liberty not only inhibits the practice of the whole Catholic faith, but also has dire consequences for modern societies. Like Pope Benedict XVI Archbishop Chaput agrees with Tocqueville that "[d]espotism can do without faith, but liberty cannot. ... What is to be done with a people that is its own master, if it is not obedient to God?" Archbishop Chaput argues, in addition, that Christianity provides a foundation for the dignity of the human person, and freedom of religion, and even supports representative government and the balance of powers. In other words, the presence of a vibrant Christian faith in modern societies helps preserve liberal institutions.

The crucial error of liberal societies today is to make relativism "the civil religion and public morality of the West." Without a core of fixed moral principles with a solid theological or philosophical foundation, liberal societies end up tolerating the intolerable in every kind of society including their own. As his primary example of support for the intolerable, Chaput mentions the widespread acceptance of abortion in the West. His judgment about this practice is clear and challenging: "Homi-

cide is homicide, no matter how small the victim." To allow abortion is to turn democratic institutions "against our own human dignity."

With the acceptance of relativism there is no foundation for human rights. This situation not only endangers "the child in the womb" but also "the terminally ill, or the physically handicapped," not to mention a host of other people. It further undermines respect for the religious liberty of the Church and its members.

At first glance one might think that the clarion call for tolerance would include tolerance of the Catholic Church and the proclamation of its beliefs. "The dogma of tolerance," however, "cannot tolerate the Church's belief that some ideas and behaviors should not be tolerated because they dehumanize us. The dogma that all truths are relative cannot allow the thought that some truths might not be. The Catholic beliefs that most deeply irritate the orthodoxies of the West are those concerning abortion, sexuality and the marriage of man and woman." Archbishop Chaput is right on target with these remarks. We have reached the point where even many Catholics don't want to hear their bishops say that the law should not allow abortion, same sex marriage, or embryonic stem cell research (because it entails the death of the embryo). Also offending Western orthodoxies are Catholic teachings about the evil of sex outside of wedlock, the meaning of marriage as a one-flesh unity with an openness to children, and the immorality of cohabitation and contraception. Because the Catholic Church is the most prominent institution in the world willing to challenge the prevailing relativism, it is, in the archbishop's judgment, "the most compelling and dangerous heretic of the world's new order."

Archbishop Chaput is not blind to the fact that a good number of Catholic clergy and lay people don't want to be openly at odds with the state or the culture. Many of Chaput's fellow bishops, including those who agree with him on the dangers of relativism, no doubt have serious reasons for not applauding his outspokenness. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), of

course, has challenged prevailing orthodoxies over the years, most recently in opposing the funding of abortion in the recently passed health care bill. Nevertheless, only a few individual bishops speak in public like Archbishop Chaput.

The acceptance and practice of intolerant relativism has become so serious that the archbishop issues an appeal to the Catholic Church in the West: “We live in a time when the Church is called to be a believing community of resistance. We need to call things by their true name. We need to fight the evils we see. And most importantly, we must not delude ourselves into thinking that by going along with the voices of secularism and de-Christianization we can somehow mitigate or change things. Only the truth can set men free. We need to be apostles of Jesus Christ and the Truth he incarnates.” In my judgment, Pope Benedict XVI will be pleased to read these words.

The Catholic Church will promote the good of the West and of liberal political institutions by being a community of resistance to the “dictatorship of relativism.” The Church especially resists this dictatorship by encouraging the faithful to live their faith in private and in public, by maintaining the Catholic identity of their institutions, and by making persuasive arguments in the public realm in accord with the judgment of the politically prudent person (See Thomas Aquinas on political prudence, *Summa theologiae*, II-II, qu. 47, art. 10 and 14). One doesn’t have to be strident or disrespectful to one’s adversaries in order to be a community of resistance. The biblical admonition to tell the truth with love says it all. ✠

J. Brian Benestad
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ERRATUM: See William Saunders (*below*) for his current address. He was listed incorrectly in Vol. 33, Nos. 1 and 2.

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