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The Dangers of Research

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Benjamin Jowett, I have read, became livid at the mention of the word research. I was reminded of this recently when I noticed a new sign on the road of approach to my university. *Notre Dame: A National Catholic Research University*. Doubtless only the most benign and beneficent motives lie behind this redescription of the university, motives on the order of those that prompted administrators a few decades ago to employ, in season and out, the word excellence in describing what we were up to on our campuses. That possible parallel could assume the nature of a caveat.

Speaking as the eye-witness of an accident might speak, I would characterize the pathology of the pursuit of excellence roughly as follows: One began with the judgment that Catholic institutions ought to be a lot better than they are. Nothing wrong with this. The judgment has the great merit of being applicable at all times and at all places. The hortatory form is: Let us pursue excellence in all we do.

If excellence is doing maximally well what one is already doing, it is a definable objective. But more than this was wanted. It was noticed that the way things were done in Catholic colleges and universities was not in every way the same as in secular and/or secularized institutions. But many good things were going on in the latter. Therefore, if Catholic institutions were to do better and better what they were already doing, *and* added to this the salient features of secular institutions, the resulting amalgam would be a wonderful new synthesis.

When I joined the philosophy department at Notre Dame in 1955, as good as all my colleagues were Thomists. The pursuit of excellence was conceived as a way of implementing *Aeterni Patris*. The way had been shown by such mentors as Jacques Maritain. Each member would move out from the common center into some form or facet of contemporary philosophy, e.g., phenomenology, existentialism, analytic philosophy, pragmatism. Collectively we would fashion a Thomism that was a synthesis of *nova et vetera*. Rooted in Thomas, it would include truth wherever it is found.

It is safe to say that this new synthesis was not accomplished. Why? Not because a conspiracy was hatched to wean the department from Thomism and bring it into the mainstream of contemporary philosophy. The failure came about almost by inadvertence.

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New colleagues were hired who were not Thomists but who were practitioners of one or the other contemporary style of philosophizing. No matter. The center of gravity of the department remained Thomistic and the absorbing and synthesizing activity was in any case communal. The number of non-Thomists grew. Almost without exception they were wonderful people with brilliant minds and great dialectical skills. The weekly colloquium that came in during Ernan McMullin's reign was and is a powerful solvent of doctrinal differences. Gradually the idea that we were collectively pursuing some new synthesis of Catholic philosophy weakened. More and more non-Thomists came aboard. Finally, excellence seemed merely a word for our desire to be indistinguishable from the distinguished secular and/or secularized institutions of the land.

The lure of research may be similarly fateful.

In the present dispensation, I think it is fair to say that the primary analogate of "research" is the sort of thing going on over in microbiology or in chemical engineering. Perhaps the closest thing to this in the humanities would be paleography, the establishment of a critical edition, that sort of thing. To call a dissertation on the status of color in Hegel research is a very extended use of the term. What all senses of the term have in common is that they bear only the most remote relation to what goes on in classrooms.

Research is what professors do on their own, it enhances their own reputation, it is addressed to a dozen or so others interested in the same things. The results might trickle down into classroom teaching, but this becomes increasingly doubtful when one considers the research projects funded by, say, the NEH.

The parallel with the excellence phenomenon is that the models of the research university are the same ones as for excellence. Increasingly, the tendency is for a university to seek prestige through the research of its professors, to raise and allocate funds chiefly for research, to put a premium on research.

A junior colleague today would be foolish to think that his future depends upon his excellence as a teacher. Promotion and tenure are said to depend on several factors, teaching, publications, collegiality. No one believes this, because it isn't true. A churlish colleague who is a lousy teacher but whose publications cause a stir is safe. A young professor who devotes himself to students, publishes sparingly, carries a fair share of the work of the department, will be on the job market soon.

Of course no one is penalized for teaching well, provided he publishes. All this is of course old hat so far as universities go; universities being defined as institutions which offer graduate as well as undergraduate degrees. The sad thing is that colleges are being affected as well.

It is as if the only sure appraisal of those with whom we work comes from elsewhere, from referees of submitted papers and articles. These anonymous voices will always override those of students and colleagues. Thus it pays the teacher to ignore the living, breathing students before him and to write things western civilization would not be poorer without.

I say these things as one who has published a lot, will publish more, and would wither and die if I should stop doing – research. Research is always secondary to the work of the teacher, however, and all professors are primarily teachers.

It may be unwise to redescribe our universities as research institutions. Unless, to rile the spirit of Jowett, we are prepared to see every Oxford college become like All Souls. But to *require* research of college teachers is like asking a beautiful woman if she can cook.

The *Personal Publication List* for members of the Fellowship is in the process. Many members have failed to return the printed list we sent them. Those still interested in having their *published books* (title, publisher, year) incorporated into the Fellowship catalogue are asked to send the results to Msgr. Kelly immediately.

The Bishop's Teaching Mission and Catholic Realities

(Editor's Note: In the light of the new pastoral approved by the Bishops in last November's meeting entitled "The Teaching Ministry of the Diocesan Bishop," four members of the Fellowship met the same month to exchange views on how that mission is best carried on in the existential situation of the contemporary Church. The four are Professor Robert George of Princeton University, Father Paul Mankowski, S.J. of Harvard University, Father Ronald Lawler, OFM Cap. co-author of "The Teaching of Christ" and Msgr. Daniel S. Hamilton, pastor in the New York metropolitan area to 20,000 Catholics. The following is a truncated summary of their deliberations.)

Some General Observations

Collegiality vs. Collegiality. It is sometimes necessary in guarding the Faith to oppose a majority decision of a given Church bureaucracy. This should be presented as an exercise of that collegiality which represents the *universal* brotherhood of the episcopate with the Pope. It is entirely proper to decry errant action by a particular bureau as a *breach* of the collegiality to which the Second Vatican Council invites all bishops in union with the Pope.

Unity of Commandment and Compassion. Dissenters often speak as if God were more Godlike in his forgiveness than in his lawgiving. This is a grave theological blunder which leads either to practical ditheism (there are two Gods, a God who commands and a second God who forgives those who break the commands of the first) or to a theology of radical divine mutability (as a 'Plan B' or afterthought, God decides his commands were too severe after all). It must be stressed that commandment and compassion are merely dimensions of a *single act* of God's love.

Dissent and the Aging Bourgeois. Dissenters portray their agenda as the wave of the future and the "majority Catholic view." Both notions are false and should be countered aggressively. Far from being the pet of toothless monsignori, orthodoxy is the concern of the emerging generation of Catholic scholars. It is the "Bell Bottom Theology" of the 60's and 70's which provides the intellectual framework of the dissenting generation, a generation separated from the rest of Catholic America by its hostility and its upper middle-class world view. Peggy Noonan speaks of a class of difference between the "clever people who speak loudly in restaurants and those who seat them": in great measure the difference between dissenters and the laity they claim to speak for.

Primacy of Martyrdom. The witness of the martyrs is the prime boast of faithful Catholics and should be constantly kept in view. A pastor should say: "Brave men and women died for the Catholic Mass; I have no license to pawn what was bought with their blood. Brave men and women died to defend the teaching authority of Peter; I have no liberty to give away what I inherited from them." No dissenter can point to a "martyr" for his cause without *eo ipso* apostasy. By the same token, the examples of Bishop St. John Fisher and Bishop St. Irenaeus should be vigorously invoked.

Ad Hoc Spokesmen. When feasible, media spokesmen should be representative of that group most visibly affected by the issue under discussion (instead of a single cleric). In particular, laymen and laywomen with proven composure and knowledge in a given area might be used to great effect in explaining Church teaching in whatever area is in controversy.

The Present State of Catechesis

The catechetical crisis, admitted by most parties to recent controversies, has broad cultural roots. But particularly troublesome is our inability to manage this difficulty, not only for pastors but for parents. The cultural and sexual revolutions, and the ability of electronic media to exploit them, have correctly led to demands for new and creative approaches to transmitting the Faith. Unfortunately, in the process, catechesis in recent years has run away from bishops' oversight and has come to be a bland report on felt religious experience more than on indoctrination or authoritative teaching. Even worse, in some places, dissent among catechetical leaders from authoritative teaching has been commonplace. Factually, however, such dissent, which often is thinly based, has been turned into conviction whenever pastoral care of

catechesis follows Catholic norms in a determined way. Indeed, pain of the loss of faith among younger Catholics is resulting in strong demands for realistic catechetical reform to be led by bishops.

It is evident, therefore, that the Holy See and Bishops must once more reaffirm their authority over catechesis. They must be especially attentive to the training of those who teach in the Church's name, must examine with care the content of catechetical congresses, must establish criteria for catechetical materials, etc. They must also use experts who are fully devoted to Catholic catechesis, and defend their choice of experts to the extent that this is necessary.

Above all, bishops themselves should preach unambiguously about what the Church teaches and what renewal in catechesis really means.

The Realities of Religious Life

Historically, religious have been given special liberties by episcopal authority, including exempt status, resources and leisure besides, to undertake arduous tasks on behalf of the Church mission. One of their most enduring contributions, throughout all those years when communities were recognized for their fidelity to Catholic teaching, was their creation of institutions which enriched the temporal and spiritual life of the faithful.

Since 1965, however, this freedom from local religious authority has been broadly abused by radical dissent and by the secular recasting of Catholic values. Reflection is also required to evaluate the significance of the well-known scandals that have been visited upon the Church by religious. Studies, thus far, of religious life have been unrealistic, especially of the theological formation going on in large seminaries and of the resistance by "distinguished leaders" to ecclesial correction of well-known offenders.

Since what religious do in colleges and hospitals substantially affects Church life at the parish level, the oversight of bishops is radically necessary. Important questions call for honest answers: Does the leadership of LCWR or CRSM fully accept Catholic guidance from magisterium? Have their members in Catholic institutions been truly faithful to Catholic teaching as their vocation requires? Have bishops bowed unnecessarily to unfair demands by rebellious religious? Have they done what they could to protect "faithful

sons and daughters" from unreasonable restraints and, at times, from penalties?

The Church's University and Seminary Worlds

The Intellectual Problem: Church doctrine is treated reductively as theology, and "theologies" are represented as different *methodologies* of equal epistemic value. As a consequence fundamental doctrinal differences are radically relativized.

The Institutional Problem: In Catholic university theology and (to a lesser extent) seminary faculties, scholars without Catholic, or Christian, or even monotheist convictions, continue to identify themselves as Catholics, and are entrusted with hiring, curriculum design, and articulation of the Church's Faith to the next generation of priests and laity. Orthodox Catholic grad students often resort to secular universities to avoid the fierce anti-ecclesial atmosphere of Catholic departments.

The Pastoral Problem: Faculty and students enfeebled by severe personality disorders that thrive on ambiguity (such as homosexuality and morbid authority hang-ups) are disproportionately attracted to theological and seminary studies and exert disproportionate influence in their various capacities. Such people do not receive the help needed to overcome their problems and increase the harm done to others, especially to the lay faithful.

The Evangelical Problem: Students and seminarians are not so much coached in dissent as deprived of an intellectual framework in which orthodoxy can be distinguished from heterodoxy. Being Catholic becomes a question of good manners and good politics rather than true doctrine. The gospel remains unpreached.

The Goal: Restoration of doctrinal integrity is central to full Catholic communion.

- Conspicuously heterodox faculty members should be removed where possible and in all cases denied the privilege to call themselves "Catholic." For every Catholic intellectual who defects in protest, the Church will gain five converts who will serve her well.
- In the matter of controversial statements Church Bureaucracies should be beaten to the punch by individual bishops so that the "burden

of collegiality" is on the soft centers of the Church, not on the sturdy churchmen.

- The Pope should know that his co-workers in the shepherding of the Church discharge the tougher administrative tasks outlined in documents such as *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. An unenforced law amounts to no law at all, and bold papal leadership is unlikely if even modest curbs remain untried.

- It is absolutely key that *doctrine* be made the prime test of allegiance and of reliability. If a man is sound doctrinally, the Church has little to fear from his politics or his social convictions. The reverse is not true.

From a Lay Point Of View

The faithful perceive that disagreement (or uncertainty) among the bishops on certain matters of faith and morals leads to uncertain (or, at least, unconfident) teaching. Bishops owe it to the laity to confront their disagreements squarely and honestly and return themselves to unity. Then, they must proclaim forcefully what they believe and what the Church teaches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

There are many dissenting diocesan priests who teach in the name of (and with the authority of) bishops who do not approve of their dissent. It is difficult to see how this can legitimately be tolerated. The laity are confused when the bishop says one thing in person and something else through his delegate to them. As bad as the notorious dissenters in the academy are (and they *are* bad), they do less damage than dissenters in the diocesan clergy.

Relatedly, something must be done about widespread dissent (especially in the area of morals) among lay religious educators. For whatever reason, dissenting Catholics tend to be more activist than others, and more eager to get involved in diocesan and parish activities (especially in the education area). They do a lot of harm. No one should be permitted to teach in the name of the Church who is unwilling to teach what the Church teaches. Serious, solid Catholics (who tend, alas, not to be inclined to activism) need to be positively encouraged to serve the Church in the area of religious education.

The Future of the Church: Concluding Thoughts

What Must We Do To Overcome The Present Crisis?

First, we should promote a more spiritual – a more charitable – atmosphere in the Church generally and among the disagreeing parties within the Church.

We may evaluate certain views as very mistaken and harmful. But gentleness and kindness, in addition to rigorous scientific objectivity and cogent argument – and, where called for, appropriate administrative or disciplinary actions – must be utilized in seeking to resolve the current division in the Church.

Second, every effort should be made to avoid undue delay in clarifying disputed issues. Long delays mean that dissenting opinions will probably gain widespread acceptance and be all the more difficult to correct.

Third, dissenting views and practices must always be confronted; they should never be allowed to pass without comment, uncontested (we refer to books, articles, lectures, newspaper, radio/TV presentations, and so forth.) They should rather be subjected to scientific examination and refutation in appropriate fora.

All religion/theology textbooks used for instruction in institutions under the Ordinary's jurisdiction should have an imprimatur or equivalent approval. Publishers of catechetical materials should be monitored carefully to insure that they incorporate directives and guidelines issued by the Holy See and the NCCB.

When dissenting opinions – opinions demonstrably in conflict with binding Church teaching – are presented for acceptance in institutions over which the diocesan Ordinary has jurisdiction, he should take appropriate steps, and promptly so, to deal with the particular cases. Religious Superiors should do the same within jurisdictions proper to them.

Fourth, Church authorities should also encourage and support individual scholars or groups of scholars or religious institutes that do pursue their intellectual disciplines or their Religious Life in harmony with the Church's authentic teaching.

Conversely, Church authorities should not honor scholars who are public dissenters by inviting them to advise bishops, lecture in bishops' assemblies, in pas-

toral workshops, in clergy conferences or the seminaries or to take leading roles in the drafting of church documents. They should not be appointed to NCCB-sponsored committees.

Fifth, it is important, also, to encourage and support those Catholic colleges and universities that have kept their Catholic identity in the fullest sense and those institutions more recently founded precisely for this purpose. All other Catholic institutions of higher learning should be exhorted and assisted to preserve and enhance whatever Catholic identity they have been able to retain. The feasibility of establishing a Pontifical Faculty of Theology, Philosophy and Canon Law somewhere in the northeast area of the U.S. should be studied.

Sixth, a way must be found to bring to life in young men and women a deep appreciation of the unique and irreplaceable spiritual service that the Ministerial Priesthood and the Religious Life contribute to all of us on our pilgrim journey as we move, with the rest of creation, to the final kingdom of God.

The present state of priestly vocations in the United States is alarming and ominous. Most religious communities of women seem headed to certain and speedy extinction.

Seventh, it is particularly necessary that all teaching in seminaries be fully in accord with binding Church doctrine and norms and that no theories be presented for acceptance or as licit options and prob-

able opinions in any branches of the ecclesiastical sciences that are manifestly in conflict with binding Church doctrine and norms. Many seminaries – constantly changing their curriculum, prayer life and discipline in the early post-conciliar decades – received poor oversight.

Eighth, the project of the Universal Catechism deserves an early conclusion. Taking account of all criticisms made of the first draft, those in charge of formulating this document should seek to make it the best possible instrument for unifying instruction in the Catholic faith throughout the world.

Ninth, all those with power of appointment in the Church – pastors within their parishes, diocesan bishops, college/university presidents, Religious Superiors, those Roman dicasteries responsible for appointing bishops, and the Holy Father himself – must appoint to key positions only those persons who, in addition to other qualifications for their office, have a significant track record of active fidelity to the Church's teaching office.

Tenth, moreover, bishops who are convinced of the dangers created by the present divisions in the Church should unite to insure that those appointed to the episcopal office are neither dissenters nor passive tolerators of dissent but active promoters of Vatican II (together with the entirety of the Church's previous Tradition), as interpreted by the Post-Conciliar Synods and the Popes (Paul VI and John Paul II).

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND COLLEGE FREEDOM

Education Secretary Lamar Alexander, in a letter to Martin Trow, the Chairman of the Federal Advisory Committee investigating the present accreditation process in American Higher Education, proposed a new statute which would permit colleges to apply for Federal student aid directly. The reason: since 1988 the Middle States Association has used a political standard ("cultural diversity") in evaluating institutions, an attempt, Mr. Alexander said, that is "symptomatic of a trend by accrediting associations to impose their own views of social policy on schools that clearly provide a quality education." Federal aid, therefore, becomes the lynchpin to force compliance with political rather than educational goals. Two years later Middle States deferred the accreditation of Baruch College in New York until it satisfied Middle States that it was doing more for the employment and en-

rollment of minorities.

Historically, accrediting agencies have taken for granted that colleges define their own goals and set their own policies, thereby determining the context within which their educational achievement, or its lack, will be judged. Catholic institutions, if they choose to follow their religious commitment, are especially vulnerable to forced compromises of their *raison d'être*. A few years ago a priest chairman of a Middle States Committee, for example, inquired of faculty at a Catholic university in New York why their institution did not take State "Bundy money" (which demanded religious divestiture in exchange for direct aid,) a matter which was neither the business of the Middle States, nor even of the faculty. It will be interesting to observe how Secretary Alexander fares.

Around the Church in the 90's

- ✧ *The National Jesuit News*, (November 1991) carries a criticism of the performance of Father Canavan and Father Mankowski at our Denver convention. Weston's Peter Fink, S.J. thinks that "being conservative is no more a guarantee of orthodoxy than being liberal is a guarantee of departure from orthodoxy."
- While CNS' report did not fully or adequately report the Fellowship Convention, Father Fink apparently does not follow John Paul II's views on "pick and choose Catholicism," quite widely practiced by Jesuits.
- In the same issue of NJN another Jesuit, John Barrett, longtime missionary in the Far East, reports on a long list of Jesuitical dissents since Vatican II. He recalled the Broadway play fifty years ago which labeled Jesuits the Church's "First Legion." Father Barrett now wonders aloud: "Without loyalty to the Holy See, are we to be the last?"
- ✧ Janet E. Smith, of the University of Dallas and Fellowship member, has authored a first-rate, well researched, and finely written 425 page book *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later*. Published by The Catholic University of America Press, it will be reviewed in a later issue of the *Newsletter*.
- ✧ The Archdiocese of Denver has published a comprehensive *Pastoral Handbook* providing guidelines and directives for parish staffs, which Archbishop Stafford expects to be applied by local pastors "in justice and charity." While the liturgical norms, to be in force after December 8, 1991, have received a large amount of public attention (no alteration of liturgical texts, use of vestments, first Penance before First Holy Communion, proper use of lay ministers, etc.) the book itself has ten sub-sections dealing with Church structures, the respective roles of clerics and laity, the Church's teaching office, worship, charitable and social works, judicial processes, sexual misconduct, Presbyteral Council, etc.
- ✧ Bishop Glennon P. Flavin, of Lincoln, Nebraska, published a pastoral letter for "Catholic Couples and Physicians on Artificial Contraception." It appeared in *Origins*, October 11, 1991.
- ✧ David Schindler has been appointed, effective August, 1992, Edouard Cardinal Gagnon Professor of Theology at the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and the Family in Washington, D.C., joining Professor William May there. Students interested in this institute may contact the Director of Admissions Barbara Wynne or Dean Carl Anderson at (202) 526-3799.
- ✧ Kenneth D. Whitehead offers professional writing and editing services, including writing and rewriting, revision, editing, copy editing, and indexing of manuscripts. Author of four published books, co-author of another, and contributor of a chapter to three others under his own name, Mr. Whitehead has also served as a senior editor of two historical reference books issued by major publishers. He is also the author of dozens of articles and reviews for a variety of publications, both scholarly and popular.
- ✧ Mary Collins, O.S.B. (Washington, D.C.) address to the LCWR National Assembly, August 26, 1991 said in part:
- "Most congregations navigated the rocky shoals of constitutional approval by making compromises to write a text that affirmed historical continuity and canonical identity in terms of specific eucharistic observance. (Those relatively few Institutes that maintained monastic identity also included common celebration of the Hours of Prayer as part of their self-definition and have subsequently found in the Hours some buffer against wholly clericalized public prayer.) The approved Constitution on your bookshelf is now being interpreted in daily living. Even the best efforts to make operative that declared eucharistic center for congregational and personal spirituality have been aggravated by circumstances few of us anticipated. In the decade of the 1990's, matters related to women and the eucharist promise only to become more publicly conflicted.
- "Abundant anecdotal evidence supports that judgment. Who does not know of Sisters who have arranged non-eucharistic liturgies for jubilees and for rites of final profession, causing at least com-

ment and heartache, if not acrimony and dissension, within the Congregation and among its clergy associates? Perhaps you yourself made such a choice. Who has not been asked to explain when Sisters demand that a woman co-preside with a priest at the Eucharistic liturgy of a congregational assembly or retreat, while ruling out the possibility of presbyteral concelebration? Perhaps you yourself made the demand or were the co-presider. Who dares dismiss the testimony of Community members when they report how they were renewed in faith because they participated in a Women's Seder celebrated as an alternative to a clericalized Eucharist of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday? Perhaps you were the one who testified. Who among you sees as insignificant the alienation of the Sisters who chose to remain members of your communities but who no longer participate in any eucharistic liturgy? 'I am no longer part of the institutional church,' they say. And they identify Eucharistic liturgy as part of the system of power and privilege they reject. Perhaps your office carries with it your own private struggle with alienation."

- ✧ Dr. Herbert Ratner has new booklets on his favorite topic - nature. They are called "The Nursing Couplet," "The Natural Institution of the Family," and "Nature's Answer to AIDS," available from the Couple to Couple League, P.O. Box 111184, Cincinnati, Ohio 45211.
- ✧ The National Catholic Educational Association has produced a school program aimed at fostering respect for people who have AIDS, suggesting in part that "homosexuality is neither the cause of AIDS, nor a cause of disrespect." On September 10, 1991 Dr. Albert Sabin, renowned for his polio vaccine, in an address sponsored by Loyola University Medical Center, made the following statement: "[From 1981 to 1990 inclusive] homosexual, bi-sexual 60 per cent, and intravenous drug abusers also among them, you see they make up the great majority of the problem. That's where the fire is. And there is no use going around all of the United States and teaching kids how to put a condom on a banana. It makes me sick . . . The place to teach, the place to send the fire department, is not to every house in town. Go where the fire is

for goodness sake. Don't go to the schools and grade schools and other places and tell them a lot of nonsense and a lot of things they don't know. Go to the homosexuals."

- ✧ Sister Patricia Wittberg, S.C., in her new book *Creating a Future for Religious Life* (Paulist) offers one reason for the disintegration of congregations today is that they neglect "socially-integrating mechanisms" upon which their very survival depends.
- ✧ Fellowship member Fr. James Tierney, Director of the Newman Centre in Australia (1 Chetwynd Rd., Merrylands, NSW 2160) has published a second Revised Edition of his Catholic Family Catechism.
- ✧ American Portrait Films has produced a ten-minute pro-life video called *Hard Truth*, a follow-up to *The Silent Scream*. The video has been endorsed by pro-life leaders across the country. For further information call Mary Rose Tichar at 1-800-736-4567.
- ✧ Is Catholic "Conscience Investing" Unconscious? Recently, the National Catholic Conference of Bishops, wanted to know if the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) was investing money from Catholic organizations in companies that give shareholder money to Planned Parenthood. The ICCR, headquartered in New York, is comprised of 242 Catholic religious orders, dioceses, and pension funds. An inquiry made by *Pro Vita Advisors for Life*, (Dayton, Ohio - 513-298-8125) of several religious communities, evoked interesting responses. One leader of religious men opined that he would not exclude the companies that made contraceptives/abortifacients. Another university investor, also a religious, already excludes companies that do business in South Africa from investment consideration. When asked if he would use the tens of millions of dollars entrusted to him to address the abortion issue, he said, "I don't know if we should be trying to fight something that is legal in this country." A Sister member of ICCR, who handles the finances for her community, when queried about

bringing the subject of abortion before the membership of the ICCR, replied, "I don't think it would be very popular."

✧ Those who blame homosexuals, drug addicts, and other sexual activists for the breakdown of American mores on marital and extramarital behavior might look also to the medical profession. The professional magazine *Pediatrics* (November 1991) provides a strategy (for which it unsuccessfully disclaims credit) for confronting the AIDS crisis:

1. Have teenagers discuss risk-free "outer-course" (e.g., petting, masturbation, massage) in addition to presenting risks of intercourse.
2. Develop a new viricide or barrier method that is female controlled.
3. Quickly expand HIV/AIDS educational efforts in schools, agencies serving youth, and health facilities, including making condoms widely and easily available to teenagers having intercourse.
4. Teenagers need to see and know people their age who are living with HIV, not dying from AIDS. Discussions should include same-sex activities and gay sexuality.
5. Attend to the barriers that exclude teenagers from services (payment, confidentiality, availability of skilled health care professionals).
6. Help adolescents channel their energy, idealism, and enthusiasm to become part of the compassionate response to the epidemic by becoming volunteers, peer educators, etc.

✧ Sister Miriam Paul Klaus, M.D. has a better strategy in her Teen Star Program which teaches adolescents about their sexuality and fertility (8514 Bradmoor Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817-3810 (301) 897-9323).

✧ *The London Tablet* (November 9, 1991) reports that dissenting Catholic groups in Europe have founded a network, Church in Revolt (Kirche im Aufbruch), which will co-ordinate resistance against authoritarian measures in the Catholic Church. Movements from Switzerland, Germany, Austria and the Netherlands, as well as individual members from Belgium and Luxembourg are participating. After having been active for several years in a national context, these groups have agreed to exchange information and discuss common prob-

lems at their twice-a-year gatherings. On November 30, 1991 the same publication reported that "Rome backs Bishop Haas." The Swiss bishops have been told by Rome to support Bishop Wolfgang Haas of Chur, whose appointment still rankles in the Swiss Church. The bishops' conference, at their winter meeting on Monday and Tuesday of this week, received a letter from Cardinal Bernardin Gantin, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, and Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Vatican Secretary of State, in which the bishops are called to support Bishop Wolfgang Haas of Chur. Haas, the letter continues, is and remains bishop: there is no question of his stepping down.

✧ Doubleday, a premier publisher of Catholic books for more than thirty years (thanks to John Delaney) has now formally abandoned its Catholic identity, choosing instead to embrace "ultimate concerns," rather than "narrowly sectarian markets and concerns," according to Mr. Thomas Cahill, the new director of the religion department there:

"I am not in any way opposed to religious obligation and ritual, but I think that if that's your concentration, you tend to miss the forest for the trees. The forest is the great human questions."

The old logo for Image books, showing a cross atop the world, is no more. Old books, such as *The Life of Teresa of Avila* will be reissued to appeal to female CEO's rather than advertised as a story of a saint's piety. A new book, such as, Uta Ranke-Heinemann's *Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven: Women, Sexuality and the Catholic Church*, is called by the publisher "a definitive study on the oppression of women in Western Society." And in the Church, of course.

The troika in charge of Doubleday's "wider net" for matters religious, besides Mr. Cahill, include William Barry, deputy publisher, and Michael Iannazzi, editor of bible programs. All are Catholic.

✧ Jude P. Dougherty, Dean of CUA's Philosophy Department, announces a three-day symposium for October 14-17, 1992, on the Role of the Church and the Crown in the Discovery of the Americas. American Scholars are collaborating with peers from the University of Salamanca in rounding out

the Catholic thinking and spirituality of that era in view of the misinformation currently disseminated and in vogue. An attractive booklet entitled *"The Rights and Obligations of Indians and Spaniards in the New World According to Francisco De Vitorio"* is already in print. For additional information write or phone Dean Dougherty at CUA, Washington, D.C. 20064, (202) 319-5259.

✧ *"The Foghorn"* is a student newspaper at the University of San Francisco. In the November 27, 1991 issue, a student reports a visit to this Catholic campus one week earlier by Planned Parenthood, where students learned about diaphragms and spermicidal jellies. The reporter says not once did the morality of anything come up for discussion, not even about abortion. He asked this question: "Doesn't anyone on Campus Ministry care about my moral state of being?"

✧ The Student Government of Fordham University has rejected a place on campus for homosexual and abortion groups, a place they had been granted "ad experimentum" by the Jesuit administrators.

✧ The Religious Education fight is steaming up in England between dioceses. One textbook, called *Weaving the Web*, approved by Archbishop Warlock of Liverpool, has been rejected by the Birmingham diocese as "not Catholic enough." Msgr. Daniel McHugh, Director of Religious Education in Birmingham stated his objection:

"Where the education of our young people is concerned, we cannot compromise. We have the duty of handing on to them our Catholic faith in its integrity. If we perceive a programme as defective in seriously doing this, then we are duty bound to provide something which we hope will fulfil this sacred task more adequately, a task given to us by Christ himself when he said "Go, teach all nations..."

First, we must be clear about the authority of *Weaving the Web*. It is essential to understand from the beginning that it is not sufficient for a catechetical programme, or a religious education programme, simply to have the imprimatur, the statement that a given text is not contrary to faith or

morals. A Catechism or religious education text needs the positive authority of the local bishop, or of the national conference of bishops. The fact therefore, that *Weaving the Web* has an imprimatur does not make it an authoritative religious education programme."

✧ The Bishops' Conference in England (through its Education Department) issued a clarification late in 1991 denying that *Weaving the Web* was ever intended as a syllabus, asserting, too, that "it needs to be complimented by other material." That office assured its critics that an evaluation of the proposed material was already in process. One defender of the publication, a Fr. Francis Swarbrick, whose background is high school education, was not surprised by the debate because he says authentic Catholic education now involves freedom of choice, even by different dioceses, to determine what is best for its own pupils. The shift from a "confessional" approach to an "educational" one is, in his view, taken for granted today, a recognition of the variety of opinions within the Church and out of respect for other faiths and philosophies. (See *The Universe*, Sunday, December 8, 1991.)

Fr. Francis Marsden of Liverpool, a Roman trained theologian, argues, on the other hand, that however much a non-denominational state school can profit from an uncommitted religious text, such a volume has no place in a Catholic school. He objects to its statement of purpose: "Religious education is not primarily concerned with maturing and developing Christian Faith." Marsden's critique, *Weaving a Web of Confusion*, details the Catholic doctrines specifically omitted in the Bishop-approved text: Trinity, Holy Spirit, Jesus' founding of the Church, the Sacraments, Mary's Assumption, Purgatory, Absolute Moral norms, etc.

Birmingham's Msgr. Daniel McHugh appreciates the call for further "dialogue" on the guidelines by the Bishops' department, but indicates that earlier criticisms while the document was in process were ignored. Says McHugh such dialogue is unprofitable if one side of the dialogue has been ruled out. (*Catholic Herald*, Friday, December 8, 1991.)

Some Notes on the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars

Recently, the early history of the Fellowship has become a subject of discussion in various quarters, including the roles it has played in the lives of its members and within the Church. The following summary capsulates those early years and later developments.

Since its inception in 1976, the Fellowship has served a variety of purposes. Initially, it was suggested by Roman Cardinals (1) as an *alternate voice* to the bureaucracies of the United States Catholic Conference and the National Catholic Educational Association. It was clear, however, that the leadership in each of those institutions was not interested in bringing Fellowship personnel into their deliberations or infrastructures. (Incidentally, the early Fellowship members were not school boys: John Ford, S.J., Germain Grisez, John Hardon, S.J., Joseph Mangan, S.J., Henry Sattler, C.S.S.R., Jude Dougherty, John Finnis, Fr. Donald Wuerl, Msgr. Anthony Bevilacqua, Fr. Adam Maida, Donald Keefe, S.J., James Hitchcock, Ronald Lawler, O.F.M., Cap., Richard Roach, S.J., Fr. James Turro, Paul Quay, S.J., Paul Marx, O.S.B., Robert Brungs, S.J., etc.) Some noted academics thought they would have a better chance with USCC, etc. if they did not publicly or formally identify with the Fellowship: John Connery, S.J., being one such. In short order, therefore, Fellowship members became (2) *research scholars* for individual bishops and for selected Roman congregations. It also happens to be true that within five years the Fellowship also became (3) *a support group* for those academics who by virtue of their commitment to Magisterium suffered neglect, lack of approval, harassment, loss of tenure or promotion, sometimes of position. In due course the realities of the present Church situation has tended to confer upon the Fellowship (4) *an outside critic's role* against organizations within and without academia which contribute to defective position papers, doctrinal and disciplinary abuses, or vitiate the attempts of John Paul II and the bishops in union with him to implement the decrees of Vatican II authentically.

As time went on, the Fellowship received the friendly attention of bishops: Archbishop Stafford was a generous host at Denver in 1991, Bishop Wuerl is more than happy to have us in Pittsburgh in 1992,

California's Bishop McFarland, a long-time ally, cheerfully looks forward to our convention in Orange (1993), and Bishop Rene Gracida would like to have us come to Corpus Christi. This offer will go before the Fellowship Board for 1994.

The future of the Fellowship has positive aspects providing we can prepare ourselves to keep going as we have **together**, without over-dependence on any one group, party, or person.

Special gratitude must be expressed to these Fellowship members:

Dr. Joseph Scottino, former president of Gannon University who, for most of our existence, has been our Secretary/Treasurer.

Fr. Michael Scanlon, T.O.R. and Dean Michael Healy of Steubenville University, who together are undertaking the onus of managing our conventions, beginning in 1992.

Professor Ralph McNerny of Notre Dame who will become Editor of our *Quarterly Newsletter* after the 1992 convention in Pittsburgh.

From A Seminary Professor:

[Editors's Note: Fellowship members are not likely to be interested in most of the mail arriving at our central office. But the following piece of correspondence contains a cheerful message.]

"I enjoyed the Fellowship's Denver Convention. You Fellowship leaders are like some old-style chiefs who really love what they do for the Church and love the people who help them do it. The Fellowship actually feels and runs like a fellowship. That is no mean achievement these days.

"I can say that because, although I have not moved within the same ecclesiastical circles as many of the Fellows, I have some sense of a fellowship because I have some sense of the Church as it lived in the streets, in my folks, in the parishes, grade schools and high schools. Particularly in the high schools and colleges. I was a Brother until eight years ago, spending 17 years in teaching in the high schools, then getting my Doctorate by studying Aquinas, and teaching in various colleges. I have seen what was (and it looks a lot better now than it did then) and I've seen

what is (and the Church looks far worse than I could ever have imagined it to look). I have been around - adding to the confusion myself by helping to dismantle old structures in the name of some new vision. I have pulled back from that sort of thing and have actually started to read what the Popes have said.

"My point is that, though I have always had some feel for the Church which I inherited, my thoughts of it now are more conscious and deliberate. What I had once taken for granted, I no longer take for granted. I am surprised to see that the Church, once appearing so solid and even boring, is in for the fight of its life. But, judging from the way of the Fellowship, the fight will have humor and grace beside strong determination. I think that is due to the fact that the generation who knew of the Happy Warrior is still around.

"You old birds are tough to kill. The fact that you scholars are most serious about a most serious enterprise does not mean that the speaker at a main banquet cannot tell stories or give imitations. Young Tigers are too earnest and simple-minded to appreciate such a gesture. One has to be older. Moreover, one has to have had a sense of having shared with other men over a long period a life in the Church together.

"I know what it was like in the Brothers. So I have some sense of what it must have been like with the old priests, Monsignors and Bishops. In the past, I might have had a little touch of the anticlerical and so would have not been so appreciative of the fellowship they had together. But now I take my hat off to the Fellowship because it seems particularly to be a work of men who were and are real Pastors. The conviction is dawning upon me that the whole backbone of the Church is the Popes, Bishops, Pastors and priests handing on the Truth that was given to them. When that line gets damaged, I am no longer surprised at so many other institutions and groups collapsing.

"I enjoyed reading in books by Fellowship members about the old days. It seems that a priest then was really part of the people. In my day the priests seemed to be stuck more in the rectory and the Brothers were the figures that fired my imagination.

"Anyway, I enjoyed the Denver convention. I sensed the city streets in the old-timers there, the old loyalties and causes. The times that created those types are past. But you and your friends are not past - not just yet - anyway. You are very much alive and still doing a great service to the Church, upon which

so many ordinary people depend, not only for salvation, but for some sanity and dignity in this life, too.

"I had the pleasure of talking with some of the old Jesuits who were eminent moral theologians in the forties. It was good just to see and chat with them. Nothing very important. I didn't blab on with them as I am now doing. But I am hoping that they could sense that I was taking my hat off to them.

"Your souls may not need to receive that gesture so much - but mine needs to give it. I suppose that what I am saying is that you ain't dead until you're dead - and neither am I. The old days are gone - but they are still alive. And I hope to see that they live for many more years.

"I am teaching philosophy at a seminary now. I have been really surprised at this turn of events in my life. Ten years ago I would not have known what to tell any future priests. But now thank God I know. They should listen to the Pope, preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments and say their prayers. Having read your books, I can now give them a more concrete suggestion about how to do those things. They can get out there and start taking a census. I don't know how much good that would do the people. But I am sure it would do the young priest a lot of good. I would not have dreamed that these simple things were so important if I had not had the experience of the last thirty years. The bishops and priests have to do it - because that is what they are ordained for. Without them doing it, the sheep are in a lot of trouble.

"I quote Aristotle and Plato and Augustine and Thomas and Newman to seminarians as our teachers did to us. But seeing the Fellowship in action enables me to put some bite into those quotes. You carry a lot of images and history - as my folks did. There is real power in that.

"Well, so long. You scholars still seem to have a strong hand on the tiller as you probably are looking to pass it on to others. I think that you are eminently right in unabashedly putting great emphasis upon Bishops, Pastors and priests. Other people certainly count. But Christ seems to have made them the heart of the matter. If that structure holds strong, then all the other elements have a place in which to flourish in a sane and healthy way. I am not beyond having a touch of the anti-clerical in the past. But now I am

Concluded on last page.

Fifteenth Annual Convention Information

Friday to Sunday, September 25-27, 1992
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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GENERAL THEME:

"The Church and a Universal Catechism"

Host: Bishop Donald Wuerl

Speakers to include: John Cardinal O'Connor, Father Alfred McBride, O. Praem., Sister Joan Gormley, Bishop George Pell of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and others. Detailed program will be published in the June *Newsletter*.

1. THE 1991 CONVENTION will be organized by *Mr. John Rook* and *Father Anthony Mastroeni*, STD of Steubenville University, Steubenville, Ohio 43952
2. MASSES, on Saturday and Sunday, to be celebrated at: St. Mary of Mercy Church, 202 Stanwix Street, Pittsburgh (within sight and "easy" walking distance of Hilton Hotel).
3. AIR TRANSPORTATION:
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4. AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION to and from hotel: Departures every twenty minutes from airport - \$10.00 each way.
5. CONVENTION SCHEDULE: The general sessions will begin at 1:00 P.M. Friday, September 25th, with another session planned that day for 4:00 P.M.
The banquet this year will begin at 7:00 P.M. Friday, not on Saturday. On Saturday, September 26th, the sessions will be held as usual at 9:00 A.M., 11:00 A.M., 2:00 P.M. and 4:00 P.M. **On Saturday night, at 7:00 P.M. John Cardinal O'Connor will discuss the topic "Catechetics and the Governance of the Church."**
6. ON SUNDAY MORNING, at 8:30, there will be a business meeting for members of the Fellowship followed by a High Mass at 10:30 at Saint Mary of Mercy Church. The Convention will close with that 10:30 A.M. Mass celebrated by Bishop Wuerl. Priests are requested to bring alb and stole.

Manual of Guidelines on Clinical-Ethical Issues Part II: Commentary by Eugene F. Diamond, M.D.

[Editor's Note: The Catholic Health Association has published a policy statement covering its relationship with the Church. The previous issue of the Newsletter contained Dr. Diamond's commentary Part I on the CHA's policy statement on matters such as rape and withholding artificially administered nutrition and hydration.]

The topic of the post-treatment of rape also includes some ambiguous and scientifically questionable language. The inclusion of post-coital estrogen administration in rape protocols has been a thorny issue for many Catholic institutions. The Manual states "In cases of doubt as to whether ovulation has occurred within the current cycle, the use of post-coital contraception is permitted because the probability that fertilization has occurred is minimal." It is to be expected that a state of "doubt" as to whether ovulation had occurred would be almost universal. Secure knowledge as to the absence of ovulation might be available to the 2-3% of Catholic couples and the 1-2% of the general population who were keeping track of ovulation by sympto-thermic natural family planning. Even for those on oral contraceptives such as minipills or progestin-only pills, break-through ovulation would be a possibility. For the rest it might be no more than an educated guess based on timing within the menstrual cycle.

There is serious question also as to whether suppression of ovulation would be a primary effect of the administration of estrogens following rape. According to Blye (*Use of Estrogens as Post-Coital Contraceptive Agents*, Am. J. Ob-Gyn. pp. 1044-1050, 1973) these agents act by 1.) Prevention of tubal transport of the zygote 2.) Prevention of sperm transport 3.) Loss of sperm viability 4.) Prevention of embryonic viability 5.) Luteolysis 6.) Asynchrony of the uterine endometrium. The affects on sperm are not relevant to the situation of rape since post-coital contraceptive therapy is contemplated long after spermatozoa have reached the site of fertilization in the female reproductive tract. The remaining four effects are effects taking place after fertilization but before implantation. In other words, they are abortifacient effects. Where estrogens are recommended in rape protocols they are recommended for their abortifacient effects.

In addition to the highly questionable recommendation for the use of post-coital estrogens, the Manual recommends transferring the patient to another medical facility or another physician as an option (where abortifacient medication would be dispensed). This would clearly be formal cooperation in the use of abortifacient medication.

In the matter of Artificially Administered Nutrition and Hydration, the Manual admits "There is not yet a public consensus on issues related to the limiting, withholding or withdrawing of artificial nutrition and hydration." Not to worry, though, since in the next paragraph, it states that "artificial administration of nutrition and hydration qualifies in every respect as a *"medical treatment"* (emphasis added). Such a statement obviously finesses the controversy.

The Manual was subjected to sufficient criticism that CHA put a stop order on the Manual until it could be revised, particularly in its treatment of sterilization.

The fundamental question about this Manual and some other recent publications from CHA is "Quo Vadis"? Is there a systematic plan to dilute the high-profile witness of Catholic health institutions in order to serve economic goals in a highly competitive market? If so, how does one justify the payment of thousands of dollars in annual dues to a separate Catholic organization which duplicates the functions of the American Hospital Association or the various state and local Hospital Associations? As the Catholic *Hospital Association*, a long and illustrious record of service to the Catholic health apostolate was built on the basis of uncompromising fidelity to the Church and its unique approach to medical moral values. Catholic physicians and nurses have relied heavily on that kind of organization and would be severely compromised in rendering their own personal witness if such an organization ceased to exist.

John Paul II's Stubborn Humanism

(The Encyclical *Centesimus Annus*)

Fr. Joseph M. de Torre, Ph.D.
Professor of Social Ethics
Center for Research and Communication
Manila, Philippines

The Pope issued his third Encyclical on social ethics, *Centesimus Annus*, (CA) dated 1 May 1991, "memorial of St. Joseph the Worker," on the centenary of Leo XIII's Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, which inaugurated the systematic elaboration of the social teachings of the Church in modern times. John Paul II's first Encyclical on the subject was *Laborem Exercens* (LE), issued on the 90th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, 14 September 1981. And the second was *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (SRS), published on 30 December 1987, to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Paul VI's social Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*.

At the time of *Laborem Exercens* (LE), whose publication was delayed due to the attempt on the Pope's life on 13 May 1981, I drew attention¹ to the intense humanism of John Paul II, always faithful to the central position of the human person in the Church's teaching. It is a Christian anthropology or Christian vision of the human person which, neither flattering nor condemning him or her, raises humanity to an insuperable greatness in the material cosmos.

This Christian humanism is in neat contrast with the post-Christian secular humanism of the Enlightenment, which encloses humanity into an immanent cosmos in perpetual evolution never transcending itself, and doing away with a transcendent and personal God, as well as with an afterlife for both the human soul and the human body.²

In *Rerum Novarum*, Leo XIII had explained the difference between the two ideological positions which he called "liberalism" and "socialism." Whatever else these two terms may have come to mean later, what they meant for Pope Leo there and then was very clear: liberalism was the individualist mindset of selfishness and survival of the strongest based on the above-mentioned secular humanism, while socialism was the attempt to stamp out all individuality, based on the same materialist presuppositions. But both ideologies had the same aim, namely paradise on

earth, liberalism on an individualistic and socialism on a collective basis. Liberalism thrived within the capitalistic economic system, and gave rise to many injustices, especially in its initial stages, as well as to the expected reaction of socialism, which found its most radical version in Marxism.

Both ideologies were, and still are, secularized (materialistic) distortions of Christianity, liberalism by absolutizing the individual and his freedom, and obscuring his social orientation; and socialism by absolutizing the egalitarian collectivity and eliminating personal responsibility. Both were, and still are, trying to achieve a "liberation" of man consisting of freedom from pain and enjoyment of pleasure in this world (saeculum). They are two versions of the same secular humanism, opposed to the human persons' immortality.

Nevertheless, neither for Leo nor for any of his successors was there ever any "moral equivalence" of the two ideologies. Liberalism was not synonymous with capitalism, since the latter was not an "ideology" like liberalism or socialism, but an economic system with its own laws and techniques (cf. CA, no. 42), so precisely discovered and analyzed by Adam Smith, whose skillful handling would prove to be the "cause" of the "wealth of nations." It is significant that Smith's famous capital work appeared in 1776, the year of the American Declaration of Independence, and it was the new American republic that most successfully implemented those skills (private enterprise on the basis of private property; free market and free competition on the basis of a spirit of service and altruism; free sources of finance, on the basis of thrift and productive investment; and free association on the basis of communal team-spirit) as noted by fascinated observer Alexis de Tocqueville early in the 19th century.

This capitalism would be successful only to the extent of deploying the ethical values and virtues of altruism, self-sacrifice, patriotism, industriousness and so forth. Only thus would the laws of the free market and free enterprise work and deliver the goods. A waning of those values would, on the other hand, bring about a proportional rash of social injustices and economic crises. And it was the liberal ideology

that would produce this adverse effect coming from a substitution of selfish consumerism for those virtues propelling economic growth and wealth.

The danger was not, therefore, in the capitalist system as such, but in its risk of succumbing to that liberal ideology, thus destroying itself. The capitalist system, given man's evident propensity to sin, would then be in a perpetual need of self-reform in its moral motivation. On the other hand, the socialist system is radically wrong, both ethically and economically, entirely based as it is on a flawed anthropology, blind to the transcendence of the human person, with its consequent liberty and rights, including the right to private property and economic initiative. So, there is no "moral equivalence" between the two ideologies.

LE already took up this point, but *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (SRS) made it even more clear in its momentous no. 15, one of the most incisive denunciations of the socialist error. Here John Paul II reaffirms "the right of economic initiative," which had already been explicitly asserted by John XXIII in no. 57 of *Mater et Magistra* (1961),³ and is strongly reaffirmed in no. 43 of CA.

At the time of the publication of SRS, I wrote the following:⁴

Why is the Pope so concerned about the "right of economic initiative," otherwise known as the freedom of enterprise, proper to capitalism? Aside from the metaphysical reason given in no. 15, namely that the suppression of this right chokes the "creative subjectivity of the citizen," the same Pope gave an answer on 3 April 1987 (before the publication of SRS), in his address to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago de Chile:

"The moral causes of prosperity are well-known throughout history. They reside in a constellation of virtues: diligence, competence, order, honesty, initiative, frugality, thrift, a spirit of service, keeping one's word, courage; in short to love work well done. Without these virtues, no social system or structure can magically solve the problem of poverty; in the long run, the pattern and the performance of the institutions reflect these habits of the human subjects which are essentially acquired in the educational process and shape an authentic work culture."⁵

This was a loud vindication of the celebrated virtues of the early settlers of New England. Theirs was not, as has been maintained, a "Protestant ethic," but simply a Judeo-Christian ethic, applicable, too, and valid for all Christians, and indeed for all believers in the Bible. That they implemented it more successfully was due to their historical circumstances.⁶ Their motto was: "Make it do, make it last, do without, finish it up." And it was Thoreau who spoke of that "richest man" who is the richer the more things he can do without.

Shortly after the Chile speech, on 6 June 1987, President Reagan was received in audience by the Pope, and in his address to him, the U.S. president referred to the papal speech in Chile:

"Your Holiness, you have spoken eloquently of the 'moral causes of prosperity,' among them hard work, honesty, initiative, thrift, spirit of service and daring. In many countries today we see economic revolutions founded on this basic tenet, that the sources of prosperity are moral ones, that the spirit and imagination of man, freed of statist shackles, is a revolutionary force for growth and human betterment."⁷

What John Paul II criticized in the capitalist West was, of course, not the capitalist system as such but its contamination or weakening by a liberal ideology turned into a selfish secularism and its consequent contraceptive imperialism aimed at the rest of the world (cf. SRS, no. 25, and CA, no. 39). It is the hedonistic consumerism rampant within the capitalist system that the Pope constantly criticizes.

Now *Centesimus Annus* (CA) comes to reaffirm all these points. It is more urgent than ever to proclaim as loudly as possible that ethics must not only inspire but suffuse the entire field of economics. And economic rights, beginning with the right to economic initiative, must be firmly placed in the framework (social, institutional, political, juridical, cultural) of the totality of human rights – a truly democratic framework of liberty (cf. CA, nos. 46-47).

That a democratic and capitalist society can be undermined and even destroyed by selfish secularism and materialism is tantamount to saying that man is prone to sin. But man is *also* prone to good if he opens himself to that transcendent God, author of human nature and redeemer of man (cf. CA, no. 25) -

the God appealed to by the American Constitution (although the Pope does not actually mention this fact) as the giver of human rights (cf. CA no. 44).

That evil can thrive, and does in fact thrive, in democratic and capitalist society no one can deny. But the socialist utopian "paradise on earth" would be a "remedy" far worse than the "disease" (cf. CA no 12). The only real remedy in this necessarily imperfect world is the constant struggle for a gradual improvement of society, always in freedom. This is a teaching which "recognizes the positive value of the market and of enterprise, but which at the same time points out that these need to be oriented towards the common good" (CA, no. 43), that is, freed from the alienating force of the liberal ideology as Leo XIII understood it.

"... in constantly reaffirming the transcendent dignity of the person, the Church's method is always that of respect for freedom. But freedom attains its full development only by accepting the truth. In a world without truth, freedom loses its foundation, and man is exposed to the violence of passion and to manipulation, both open and hidden."

This is John Paul II's stubborn humanism reaching its peak in Part VI of CA ("Man is the way of the Church."):

"As such (the Church's social teaching) proclaims God and His mystery of salvation in Christ to every human being, and for that very reason reveals man to himself. In this light, and only in this light, does it concern itself with everything else: the human rights of the

individual and, in particular, of the "working class," the family and education, the duties of the State, the ordering of national and international society, economic life, culture, war and peace, and respect for life from the moment of conception until death." (CA, no. 54).

Endnotes

1. cf. *Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas*, Manila, March-April 1982; and Chapter 5 of *The Leaven of the Gospel in Secular Society*, Vera-Reyes, Manila, 1983.
2. cf. the author's *The Humanism of Modern Philosophy*, SEASFI, Manila, 1989.
3. "Experience, in fact, shows that where private initiative is lacking political tyranny prevails. Moreover, much stagnation occurs in various sectors of the economy, and hence all sorts of consumer goods and services, closely connected with needs of the body and more especially of the spirit, are in short supply. Beyond doubt, the attainment of such goods and services provides remarkable opportunity and stimulus for individuals to exercise initiative and industry." (Official Text.)
4. cf. the author's *The Church and Temporal Realities*, SEASFI, Manila, 1989, pp. 122-123.
5. *L'Osservatore Romano*, English ed., 4 May 1987, p. 7 (emphasis in text), cf. CA, no. 32.
6. cf. the author's *Work, Culture, Liberation*, Vera-Reyes, Manila, 1985, Chapter 3.
7. *L'Osservatore Romano*, English ed., 15 June 1987, p. 9, cf. CA, no. 27.

ALBA HOUSE BOOKS IN BRIEF

Jordan Aumann, O.P. and Dr. Conrad Baars, *The Unquiet Heart: Reflections on Love and Sexuality*, (172 pp., \$9.95).

Two Fellowship members, drawing on their many years of psychiatric practice, deal with self-gratification, human maturity and authentic Christian love.

Edmond Robillard, O.P., *Reincarnation: Illusion or Reality?*, (204 pp., \$9.95).

Deals with questions regarding the immortality of the soul and defends the Catholic doctrine of salvation.

Peter Slattery, O. Carm., *The Springs of Carmel: An Introduction on Carmelite Spirituality*, (152 pp., \$7.95).

Jose de Vinck, *Revelations of Women Mystics*, (180 pp., \$7.95).

Sergius Bolshakoff and M. Basil Pennington, OCSO, *In Search of True Wisdom: Visits to Eastern Spiritual Fathers*, (176 pp., \$9.95).

Roch A. Kereszty, O. Cist., *Jesus Christ: Fundamentals of Christology*, (440 pp., \$19.95).

A selective history of Christology up to the present day, with a good biblical and patristic concentration.

The Feminist Cause: Social Development, Cultural Revolution, or New Revelation?

[Editor's Note: Ever since the contraceptive revolution freed women of the burden of so-called unwanted children, and institutionalized the one-two-child family, the role of women in the marketplace has been avidly debated to a pitch of emotion not hitherto experienced when the word "woman" was equivalently interchangeable with "mother." The full implications of a contraceptive culture extend far beyond affairs of State to the nature and meaning of religion, including the nature of Christianity itself, especially in its Catholic form. Our contributors include a new convert, the founders of Women for Faith and Family, and of a new religious community of Franciscan Sisters.]

Father John Neuhaus

The Editor-in-Chief of *First Things*, (December 1991), citing recognized feminist sources, simplifies the controversy over feminism by distinguishing between its liberal and socialist forms (the latter of which would undermine the nuclear family) and the true "liberal feminism" from its "gender" counterpart. "Liberal feminism" would respect women's aspirations for equality in social choices, even when it includes marriage and motherhood. "Gender feminism," on the other hand, denies that there is a distinctive human nature, that motherhood is of its nature oppression, institutionalized throughout history by men who realize that their control of society depends on their control of women. Since androcentric society depends on motherhood, of the biological or religious kind, the latter state must be shattered by the forces of feminism. This is the "new revelation," whose partisans engage in "consciousness raising" and "male bashing" as the way to what they think is equality. The "movement" has become a form of radical politics of condescension and intimidation, one which has achieved respectability in important segments of the university world and in those institutions where academics wield important influence.

Father Neuhaus concludes: "Radical feminist and similar studies are better understood as religious rather than as academic disciplines. When the university gets rid of religion, it does not end up with nothing to

believe in but a multitude of belief systems – most of them wildly incoherent and very, very angry."

Helen Hull Hitchcock on Seamless Feminism

"The seamless garment of the body of Christ, an ancient image of the unity of the Church (sic), has grown old, thin, and faded. The sins of patriarchy, notably sexism, clericalism, and racism, have created great tears in the fabric of unity," summarizes the thinking of Sister Sandra Schneiders in her new book, *Beyond Patching* (Paulist, New York, 1991, 135 pp.). She is an IHM religious on the faculty of the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, California.

Her book is comprised of a prestigious series of lectures Sister Sandra gave at the Newman Theological College in Edmonton last year. Sister introduces her thought in the early pages: "Some in the Church would like to see feminism as a patch which can be sewn, inconspicuously they hope, over the rips and tears of division. But those who would reduce feminism to a local repair job on an otherwise still usable garment risk aggravating rather than improving the situation. Feminism is not a patch; it is a whole new pattern which can only be realized by weaving a new garment, seamless from top to bottom and multicolored from the beginning" (p. 4.).

Focusing her attention on Scripture and spirituality as fundamental problems for feminists, she questions "how Scripture, once its andro-centric, patriarchal and misogynist content has been identified, can function normatively for Christians, especially for women." The Bible, though "understood as the word of God," is flawed by "sometimes morally unacceptable treatment of women": "[Catholic women] whose feminist consciousness has been raised consequently find themselves in excruciating tension with the institutional Church and even with Christian faith as it is articulated and practiced within the believing community."

The book is a revealing document, remarkably open about the agenda of feminism for the Catholic Church:

"Feminism . . . is a comprehensive ideology which is rooted in women's experience of sexual oppression, engages in a critique of patriarchy as an essentially dysfunctional system, embraces an alternative vision for humanity and the earth, and actively seeks to bring this vision to realization. . . . [F]eminism is a comprehensive theoretical system for analyzing, criticizing and evaluating ideas, social structures, procedures and practices, indeed the whole of experienced reality. . . . This definition of feminism as an ideology suggests immediately that one cannot be a feminist by default, e.g. by not being overtly and deliberately sexist; or anonymously, i.e. without knowing it; or on the side, as an interest which can be displaced in favor of other concerns" [p. 15-16].

For feminist 'theologians' and their disciples (of both sexes) the objective of "dialoguing" and "listening sessions" is to convert people to the feminist ideology (see pp. 17-18, 30-31). If anyone overlooks the point about hierarchy vis-a-vis the Catholic Church: "(T)he Catholic Church was a major participant in the oppression of women and . . . this was not an accidental historical development but a major systemic problem with Catholicism itself" (p. 33).

The Church is directly responsible for sexual abuse of women by men: "a prime legitimator of patriarchal marriage and its attendant abuses . . ." Not only does the Church permit and encourage men to abuse women, but victimizes them herself. In her view the "basic theological question is this: Is the Church patriarchal by human or by divine dispensation?" (p. 34).

The feminist resolution to unravel every fiber of the 'old garment' of the Church is reflected in this paragraph:

"Women do not seek to participate . . . in a male construction of reality. Rather they have undertaken a deconstruction of male reality and a reconstruction of reality in more human terms. If the feminist enterprise succeeds, the future of humanity will be qualitatively different" (p. 36).

Sister Bernadette Counihan, O.S.F. on Donna Steichen

Donna Steichen's work, *UNGODLY RAGE* (Ignatius Press, 1991), has done the Church a service in uncovering so fully "the hidden face of Catholic feminism." For over seven years Ms. Steichen researched (and attended!) the meetings, methods, rituals and gatherings of those Catholics whose alleged grievances against the Church are numerous. The reader comes to admire the author's painstaking accuracy. *UNGODLY RAGE* is aptly named as a description of the movement, and is must reading for Christian women and the Church's pastors.

Anyone who thinks that radical feminism is harmless, or even admirable, is in for an awful awakening to the evil in this movement. Chapter One, "From Convent to Coven," shows the "theological" turn that failed-feminism took in the 80's. As Rosemary Ruether, founder of Woman-Church, has stated openly on many occasions, radical feminists decided to "stay in the Church and use whatever parts of it they can get their hands on" in order to "have far greater impact both on the Church and on the world . . . than they could possibly have if they separated from it" (p. 78). Those of us who lived through the "revolution" in religious communities in the late 60's and 70's remember how "leaders" of LCWR used the same tactics then.

UNGODLY RAGE reveals what these angry women have been worshipping since they broke with Magisterium: "Feminism appears as the bait, moral disintegration the hook, and the occult, the dark and treacherous sea into which the deluded are towed" (p. 40). Donna Steichen, in her seven-year study, saw witchcraft, the "goddess within," Wicca, voodoo, fake "eucharistic" rituals. Journalist that she is, she clearly gives the who, what, when, where, why of countless meetings. One of the valuable assets of the book is its fifteen-page index, a Who's Who of Woman-Church, making the book a handy reference work.

The final chapter, "From the Catacombs," gives the reader a frightening view of the devastation, but also sane suggestions for survival during the Restoration, among which is advice to pastors to exercise greater caution in the choice of administrators and supporting scholars for positions of influence within dioceses and the national episcopal structure.

Donna Steichen on Feminism and the Church

Prospects for Catholic women in America took an upward turn last year, when American Bishops writing a pastoral letter on women's concerns, went to Rome to consult with Vatican officials and Bishops from other nations. A statement on women, when finally approved by the U.S. Bishops' Conference, can be expected to proclaim Catholic doctrine more confidently than any of the earlier drafts. This is welcome news to Catholics who thought the earlier versions conceded too much ground to religious feminism. However, the struggle with feminism in the American Church will not thereby end. In some respects, it has only begun. Comforting as it might be to suppose that a majority of Catholic women have been untouched by the feminist revolt in the Church, mounting evidence indicates that ordinary Catholic women, wives and mothers, who do not share the ideology or support the agenda of religious feminism, are nevertheless suffering its adverse effects in troubled faith and in discouragement.

Zealous feminists regularly concede that few lay women ever enlisted in their movement. It is also true that the most prominent feminist theologians and organizers are aging. But their retirement will not by itself take their theories out of circulation. Revolutionary feminism has been building among religious professionals for twenty-five years. Its concepts were introduced to the Catholic reading public in rudimentary form by Mary Daly in 1968, with *The Church and the Second Sex*. Transmitting those ideas to adult lay women was a slow process. But through Church bureaucracies that reach from Chancery offices to the smallest parishes, a powerful bloc of feminist partisans have found bases as directors of ecclesial committees, as authors and editors of catechetical texts, as professors of theology in Catholic colleges, universities and seminaries, as hospital "chaplains," retreat mistresses, diocesan directors of religious education, as parish administrators, DREs and liturgists. Claims to the contrary notwithstanding, these activists have tried not merely to express perennial Catholic truths in contemporary language; they have positioned themselves strategically between the bishops and the faithful, and in the doing have distorted the Catholic teaching they were appointed to transmit, coloring or contradicting it in their attempt to replace understandings of revealed truth with a

new feminist mythology.

Lay women have been subjected to re-education in compulsory catechist certification courses and at "women's spirituality" retreats. Others who previously escaped this indoctrination encountered it during the rounds of "listening sessions" held in preparation for the writing of the "women's pastoral." A rash of diocesan "women's commissions" sprang up, where feminists, skilled at manipulation, agitated endlessly for their particular agenda. At length, feminist influences began to seep even into the long-established, mainstream, Councils of Catholic Women.

Today, run-of-the-pew Catholic lay women are inundated by feminist propaganda rooted, as Rosemary Ruether admits, in a neo-modernist "creation spirituality." Explicitly or ambiguously, it denies Original Sin, the unique Divine Personhood of Jesus Christ, and man's need for Redemption. It insists that Jesus called God "Father," and chose male Apostles, only because He was conditioned by first century Jewish culture; that He founded no Church, instituted no sacraments, and ordained no priests. The human authors of the New Testament, feminism holds, distorted Jesus' message to fit their own cultural prejudices, establishing misogynist discrimination against women as policy in the Church *they* established. All patriarchy is held to be an evil heritage of ancient Mediterranean cultures. Feminists maintain that Catholics today are morally obliged to be pacifists (except in socialist revolutions); that Catholics should limit their families to a culturally approved size; that women must have more important careers than motherhood, and must be admitted to altar service; that liturgical language must be neutered to eliminate "sexist" bias (except in references to the devil, where masculine pronouns prevail unchallenged).

Lax Catholics probably hear as little of feminist theology as of anything else related to the Faith. Instead, the most committed parishioners are its chief victims – truly virtuous women who want to obey the Church, mothers of large families who bear their personal burdens without complaint, parish catechists and pro-life activists, tireless assistants in the charitable works of the Church, dutiful members and officers of Councils of Catholic Women, of parish and diocesan boards. Many of them were able opponents of secular feminism in its heyday, and recognize its earmarks in religious feminism. These good women

may be skeptical about feminist claims, but since they rarely hear any Catholic rebuttal, they are not sure that it is not the Church which now advances them. Unless their faith is reinforced by confident and authentic teaching from sources outside the standard galaxy of Church programs and organizations, their certitude is inevitably shaken. Most do not know where to find such reinforcement.

Despite their mounting confusion and dwindling morale, despite ubiquitous declarations that "the people are the Church," despite the example of religious feminists who have traded on grievances to build a constituency extending even into ecclesial centers, the great majority of Catholic women have maintained a low profile in the Church since "the spirit of Vatican II" was unleashed in America. Why haven't more lay women been heard to complain about their own pain and anguish? What has kept them silent before the feminist insurgency, and thus contributed to an apparent assumption in clerical circles that religious feminists speak for all Catholic women?

One factor, ironically, is their persistent trust. The effects of feminist propaganda have been compounded by the laity's apparently unshakable confidence that religious authority figures always act from benign intentions. That trust has survived even the conspicuous failure of religious education and youth ministry programs over the past generation. So Catholic parents blame themselves, and the decadence of society, for their children's defections to casual secularism or fervent fundamentalism. Susceptible as all fallen mankind to a climate of permissiveness, misled about the nature of ecumenism, and tenaciously loyal to their children, many even deny that such apostasy is tragic.

Intellectual humility is perhaps an even more important factor. Women who learned their catechism in a more orthodox era remember what they were taught about basic doctrine, but like most lay men they know little of theology. Their situation recalls that of uneasy parents during the "New Math" era who, though sure that two plus two still equalled four, were displaced because they understood not at all what their children were being taught. In the same way, faithful Catholic women have realized that they lack even the vocabulary to debate what is taught in parish education programs. Contemporary theology seems an alien jungle; they may doubt the validity of the new concepts, but they know they will sound ignorant if they

try to challenge those authority figures who teach it. They have also learned, from the experiences of more outspoken acquaintances, that critics of prevailing opinion are routinely dismissed as reactionary malcontents. An authoritarianism that so "marginalizes" believing women expresses neither pastoral compassion nor respect for the good faith of "the people of God." It is a recipe for silence, and troubled silence is what it has produced.

A few real life examples, all woefully typical, may illustrate the unsettled condition of American Catholic women:

- In one Midwestern diocese, during a "small-group" session which followed a panel discussion on the first draft of the women's pastoral, the facilitator/recorder was a sullen middle-aged nun, director of a Diocesan office. The Church, she announced, has traditionally taught that women are not full members. She said she had always felt excluded from the Mass, because the priest is male and the language of the liturgy fails to mention women. She denied that the English word "man" used generically, includes all human beings.

Among those seated around her was a lay woman of approximately the same age, a mother and grandmother long active in Catholic organizations and the pro-life movement. When asked whether her silence meant that she agreed with Sister's complaints, she murmured "no". Why didn't she say so? "Well, I learned my catechism a long time ago," she said. "I've never felt left out, or any of those thing Sister says. But they don't teach the same way they used to. I still understand things the way I learned them, but I don't know anymore if that's what the Church teaches."

- In the same state, after a symposium on the second pastoral draft, one of the women present said she was glad her daughters could serve on the altar. Nevertheless, she was relieved to learn that feminist myths have not replaced the articles of the Nicene Creed. She does not share the feminists' resentments against the Church, but she hears about them incessantly, and since no one had ever before challenged them in her hearing, she had concluded that they must be valid.

Another woman in the audience, a Council of Catholic Women officer from a neighboring diocese, asked for copies of all the addresses critical of religious feminism. "I need those arguments to answer

the feminists who control the Women's Commission," she explained. "I'm really grateful to find some." Her organization, with some ten thousand members, received a diocesan subsidy of \$14,850 for the 1990-1991 fiscal year. The Women's Commission, with twenty-one members, received a subsidy of \$70,000 for the same year.

- In one small California town, a cheerful young Catholic wife and mother told members of her parish women's organization that the Church no longer prohibits the use of contraceptives. It is evidence of her honest good will that she accepted the truth when friends gave her a copy of Couple-to-Couple League's pamphlet, *What Does the Catholic Church Really Teach About Birth Control?* Where had she picked up her misinformation? The new parish education director, hired to "update" parishioners' attitudes, at a salary almost double that of her predecessor, had assured her that the Church now teaches that contraception is entirely a matter of personal choice. This depressing incident, without the happy ending, has been duplicated so often in parishes across the country as to be stereotypical and even dated. Can anyone still wonder why many Catholic women ignore the Church's teaching on marital chastity? How many ever hear any mention of *Humanae Vitae*?

- In a north central state, a Catholic mother of nine, who for years had made coffee and washed dishes at countless parish events, and volunteered as playground supervisor at the parish school, celebrated her last child's graduation by enrolling in an adult education class on "Women of the Scriptures." Warned that her instructor, a female "pastoral associate" in a different parish, had more than once lectured on the merits of goddess witchcraft, the docile student ingenuously parroted the teacher. "Oh, that's no problem," she confided. "You know, witchcraft has been *much* misunderstood!"

- In an eastern state, two years ago, a pair of Catholic lay women encountered alarming activities when they attended several meetings of a new organization, Sarah's Circle, formed in their outlying part of the diocese by two former members of the diocesan Women's Commission. Circle members "never once used the Sign of the Cross, or said the Our Father," one of the women reported. "At the first meeting, we were all herded into a ring, and they called on the spirits of the four directions. At other meetings, they

anointed each other, advocated women's ordination, and called St. Monica a 'bitch' for meddling in her son's sex life, among other things." One of the observers wrote to the bishop, asking for an appointment to discuss the doctrinal heterodoxy reigning in Sarah's Circle. The bishop declined to meet with her, but said he would investigate.

The following month, when Sarah's circle met in a Catholic rectory, one of the leaders publicly confronted the astonished pair, pointed her finger and bellowed, "What's your agenda? We don't want you here! This is a support group for women who are alienated!" With a new understanding of alienation, the two women departed.

Curiosity brought them back, however, in May, 1991, when Sarah's Circle invited the public to a "Marian Prayer Service" at a parish church. The opening prayer, printed on the program, addressed God as "our Mother and Father." After an innovative version of the Magnificat ("You have deflected my fervent (sic) thrust toward iron-clad goals . . ."), there was a bizarre feminist "litany," to "spark us to be 'women moving church.'" It called on "Eve and Lilith": ("Mothers of Life, you claimed your own power by reaching for knowledge and found it was good"). The Blessed Virgin, addressed simply as "Mary," rated only a fourth-place mention. Among other women invoked were labor organizer Mother Jones, suffragist leader and occult medium Matilda Joslyn Gage, and Dolores Huerta of United Farm Workers. Participants, including the pastor and a second priest, answered with the refrain, "Move here with us." The bemused non-feminists reported that nothing has been heard so far of the diocesan investigation.

- An even more disturbing case, because of its sponsorship, was the "first annual Wisdom of Women" Conference that took place in Washington, D.C. in November, 1990. It was held under the auspices of the NCCB's Committee on Women in the Church and in Society, and organized by the USCC Secretariat on Laity and Family Life (since renamed the Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women and Youth); the steering committee included Annette Kane, the current executive director of the mainstream National Council of Catholic Women, and Winkie LeFils, past NCCW president, now U.S. representative to the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations. At the conference, appointees of the nation's bishops, two per dio-

cese, heard Committee chairman Bishop Matthew Clark urge in his keynote address that the Church "courageously explore" its teachings on birth control, abortion, ordination of women, and priestly celibacy, by continuing to dialogue with dissenters. Conferees were exhorted to agitate for "inclusive" liturgical language, and to lobby their bishops for the establishment of diocesan Women's Commissions wherever they do not yet exist. Among other dubious selections on the list of recommended readings they were given was *Womanspirit Rising*, a notorious primer of goddess witchcraft edited by Carol Christ and Judith Plaskow.

In subsequent mailings, Secretariat Director Delores Leckey continued to press conference attendees to the task of implementing those recommendations in the rejected pastoral drafts which apparently provoked the May consultation in Rome.

How long revisionist feminism will continue to assault the Faith and bewilder the faithful, and whether the damage it has already done can ever be fully undone, will depend on matters difficult to predict. The need is urgent for the nation's Bishops to take women seriously, including the faithful. As long as religious feminists continue to hold positions of power in the Catholic establishment, confusion and apathy will increase among the laity, and defections from the Church will continue. If the NCCB, at length, issues a sound and convincing letter, restating the Church's consistent teaching on the dignity and vocation of women as Pope John Paul II did in his 1988 meditation, *Mulieres Dignitatem*, beleaguered Catholic women will be reassured that the Faith has not been adulterated by feminist ideology. If the bishops read "the signs of the times" correctly they will make it more difficult for feminists in Church offices to distort authentic teaching.

CARDINAL RATZINGER ON BIBLICAL METHODOLOGY

"The link between Bible and Church has been broken, Historico-critical interpretation of Scripture has made of it an entity independent of the Church: The Bible is read not starting from the Church and in company with the Church, but starting from the latest method claiming to be "scientific." Only thus it is asserted, can the Bible be read correctly. This independence has gone the length of becoming, in some, a counterposition, since the traditional faith of the Church, her dogmas, no longer seem justified by critical exegesis, but seem only obstacles to an authentic understanding of Christianity.

This separation, however, tends to empty out both the Church and Scripture from within. More: a Church without biblical foundations becomes a casual historical product, no longer, surely, the Church of Jesus Christ but that human organization, that mere organizational framework we were talking about. Further, a Bible without the Church is no longer the efficacious Word of God; rather it is a collection of multiple historical sources from which one seeks to draw out, in the light of modern times, what one deems useful. Thus the final word on the Word of God no longer belongs to the lawful pastors, to the Magisterium, but to the expert, to the professor, to everchangeable hypotheses. We must begin to see the limits of an exegesis which really is itself a reading conditioned by philosophical prejudices, by ideological pre-understandings, and which does nothing but substitute one philosophy for another."¹⁴

(14. See *The Ratzinger Report*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press. He expanded on these criticisms in a New York lecture, January 27, 1988, *Origins*, February 11, 1988.)

Catholic Practices and Recapturing the Sacred

John M. Haas, Ph. D.

The Morning Offering, the Invocation of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the sprinkling of Holy Water on children at bedtime, the Incantation to St. Anthony - "Tony, Tony, come around; something's lost and can't be found" - the pleas to St. Jude to prevent a bankruptcy, the Novenas for a sick spouse, all of these many practices fill the lives of the faithful, and enrich, comfort and orient them. Often it is difficult to trace their origin. Often, too, the ones which seem most intimate and natural to a people were never even introduced by ecclesiastical authority. They emerged as natural, faithfilled expressions of love or joy or thanksgiving or grief or desperation.

The one characteristic all these Catholic practices seem to share is their ability to turn people away from the mundane, the worldly, the everyday to direct them toward the sacred, the transcendent, the eternal. One could be traveling on the streetcar in Pittsburgh thinking about how to make a new sales contact or how to position oneself to meet the new girl in the office when suddenly, on the part of a half-dozen people, there was an adverting to another reality, another dimension, one not separate from this realm, but permeating it, leavening it, and making sense of it. Perhaps the adverting to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament by those on the street car was only fleeting, with virtually no break in the train of thought regarding increasing sales or meeting the new girl. But the adverting took place, Our Lord was acknowledged and, implicitly at least, the statement was made that increased sales was no end in itself and any future wife would, one would hope, be married in the Lord.

The sign of the cross made before the attempted foul shot was an expression of the intensity of desire to succeed, an acknowledgement that, no matter how great a basketball player he was, he still needed help because he was not self-sufficient. Of course, the gesture should not be presented as more than it was either, sometimes touched with a healthy amount of superstition, but it was the sign of the cross, the instrument of our salvation, our only hope of immortality. Though, on the basketball court, it was the sign of the same cross raised high on cathedrals and kissed before a martyr's death.

Granted, these outward Catholic practices are not enough. As the sixteenth century Theatine Lorenzo

Scupoli writes in his classic *The Spiritual Combat*, "Since exterior piety are the effects of real piety it cannot be said that Christian perfection and true piety consists in them." (New York: Paulist Press, 1978, p. 2.) Indeed, the practices can sometimes be little more than superstition or thoughtless habit. Leopold Mozart, father of Wolfgang, wrote that he and his prodigious young son had attended all three Masses in the Court Chapel of Louis XV on Christmas Day during their visit to Paris. Yet we know that the King of France attended not only chapel; he also attended to Madame Pompidor who, in that Catholic country, had been groomed from her youth to be a "morceau du roi" and who arranged for other such morsels for the King.

We know that even the magnificence and beauty of a Corpus Christi procession can be repugnant to the Lord if it is not an expression of holy righteous lives:

I hate, I despise your feasts,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies...
But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an everflowing stream.

(Amos 5:21, 24)

Of course the Lord wants justice and righteousness and abhors empty, hypocritical practices. But feasts and solemn assemblies are in no way evil of themselves, as the Puritan supposes. Our Blessed Lord Himself went in procession up to the Temple, chanted the Psalms of David, observed the ritual laws, fasted and feasted. He denounced only the insincere religiously-observant of his day.

The host of Catholic practices which have developed over the centuries and in such a variety of cultures have arisen from a living out of the faith. They arose from the admonitions of men like St. Benedict who told his monks to treat the tools in the workshop with the same reverence they would the sacred vessels of the altar, with the result that all of creation came to be viewed with a certain reverence and awe.

In many respects we might say that it is virtually impossible to have the Faith without having Catholic practices. Catholicism is a sacramental religion and naturally finds expression in fingering wooden beads, wading in water along the ocean shore, tracing the sign of the cross over the bodies of one's children.

Catholic practices are as natural as the mother stroking her child's cheek or the father throwing his arm around the returning soldier-son or the patriot raising his hand to his heart at the national anthem or the lover slipping a ring onto the beloved's finger. In fact, were external practices missing in Catholicism one would have to question whether one were dealing with a true religion.

A Calvinist woman in Switzerland one time recounted to me her visit to a Catholic church as a child. She had been awed by the dark, soaring arches, by the shadowy figures of saints high in niches, by the eerie, living flames of flickering votive candles. She could not forget the sight. It haunted and enticed her for years. The women had been confronted by the "mysterium tremendum et fascinans!" The words of Genesis (28:17) came to mind, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of Elohim."

The Lutheran theologian and phenomenologist of religion, Rudolf Otto, who thought Catholicism in error on a number of theological points, nonetheless felt compelled to write rather admiringly of our Faith, "In Catholicism the feeling of the *numinous* (the sacred) is to be found as a living factor of singular power. It is seen in Catholic forms of worship and sacramental symbolism, in the less authentic forms assumed by legend and miracle, in the paradoxes and mysteries of Catholic dogma, in the Platonic and Neo-Platonic strands woven into the fabric of its religious conceptions, in the solemnity of churches and ceremonies, and especially in the intimate rapport of Catholic piety with mysticism." (*The Idea of the Holy*, London: Oxford University Press, 1923, p. 94.)

It must be said that the attempt to eliminate many devotional Catholic practices by certain theologians and liturgists today is to diminish the character of Catholicism as a religion and to lessen its effectiveness in pointing to the transcendent in our midst. And there are schools of thought influenced by secularism or feminism or Marxism which want to accomplish that very thing. But we see it in other, less likely, places as well. The radical Calvinism of a Karl Barth with its characteristic Puritan repugnance for what is naturally human and sensual wanted to deny that Christianity was even a religion, for religion was expressive of a human attempt to reach out to God and save oneself, something repugnant to the "Neo-orthodox."

The followers of Barth at the University of Marburg used to ridicule Rudolf Otto because of his studies of the phenomenon of world religion. All that mattered to them was the relationship of faith between God and the individual. What they called for was a "religionless Christianity" since religion was a human product of sinful persons, according to their interpretation of the classical Protestant doctrine of the total depravity of man.

What they received some thirty or forty years later, however, was a religionless Christianity with a vengeance. We had the secular city of Harvey Cox and the secular gospel of Paul Van Buren and the situation ethics of Joseph Fletcher and the whole "death of God" movement in the major Protestant denominations. The result of the rejection of the place of religious practices was first an unnatural Christianity, and finally the replacement of Christianity altogether with secularism.

We now live in a world which, publicly at least, is devoid of the transcendent, the sacred, the holy. We now have the world which Immanuel Kant called for in his *Religion within the Bounds of Reason Alone*. Immanuel Kant, who said a man should be ashamed to be caught on his knees alone in prayer. And it is a brutish and brutal world which we have inherited in which even human life has lost its sacred quality and, therefore, its claim to inviolability, a world in which the attempted slaughter of entire peoples has been adopted as government policy, a world in which nations have disappeared from the face of the earth, in which centuries-old Catholic dynasties have been snuffed out, a world in which more children have perished at the hands of men than were ever offered through fire to the bloodthirsty god Moloch. Once human life lost its sacred character, once it was no longer the "imago Dei," it became merely more "stuff," more material, to be used in the building of the Secular City.

Catholic practices, which permeate the lives of individuals and nations, even in their degeneracy, acknowledge the transcendent source of our being and of our ultimate destiny. Catholic practices point to the Source of our inestimable worth. They even allow the worldly to be properly worldly by constantly adverting to the sacred and not allowing the world to be confused with it. They enable the natural to be truly natural for, as we know, without the super-

natural the natural degenerates into the unnatural. Catholic practices remind the world in ways large and small, silly and profound, that it is under judgment, that it has an unavoidable and prearranged destiny.

Emile Durkheim, the Frenchman of the last century whom some call the father of sociology, was no Catholic. Yet he maintained that the greatest distinction of which the mind was capable was that between the sacred and the profane. Indeed, such a distinction was necessary for the integration and ordering of society.

Mircea Eliade, another non-Catholic and a phenomonologist of religion, made a similar point: It was sacred practices which put society in touch with the "really real," with the unchanging in a world of flux, with the divine axis around which reality and society could be ordered. In other words, Catholic religious practices have a very important sociological function to perform and, at a time of social disintegration, should be emphasized more rather than de-emphasized. But these practices cannot be forced. Even to serve their social function they must be authentic. They must arise naturally from the piety of a people.

There were various attempts in the recent past in this country to inject salutary Catholic practices from elsewhere. For example, some tried to promote the observance of the saints days of family members rather than birthdays. The attempt was made to develop a devotion to St. Nicholas rather than Santa Claus to be observed on December 6 rather than December 25. Many of these attempts were rather forced within the American context and were frequently the expressions of another culture as much as an expression of the one faith. Devotional Catholic practices indigenous to the United States will arise. And with their full flowering, there will be distinctively American public manifestations of the faith as grand as a Corpus Christi procession in Germany or a Holy Week procession in Mexico or Guatemala. But this will occur only when the piety and devotion of the Catholic faithful are deepened through a living relationship with God in Jesus Christ.

There are many practices which have long been proven to be effective in fostering piety and deepening faith, and they should be taught and encouraged at every turn. They are fundamentally private, but in time – and time may be generations or centuries – they will blossom culturally as the most characteristic

expression of a people. Some of the more basic are: the Rosary, the Morning Offering, the recitation of the Angelus, spiritual reading, weekday Mass attendance, daily meditation and examination of conscience. There is nothing extraordinary about any of these practices. And that, I believe, is one reason for the efficacy and for the social hope they can provide for the future. They are ordinary, they require no heroic effort, they should be as much a part of our daily routine as our practices of physical hygiene or expressions of spousal or parental love.

These practices must become once more a part of our lives to have their beneficial effect. Two incidents concerning the Angelus might illustrate this. On the grounds of a seminary a workman was driving his tractor to the garage for his lunch break. When he heard the noon Angelus begin to chime, he turned off the tractor, bowed his head and quietly offered his prayers. A salesman on campus saw the workman sitting on the tractor with his chin on his chest and feared he had lost consciousness or was suffering from a seizure. Thinking he was going to the workman's assistance, he actually found himself learning of an ancient Catholic practice - the recitation of the Angelus at noon.

On another occasion a Cardinal was visiting with a group of seminarians who were gathered around him like chicks about a hen. The Angelus suddenly began to ring, but there was no acknowledgement of it whatsoever as the chatter continued. What an edifying moment that might have been had the Cardinal simply led the men in the ancient prayers. Indeed, it would have also been a pedagogical moment since it was later learned that a number of the seminarians did not even know what the Angelus was.

Such practices will, of course, have no effect if they are but vague memories of a distant past or become the precious practices of effetes or sentimentalists in the present. Catholic practices will not shape a new culture in the future unless the faith is alive and informing them.

There are some things I believe Church authorities themselves could do to advance such practice. One would be to adopt some standard translations for many of our traditional devotional prayers so that Catholics could offer them more easily and more spontaneously together. How many different versions of the Morning Offering are floating around? Obviously,

there should be no intention to discourage spontaneous prayer. Quite the opposite. The fact is that it would be helpful if there were some standard translations so that Catholics might on occasion be able to pray spontaneously together. When the new universal catechism is published, perhaps there could be appended to it a section of devotional prayers and practices so that we would have standard translations.

When the Holy Father made his first pastoral visit to the United States, my family and I were privileged to attend his Mass in Washington. Friends had traveled a great distance to be there and stayed with us. When we returned from the Mass, one of our friends remarked that it was unfortunate that there were no Catholic hymns which were so familiar to us as Americans that we could have spontaneously broken into song together on such a joyous occasion. He had been struck by the way in which Catholics in other countries the Pope visited would freely begin serenading him with Catholic hymns and songs. Such a thing was impossible in this country.

Another example: Our eight children have had to memorize three or four different versions of the Ten Commandments with the result that they could not say them together if they wanted. This came to my attention when one of our older children was helping a younger sibling with her religion homework. She was chastising the younger for not having memorized the Commandments properly when it was discovered that her sister had learned a different translation – or better, paraphrase – than she had. The King James version of the Bible helped to shape an entire culture. The endless and often insipid versions arising today will, I believe, have considerably less impact because the very variety prevents the Scriptures from becoming a shared treasure.

Catholic practices do not arise only spontaneously, of course. Ecclesiastical law can have a profound effect on their development. Laws on fasting, on forbidden times for marriages, on Holy Days of Obligation can have a tremendous impact on fostering Catholic practices.

Although I do not believe that popular Catholic practices can be forced on a people, I do believe that a strong and effective institutional expression of the faith can be tremendously beneficial. Truth be told, and we all know it, we no longer have a Eucharistic

Fast in any real sense. Also, I believe that absolutely nothing has been gained by transferring the observance of Corpus Christi and the Epiphany from their traditional dates to Sundays. First of all, most Sunday celebrations in this country are so homogenized and pedestrian that one Sunday virtually has no significance over another. Easter is usually about the only Sunday which manages to stand out in the course of the year in the United States. Consequently, the significance of those feasts is hardly enhanced. And secondly, the traditional dates for those feasts are themselves so weighted with significance and continue to be observed in the rest of the Universal Church that, again, little or nothing is gained by the transfer and much is lost.

Catholics are the largest religious body in the United States today. We number 54 million; Episcopalians a mere 2.5 million. Indeed the entire nation of Switzerland numbers only around 8 million. If the feasts of Corpus Christi and the Epiphany were celebrated in this country, under the leadership of the bishops, with a solemnity which even approached their significance, it could not help but make a profound cultural impact. If this were done, a great deal might actually be gained rather than lost by transferring the celebration to a Sunday from the traditional date. City authorities will not infrequently permit the rerouting of traffic from prominent downtown streets on a Saturday or a Sunday for ethnic or cultural festivities. One could imagine, for example, a public celebration of Corpus Christi in an American city on a Sunday with the cooperation of civil authorities which would be impossible on a Thursday.

Individual Catholics should deepen their spiritual lives by drawing on those well established practices which sacralize their days and sanctify their work. They should try the ancient and new practices for themselves and their families and make them a regular part of their lives. The institutional Church can adopt certain policies to foster Catholic practices so that the faithful can work as leaven within the social body helping to remind it that its Author and Judge is the Lord God and that all its acts much be measured against the standard of His justice.

We live in a world cut off from its spiritual roots, and, as a consequence, cultural life is disintegrating before our very eyes. Inconceivably, mothers by the million cooperate in having their children cut and

scraped and suctioned from their wombs. Divorces equal marriage in some areas of the country. Innocent non-combatants are gassed to death in regional conflicts or blown from the sky by terrorists. Drug abuse shreds the fabric of nations and undermines hope for international peace.

Christopher Dawson saw the malady clearly. "(W)e have a secularized scientific world culture which is a body without a soul; while on the other hand religion maintains its separate existence as a spirit without a body. This situation was tolerable as long as secular culture was dominated by the old liberal humanist ideology which had an intelligible relation with the Western Christian tradition, but it becomes unendurable as soon as this connection is lost and the destructive implications of a complete secularized order have been made plain." (*Religion and Culture*, New York: Meridian Books, 1958, pp. 216-217.)

We have lost our bearings. We don't know "where we are." The Catholic players on the basketball court and the office workers wading in the Atlantic on the Feast of the Assumption knew where they were, of course; but more and more modern men and women have no idea where they are. And small wonder. The human person was once the crown of God's creation, touched with the sacred. But what assaults we have suffered since the onset of modernity! Sigmund Freud spoke of the cosmic insult to man's pride when Copernicus showed that we lived on a mere speck in a vast universe rather than at the center of the cosmos. Darwin delivered another insult when he showed us,

not as the crown of creation, but as a chance product of biological process, a cousin of the ape. Freud called this the biological insult. Marx claimed to show that all our greatest cultural and artistic and political achievements are really nothing but the product of economic factors. This might be called the cultural insult. And Freud himself delivered a devastating blow to the pride man has always had in the vaunted faculty of reason. In the words of the psychoanalyst Karl Stern, "Human Reason, royal and autonomous, became a mere surface ripple over an ocean of dark mysterious currents which seem to be guided by blind, irrational forces. This was the psychological insult." (*The Third Revolution*, Image Books, Garden City, New York, 1954, p. 190.)

But that kid on the basketball floor tracing the sign of the cross before the foul shot tells a different story. He declares that we are indeed the center of the universe, that even in our natural state, we are "higher than the animals and a little lower than the angels," and that in our supernatural state we are higher even than the angels and have become as gods. That gesture made in a moment's time with little or no thought over a sweaty body in the heat and excitement of athletic competition before shouting fans declares what has been proclaimed in untold ways throughout the whole of the Christian dispensation - that each one of us is so precious that the Father sent His only Son to shed the last drop of His life's blood so that we might reign with Him forever in glory.

QUESTIONS THAT ARE RAISED . . .

(Editors Note: The Fellowship office and the U.S. Post Office are not always on speaking terms. Some of our problems have to do with Third Class mailings, some with the frequent movements of academics, some the result of just plain bad luck. If you have a problem of this kind, write us, or call (718) 990-1392. The following excerpt is evidence of one professor's distress.)

"Dear FCS:

Am I a member of FCS?

If I am, why am I never billed for dues?

If I'm not, why are you sending me all this fine material?

If I am, why am I not included in your registry?

If I'm not, why aren't I?

Respectfully but confusedly yours,
(Writer's name withheld by FCS)

Book Reviews

Chastity and the Common Good by Patrick Gavan-Duffy Riley, Washington: Pontificia Studiorum Universitas a S. Thoma Aq. in Urbe, 1991, ix plus 157 pp.

It has taken no more than a generation for the traditional laws prohibiting pornography, adultery, fornication, sodomy and abortion to disappear from American legal codes. The driving force for this revolution – and by all accounts it reflects a revolution in behavior as well as on the statute books – has been the contention that these activities, however deplorable, lie within a zone of privacy and ought therefore to be beyond the reach of public law.

Frankly, this is good liberalism. Under the Millian principle that all which does not harm another should be permissible, my fornicating with or sodomizing a willing partner is simply none of your business. The advertisements of Planned Parenthood, barring Jesse Helms from its collective bedroom, strike a responsive chord with a public whose political education has been steeped in liberal individualism.

In order to sustain a cogent case for laws supporting the virtue of chastity, it is necessary to pierce the cocoon of privatization that has been woven around sexual behavior. (An irony: sins against chastity have been rendered inviolate on the grounds of their “privacy” at the very time when publicity about them has become pervasive.) Private acts, it must be shown, have public consequences, affect the well-being of society.

Patrick Riley accomplishes this task in masterful fashion, bringing to bear on his subject the tools of philosophy, Biblical exegesis and historical analysis.

In his introductory section, Riley sketches out the relationship of the virtues to the common good, but also argues the centrality of the family to the common good of civil society and of the child as the common good of the family. Chastity, as the specific virtue which informs and protects the family is thus essential to the common good of civil society. The two remaining parts of the work are dedicated to a demonstration of this thesis.

The linchpin of Riley’s argument is his remarkable assertion that the Decalogue was given to the Hebrew

people not as a code of personal morality, but as a code of public law, a constitution which forged a heterogeneous mob into a nation. One’s initial reaction is to bridle at such revisionism of received Scriptural interpretation. But Riley supports his novel claim with sober and scholarly evidence. The Law given on Sinai was directed at securing the common good of a nation, not simply the private good of individuals.

Riley’s greatest challenge in setting forth this reading of the evidence lies in interpreting the Commandments against covetousness in a way which addresses not only an internal, spiritual disposition, but outward, externally verifiable acts. Even though this interpretation runs counter to the traditional Christian understanding of covetousness, he marshals an impressive array of philological and historical evidence to show that in ancient Hebrew law, the Ninth and Tenth Commandments forbade not only internal, but external, criminal acts. The Decalogue was originally the penal code of a body politic, and one which in fact brought that body politic into existence.

The final section of Riley’s work offers three historical instances in which this relation between the virtue of chastity and the common good of nations is apparent. The revolt of the Jews against the Seleucids, recounted in the Books of Maccabees, enabled the Jewish people to survive the twin threats of idolatry and homosexuality. The laws of Caesar Augustus prohibiting adultery contributed to revitalizing the Roman Empire. And the Crusade against the Cathar heresy rescued the West from the most virulent attack ever waged against the family until our own day. Riley shows how each of these historic dramas reveals another aspect of the public dimension of chastity.

Historically, philosophically and theologically, then, the commandment against adultery has a social character. Chastity is necessary not only to the personal integrity of individuals, but also to the good of communities. Societies are composed of families, not of isolated individuals, and chastity is necessary for the preservation of the family.

Michael Schwartz

***An Introduction to Canon Law*, by James A. Coriden. Paulist Press, New York and Mahwah, NJ, 1991, xiv + 232 pp., paper.**

This small book does not even try to equip a reader to solve the canonical problems of ministry and administration. It is neither a commentary nor a manual, but (as titled) an introduction to a subject which, for most believers (and most seminarians and far too many priests), is *terra incognita*. Its rather modest aims are (1) some understanding of the Church as a society that needs structures and rules, and (2) a broad overview of these, as they are embodied in the 1983 Code.

Six chapters are devoted to the first of these aims (including a brief history of church discipline, with bibliography for those inclined to delve deeper). A separate chapter then sketches each of the fourteen principal areas treated by the Code, indicating both the needs for norms and an idea of how the law tries to meet those needs.

There follow two appendices: the first offers guidance to persons beginning research in Church Law, while the other proposes ten fictitious "cases" illustrating the sorts of problems with which canon law deals. The work concludes with an alphabetical index.

Fr. Coriden clearly prefers a more "democratic" Church than would appeal to most members of the Fellowship: the modern Papacy, for instance, is "a dramatically aggrandized office" (p. 68). Nevertheless, such preferences seldom distort his presentation of the current reality; this reviewer found only a handful of debatable interpretations:

- on pp. 55-56, he explains c.204 (and the conciliar doctrine that the Church founded by Christ "subsists in" the Catholic Church) in a fashion that is, at best, disputable.
- on p. 117, he reads into c.842 an exhortation to receive the sacraments of initiation in an order at variance not only with common U.S. practice, but with an implication of c.914 (about the time of first confession) that he seems to dislike.
- on p. 194, he greatly overstates the role of "reception" of law, and calls this "a time-honored canonical tradition."
- on p. 195, his explanation of *epikeia* is weak, and the example he chooses is far from the one most apt to clarify the notion.

Fr. Coriden has drawn on two decades of experience as a teacher of Church Law, as well as seven years of administering it, to produce a little book well adapted to its stated aims. While it doesn't answer the practical questions, it offers an excellent framework for better understanding and addressing them. This reviewer wishes that something like it had been on the market when he first had to teach Canon Law 35 years ago!

Robert W. Crooker, CSB
Diocese of Las Cruces

***Old Testament Parallels: Laws and Stories from the Ancient Near East*, by Victor H. Matthews and Don C. Benjamin. Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ, 1991, 276 pp., \$14.95.**

Forty-four texts culled from documents dating to the Bronze and Iron Ages in the Fertile Crescent and Egypt as presented in OTP would likely be adequately representative for an Old Testament Bible class on a secondary level. Quite possibly the teacher would find the particular passage sought for, along with archaeological elucidation sufficient for supplementary purposes. Cultural cross-references are helpful and interesting.

The fly in the ointment? Is such purely archaeological elucidation all to the good, actually?

When 100 percent of the citations stem from polytheistic, idolatrous cultures and pantheistic contexts with embellishment by 124 drawings of the same character, both teacher and student would easily be led to think in the modality of comparative religion. With little or no effort the emphasis would be: appreciate the similarities; remain color-blind to contrasts, especially supernatural revelation and the mystery of Biblical inerrancy that puts the Bible in a category distinct from all compilations as a result of divine inspiration. In other words, ignore the difference between Scripture reading and reading, e.g., the Iliad. Exactly this puts the spotlight on the lie in the word: "parallels."

If by "parallels we mean some association or similarity of ideas ranging from the self-evident and true to that which is far-fetched," the use of the term could

be justified. But all too often the average readers (teachers included) are hardly in an academic position to do the exegetical footwork required. What ordinary college student, for instance, would be so advanced as to classify the first chapter of Genesis in a literary genre embodying goodly elements of ridicule or satire over against the *tohu va bohu* of Enuma elish? Precisely how would the irony and mocking employed with consummate finesse in the Tower of Babel story be "parallel" to a Sumerian ziggurat account?

The Deluge story in Genesis is preceded by three separate introductions, concluded by three different endings while the central narrative consists of an intertwined body of material from two independent sources; in addition, divine revelation from the Mosaic religion has changed or modified the meaning of significant words (God is no Mesopotamian Enlil idol here), and the purpose of the story (sanctions of mercy and wrath) is unique. Hunting for parallels in this conglomeration of literary genres, themes and theologies spins the uncritical Bible reader to swirling stultification.

At the turn of this century Professor Breasted of Chicago University placed Psalm 103 (KJ 104) parallel to Ikhnaton's "Hymn to the Sun (Aton)." Change the name Aton to Yahweh and you have an example of interdenominational togetherness. Would the original psalmist have been happy with the evolutionary alignment? He would have hurled the curses of Psalm 109 (KJ 110) against such blasphemy. Revelation, evolution and mythic poetry are not parallels. On this

point Breasted and his successors have hosted generations of neo-gnostic obscurantists.

Human reason and natural law call for weights and measures to agree with given standards. So also did the Covenant Code and the Code of Hammurabi. Parallels? Yes, superficially. But for the Hebrew merchant the sanction was not an illusory Marduk but an actually existent "I AM WHO AM"! No paper tiger parallel, He. Cf. the Deuteronomic Sanctions.

Some oracles in the prophets (both early and late) and certain proverbial sayings in Wisdom literature readily conjure up cultural realities of nations bordering Israel. If the matter is simply that of food, clothing, shelter, art common to those regions, difficulties hardly arise. But if the judgments involve matters of faith and morality, virtue or vice, how beneficial to a Bible believer are texts with a thousand false parallels crowding out the one genuine evaluation of the *one* Biblical judgment.

To reply that critics, exegetes, theologians have provided whatever clarification, correlation and elucidation that is needed, borders on the naive. On extrinsic, superficial levels parallels are automatically understood and helpful. For understanding the actual message embedded in the texts, gods that have eyes but see not, ears but hear not, legs but walk not, heads that think not, help not. Parallels have not vanished — they were never present.

William G. Heidt, O.S.B.
Cromwell, Connecticut

BISHOPS, PRESBYTERAL COUNCILS, CANON LAW

A new document, approved by the NCCB at the Fall 1991 Meeting, summarizes the consultation required by the Code for Bishops and Presbyteral Councils. (*Origins*, December 5, 1991.)

Canon law prescribes several instances when the diocesan bishop must consult the presbyteral council. Consultation is required when the bishop decides the following matters:

1. The advisability of a diocesan synod (Canon 461.1).
2. The erection, modification, division or suppression of parishes (Canon 515.2; Canon 813).
3. The determination of the use of offerings of the faithful made on the occasion of parish services and placed in a general parish fund (Canon 531).
4. The appropriateness of parish councils (Canon 536.1).
5. The granting of permission to build a church (Canon 1215.2).
6. The granting of permission for a church to be converted to secular purposes for reasons other than its poor condition (Canon 1222.2).

7. The imposition of a tax for the needs of the diocese on public juridic persons subject to the bishop; also the imposition of an extraordinary and moderate tax for very grave needs on other juridic persons and on physical persons (Canon 1263).

The diocesan bishop can determine other cases requiring consultation with the presbyteral council and can establish them as the particular law of the diocese.

Canon law gives another example of the competency of the presbyteral council in Canon 1742.1. It states that the presbyteral council is to choose a group of pastors from persons proposed by the bishop. The bishop, during the process of removing pastors, is to discuss the matter with two pastors from this group.

Books in Brief

Three books dealing with life issues have been written by Fellowship members within the past year.

Donald DeMarco, Ralph McInerny and David Liptak have published a small volume entitled *Technology and Life Issues* available from Holy Apostles College, Cromwell, Connecticut 06416. This monograph is part of a lecture series in bio-ethics.

Damian P. Fedoryka, president of Christendom College, has written *Abortion and the Ransom of the Sacred* available from Christendom Press (part of its Brownson Studies), Front Royal, Virginia 22630.

Stephen Schwartz, a professor of philosophy at the University of Rhode Island, has authored *The Moral Question of Abortion*, 290 pages of penetrating analysis of the issues created by "the child in the womb," even the matter of personhood. The book, published by Loyola University Press (13.95 postpaid) is highly praised by Msgr. William Smith.

Ignatius Press

Peter Kreeft, *Fundamentals of the Faith*, (200 pp., \$11.95).

Essays on Christian apologetics.

_____, *Prayer: the Great Conversation*, (178 pp., \$9.95).

Straight answers to tough questions about prayer.

Janet Smith, Mary Ellen Bork, etc., *The Catholic Woman*, (130 pp., \$9.95).

Eight outstanding women provide insight on the role of today's Catholic women.

Adrienne Von Speyr, *John, Volume 4*, (443 pp., \$24.95).

On the birth of the Church.

Thomas Howard, *The Novels of Charles Williams*, (298 pp., \$14.95).

"Metaphysical Thrillers" ala T.S. Eliot or C.S. Lewis.

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Ignatius Press (continued)

Evelyn Birge Vitz, *A Continual Feast*, (294 pp., \$14.95).

A unique cookbook to celebrate all the Christian feasts.

Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, Volume V, Metaphysics; Volume VI, Old Covenant Theology, (over 400 pages each, \$40.00 each).

Two of his major theological works dealing with nominalism and the biblical vision of God's glory.

Louis DeWohl, *Lay Siege to Heaven*, (363 pp., \$14.95).

A Novel about Catherine of Siena.

(continued Letter from page 8)

really rooting for my Asian and Hispanic and other students. I am so annoyed at many of the American Irish and Italians and Germans of my generation and younger, who seem to have forgotten their fathers and mothers, that I don't mind being here at the edge of the new immigration. I will try to see to it that they do not forget their roots, which are really the roots of all of us. And that is Mary and the Church. Without them we would all be barbarians not worth thinking about very much."