

America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REVIEW

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Service Call

A NEW GENERATION OF
VOLUNTEERS FOR
AMERICA?

WILLIAM J. BYRON

OF MANY THINGS

Astute observers of this page will have noted by now the change at the top of the masthead to your right. America Press, the publisher of **America** magazine, has a new name: America Media. Many of you may be wondering what it all means. It's really quite simple: Our new name reflects the reality that **America** now produces content on multiple platforms in addition to print, including the web, video and social media. It also conveys better the essence of who we are: a media ministry sponsored by the Society of Jesus, a collaboration of Jesuits and laypeople, guided by the Catholic faith and the spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola.

Let me also be clear about what this change does not mean. There are no plans to stop printing the magazine, nor are there any plans to print fewer issues. We know who we are, and we know where we come from. This weekly print magazine is the foundation and flagship of our work, as it has been since 1909. In fact, our print circulation is growing and we are putting in place new programs and technologies to expand our print circulation even more.

More important, in this uncertain era, you should know that **America** magazine will continue to be what it has always been: a smart Catholic take on faith and culture. We will not dilute or dumb down our standards of excellence. At the same time, I invite you to take advantage of all of the additional high-quality content we now offer, most of which is included in your subscription. **America** is available on mobile devices, and you will also find us on social media platforms, like Facebook and Twitter, as well as SiriusXM radio and through video and live events.

You may have noticed a few other changes to that masthead: **America** is pleased to welcome Edward Schmidt, S.J., as senior editor. Father Schmidt is a former editor of *Company* magazine. He also currently serves as editor

in chief of *Conversations* on Jesuit Higher Education. Russell Pollitt, S.J., and Anthony Egan, S.J., have joined **America's** team as our Johannesburg, South Africa, correspondents. Father Pollitt is the director of the Jesuit Institute South Africa and Father Egan teaches at St. Augustine College there.

America Films was also launched last month by Executive Editor Jeremy Zipple, S.J., a former producer at National Geographic. Look for original video content that will include editor interviews, promo pieces and mini-documentary films, all available through our website: americamagazine.org. Lastly, though **America** was born before radio, we finally have a radio show. You can hear "America This Week" at 1 p.m. Eastern Time, only on The Catholic Channel, Sirius XM 129. If you are not a Sirius subscriber, you can still listen to extended excerpts from the shows at our website.

The media world is rapidly changing and the recent changes at America Media reflect that. But you will still find here in these pages and on every one of our media platforms the spirit of **America** that has guided us for more than a century. As Thurston N. Davis, S.J., editor in chief of this review from 1955-1968, once wrote: "Within these pages, a reader will find a hundred paths that crisscross the complicated world of contemporary affairs. But through it all, and written between every line, is the conviction that in all its diversity and change, the world of man is God's world and that he who does not labor to return it to God redeemed in some small measure by his tears and worry and dedication has missed the meaning of man's job on Earth."

On behalf of the Jesuits and our lay colleagues, thank you for your continued support of this media ministry. With your help, **America** will continue to lead the conversation about faith and culture for years to come.

MATT MALONE, S.J.

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Cover: A FoodCorps volunteer teaches a child about growing food at the South Lawn of the White House in 2014. Photo: Corporation for National and Community Service.

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ON THE WEB

Jim McDermott, S.J., interviews 18 of the 20 new cardinals chosen by Pope Francis to lead the church, including **Soane Patita, Mafi** of Tonga, right. Full digital highlights on page 13 and at americamagazine.org/webfeatures.



Off Balance in Ukraine

If the recent peace summit in Belarus does not lead to an effective cease-fire, the Obama administration will be under even more pressure to do “something” to stand up to a barely disguised Russian campaign of aggression that has violated Ukraine’s sovereignty. The trouble is that any course of action is deeply perilous. Standing down while Russian nationalists seize chunks of eastern Ukraine may only encourage Vladimir Putin’s reckless campaign. But a too-aggressive effort to shore up Ukrainian defenses may heighten the confrontation between two nuclear-armed powers caught in a stare-down on the outskirts of Europe.

There will be much talk of Munich and appeasement if the Obama administration seeks to finesse a way around this dangerous confrontation. But not every attempt to avoid a potentially catastrophic military engagement represents appeasement. Sometimes it is merely the wisest course of action. The Obama administration must not allow itself to be goaded into an injudicious decision. It has to methodically build the foundation for a strategy against Putin that will last longer than the next U.S. presidential election cycle. It could be that the best course of action is to allow Putin to follow his worst instincts. His regime may eventually choke on its costly appetite for separatist enclaves, but that will not happen quickly.

In the meantime, Ukraine is entitled to defend itself. If the cease-fire does not hold, a multilateral, limited campaign to restore Ukraine’s defensive capacity seems warranted. Putin is a fan of jujitsu, a martial art that exploits an opponent’s balance. Could a dramatic gesture shift the balance of confrontation in Ukraine’s Donbass region? A decision to green-light military aid should be accompanied by good counsel. The United States could offer to host direct negotiations between Ukrainian officials and separatists, modeled after the Dayton negotiations that brought an end to conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

Prenatal Imprecision

For decades, expecting parents have had access to prenatal tests to check for genetic disorders like Down syndrome and Edwards syndrome. But until recently they have had to choose between imprecise screenings and invasive diagnostics that, while definitive, carry a small risk of miscarriage. Today, mothers are increasingly opting for a new generation of prenatal screening tests that promise, perhaps misleadingly, near-perfect accuracy with none of the risk.

Cell-free fetal DNA testing has been on the market since 2011, but some experts warn that unregulated

screening companies are overselling the precision of their results; and doctors lacking genetic expertise may struggle to communicate the limitations of the tests to patients. The accuracy of the tests ranges from just 40 percent to 90 percent, which is why a traditional diagnostic test is strongly recommended to confirm any positive screening result. Some women who learn that their child is at high risk for a chromosomal condition are having abortions without first having a confirmation test. In at least three cases, the babies were later found to have been completely healthy.

The proliferation of prenatal screening for an ever-growing list of identifiable genetic abnormalities presents an ethical challenge to health care providers. It is alarming that as many as 90 percent of parents who receive a diagnosis of Down syndrome choose to terminate the pregnancy. Parents who receive the heart-wrenching news that their child may live for just a few painful days, or who face the challenge of raising a child with special needs, deserve the full support and accompaniment of the entire community not only in their choice to bring this fragile life into the world but also in the joys and sorrows that will surely follow.

Rainless in Rio

Think of Brazil, and lush rainforests, pristine beaches and happy scenes of Carnival likely come to mind. But thanks to climate change, this South American country of over 200 million people may be in for a drastic ecological and economic makeover.

Brazil has had over 40 severe droughts since 1583, but the latest one is likely to prove the most devastating. This new picture is not a pretty one. Lack of rain (in what is supposed to be the rainy season) is adversely affecting everything from the power grid to coffee bean production to grocery prices. Over four million people in 93 cities are living with water rationing. With power being rationed, agriculture suffering, businesses closing, employees being laid off and prices for basic necessities rising, the pain of the drought is widely felt. Inadequate infrastructure, the result of both government mismanagement and private sector corruption, has created further waste and made things even worse.

Temperatures are also rising on the streets. The poor, especially in Rio, are marching with empty buckets to illustrate what the drought has done to their lives. Climate change and drought affect another vital resource: the Amazon rainforests. The exploitation of that natural wonder will have far-reaching consequences, not only for Brazil but for the rest of the planet as well. It is a cautionary tale for all, and Pope Francis’ forthcoming environmental encyclical could not be timelier.

Jailing Families

The children appeared sick and malnourished. They lived in large dormitory style rooms and were forced to use the bathroom in public view. Some had to wear prison style clothes and sleep with the lights on. Schooling was infrequent at best.

This catalog of ills, taken from legal proceedings and cited in *The New York Times Magazine* (2/4), described conditions at a federal detention facility for undocumented mothers and children near Austin, Tex. Lawyers for the government called them exaggerated, but if any of these allegations are true, they represent a violation of human rights standards and must be addressed.

The U.S. bishops have repeatedly called attention to the potential for abuses in family detention centers. In a letter to the Department of Homeland Security dated Oct. 1, 2014, Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, chairman of the Committee on Migration of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, wrote: “Family detention is harmful to the physical and mental health of these families, as children are often depressed and in weak physical condition due to emotional stress.... Mothers, already traumatized by violence, including sexual assault...remain traumatized and confused by the detention setting and the inability to access family or other emotional support.”

The journey of families from Central America to the United States since 2008 is well documented. More than 61,000 people in all have crossed the border, many of them fleeing violence sparked by drug wars. Less attention has been paid to what has happened since. Mothers with children have been placed in detention facilities that resemble prisons, even though federal judges have ruled that all children in federal custody should be subject to a “general policy favoring release.” The Bush administration argued that the case in question, *Flores v. Meese*, applies only to unaccompanied children, not children with parents. The Obama administration is now following the same approach, hoping that aggressive detention policies will deter more families from crossing the border. The bishops argue, persuasively, that mothers and children pose little security risk and can be safely released to relatives and “alternatives to detention” programs.

The influx of thousands of children and families has posed a unique challenge. It is not surprising that government facilities were unable to handle the increased numbers. But a policy that relies on detention of families is fundamentally flawed. What parents would want their

children living in rooms with bars, with little opportunity to play with other children?

Is it worth spending the time and money to improve conditions at detention centers when other, less expensive options are available? The government appears to think so. A new facility in Dilley, Tex., specifically designed for families with children opened in December. It is operated by the Corrections Corporation of America, a private prison company, and can accommodate 2,400. The new camp will have playgrounds and child care workers on staff. On the surface, it would seem to be an improvement on conditions in other facilities, but only if one subscribes to the notion that detention centers are the only option for migrant families. They are not.

Alternative detention programs, which range from nonprofit residential facilities to monitoring programs that include curfews and regular check-ins, meet many needs. They allow women to seek legal help while their children receive schooling and other basic services. At federal detention centers, families do not have ready access to lawyers, whose help has been shown to greatly increase chances of gaining legal asylum. According to one study, detainees placed in a well-managed monitoring program had a court appearance rate of 93 percent.

Unfortunately, the new Congress has proposed attaching more restrictive immigration measures to a current funding bill. One proposal would allow children to stay up to 30 days in border patrol stations and other temporary quarters, which are not designed for families, until they are moved to long-term detention centers. In an address to Congress on Feb. 11, Bishop Gerald Kicanas argued that “children can be emotionally and psychologically harmed by lengthy detention in restrictive settings.”

The Obama administration has made some important steps toward reforming our nation’s immigration policies. Unfortunately, the president’s recent executive actions apply only to individuals who have been in the country more than five years. Many of the families who have come from Central America do not qualify, although they can be legitimately considered refugees. A generous government policy would give them the resources to investigate their legal options while allowing their children to live in the best possible environment—someplace without fences and barbed wire.



REPLY ALL

'Whole-life' Witness

Re "The State of the Family" (Editorial, 2/9): For those of us who promote a "whole-life" policy, the need to support parents and their children is part of being pro-life. Organizations like Democrats for Life of America, Feminists for Life and Consistent Life work on programs that fulfill the needs of the mothers and children after birth. Poverty is a pro-life issue because it endangers lives. At D.F.L.A., we encourage those who favor the Democratic Party because of its traditional championing of social justice to be active in the party to make it pro-life across the board and to run pro-life Democrats

for office so that we can present our case with the strength of numbers.

LOIS KERSCHEN
Online Comment

The writer is one of the founders of Democrats for Life of America.

Dangerous Denial

In "Nigeria on the Brink" (Current Comment, 2/9), the editors style Boko Haram simply as a "militant group," thus participating in the denial that paralyzes the West's response to Islamic terror. Boko Haram is an Islamic terrorist group in the style of ISIS, Al Qaeda and others. Simply ask the question: militant for what? The answer is the imposition of Islam on Nigeria and the elimination of Christians and other faiths. The mul-

tinational force talk sounds nice but raises more questions: Which nations should provide troops? Who will organize this force? How long will it take? Meanwhile, the terror and the deaths continue in the face of Western fecklessness. It is time for the denial to stop.

LEONARD VILLA
Online Comment

Women's Validation

Re "Take These Gifts," by Mary Ann Walsh, R.S.M. (2/9): Both men and women receive a calling by God to enter into a life of ministry. The church validates and distinguishes a man's call from God by ordaining him. And how is a woman's call from God validated by the church? Unfortunately, I believe that many consider a woman's "job" (secretary, faith formation director, youth minister, etc.) within the church to be that validation.

I will graduate in May with a master of divinity degree. Attaining this degree is a very God-driven decision, yet there currently is nothing in place within the church that validates and distinguishes my call from God. I personally have no desire to be ordained, but I do want to be valued for the leadership qualities I possess.

MARY MILLS
Online Comment

Cuomo and the Bishops

Father Malone raises an interesting point when he questions (Of Many Things, 2/2) why Gov. Mario Cuomo could make the moral case for government to codify action on economic policy but could not do the same for the issue of abortion. I wonder, however, if Mr. Cuomo didn't take his cue from the bishops of the United States.

Our bishops have regularly and consistently informed us of the sins of abortion, assisted suicide, etc., and have codified church discipline for these assaults on the sacredness of life. On the other hand, I have never heard any explanations from the bish-

f STATUS UPDATE

Readers respond to "Take These Gifts: Women should have more leadership roles in the church," by Mary Ann Walsh, R.S.M. (2/9).

Comparing women's roles in the church to their roles in Fortune 500 companies or the White House seems like a very, very low bar. Wall Street and the U.S. political system are profoundly sexist institutions. Universities, K-12 schools, libraries and museums, the legal profession, real estate agencies and the medical professions do a much better job hiring women. It could be that the church really does hire women at impressive rates; if so, I'd brag with a different set of comparisons.

RACHEL JENNINGS

I particularly appreciate Sr. Walsh's comment that many equate ordination with power. I cannot count the number of presentations I have done and dioceses I have worked in where I have been told that for the message to really be heard it needs to be delivered by a priest. I am happy

to serve in the ways that I am able to, but I wonder if this sort of thinking unnecessarily limits the church.

LEISA ANSLINGER

Unfortunately, in a clericalist church like ours, at least as it is now, ordination is power. So we either give exclusivist "privileges" to those outside the ordained priesthood or we ordain women. This isn't to say women can't (and don't) show leadership in other ways, but it is not the same.

RYAN HOFFMANN

The truest women church "leaders" I've encountered, in life and history, were those who, like Christ, put on aprons and washed feet in humble service. I get a kick out of the fuss on Holy Thursday—the disciples were being told to do what their mothers did for them every day. Maybe the chief executives and theologians and university presidents need to become more like their nannies, home health aides, receptionists and housecleaners, not the other way around.

BRENDA BECKER

ops why unjust war policies, economic policies that create homelessness and hunger or adverse immigration policies that split families are not equally assaults on the sacredness of life deserving of the codification of church discipline.

Knowing the diversity of American and Catholic opinion, the bishops perhaps do not codify church discipline on such issues or pursue governmental codification of them so as not to appear to “theocratize” American life. Mr. Cuomo’s Notre Dame speech, to my mind, applied that logic to the issue of abortion. Just as I very much would have been interested in Mr. Cuomo’s response to Father Malone’s questions, I likewise would like to hear from the U.S. bishops why they do not codify church discipline on the issues of war, economy and immigration.

VINCENT GAGLIONE
Scarsdale, N.Y.

World Order

Re “Pope Urges Government Response to Poverty as ‘Moral Imperative’” (Signs of the Times, 2/2): In the 1963 encyclical “Pacem in Terris,” Pope John XXIII wrote that there are problems of universal dimensions that cannot be adequately addressed except by a structure “of the same proportions” that can act in an effective manner on a worldwide basis (No. 137). “The moral order itself, therefore, demands that such a form of public authority be established.”

I take the expression “moral imperative” to mean non-optional and that all of us should be striving for a more workable world. Instead, I find that a democratic world authority is not even part of public discourse. Can **America** begin a serious discussion of this topic? I suggest a critique of *Transforming the United Nations System: Designs for a Workable World*, by Dr. Joseph E. Schwartzberg, as one place to begin.

BENJAMIN J. URMSTON, S.J.
Cincinnati, Ohio

Required Reading

Thanks to John J. Conley, S.J., for his article “How Not to Preach” (2/2). I just finished giving a course on homiletics to a class for deacons. One of the fellows mentioned that his pastor is too “overworked” to prepare for his homily. I am 82 years old, with 53 years in the priesthood, and I have never seen an overworked priest—busy, yes, but not overworked. The fellow who is overworked is the plumber who has a wife and four kids and gets up three or four times a night because he is on call around the clock. The college student, carrying a full load of credits and working two part-time jobs to keep his head financially above water, is overworked. I can listen to a homily and after one minute know if the preacher opened a book during the past week. I firmly believe that most priests do not realize that the homily is just as important as praying the words of consecration.

(REV.) JOE ANNESE
Las Vegas, Nev.

Abortion Alternatives

In her fine article, “The Feminist Case Against Abortion” (1/19), Serrin M. Foster rightly emphasizes that women

are often “driven to abortion because of a lack of resources and support.” We might well consider the implications of this: for instance, that the focus on repealing *Roe v. Wade* is misguided. A majority of Americans believe abortion should be legal at least in certain circumstances. Given that fact, the criminalization of abortion would not be enforced. Women would die as the result of back-street abortions.

Some may argue that since slavery was successfully outlawed despite popular support, the same would be true of abortion. It is a false analogy. With emancipation, the victims of slavery could flee the plantation and seek legal protection. Federal forces could intervene to enforce the law, just as they did to integrate schools. But there are no surviving victims of abortion, and once the deed is done the likelihood of identifying and imprisoning the women responsible is very slight.

If there are to be demonstrations, Christians might better direct their time, effort and money toward promoting centers that offer alternatives to abortion rather than toward picket lines outside Planned Parenthood.

JOHN C. MOORE
Wayne, Pa.

Letters to the editor may be sent to **America’s** editorial office (address on page 2) or letters@americamagazine.org. **America** will also consider the following for print publication: comments posted below articles on **America’s** Web site (americamagazine.org) and posts on Twitter and public Facebook pages. All correspondence may be edited for length.



“Who are you going to believe—me, or hostile campaign ads by my rivals?”

CARTOON: HARLEY SCHWADRON

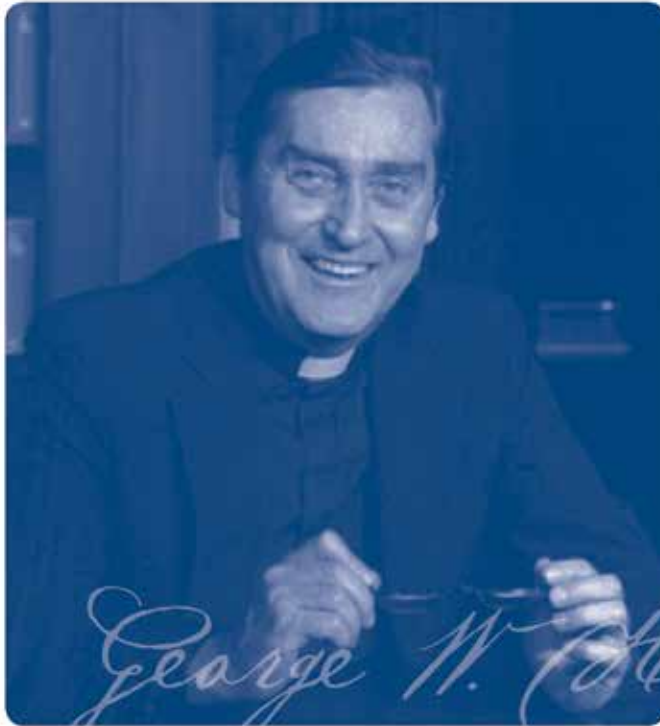
GEORGE W. HUNT, S.J., PRIZE

For Excellence In Journalism, Arts & Letters

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THE LIFE OF GEORGE W. HUNT, S.J. (1937-2011)

George W. Hunt, S.J., served as the 11th editor in chief of *America*, the national Catholic review published by the Jesuits of the United States. A native of Yonkers, N.Y., Father Hunt entered the Society of Jesus in 1954 and was ordained a priest in 1967. He earned a theology degree from Yale Divinity School in 1970, later remarking that his decision to study Kierkegaard with Professor Paul Holmer was "the best and most fruitful decision in my entire academic life," for it set the stage for a life-long study of the literary arts.

George W. Hunt, S.J., retired as editor in chief in 1998, at the conclusion of the magazine's most prosperous year to-date. He remains the longest serving editor in chief in *America's* history. Later that year, Father Hunt was named director of the Archbishop Hughes Institute for Religion and Culture at Fordham University, where he dedicated himself to "exploring the relationships between religion and other aspects of contemporary life." George W. Hunt, S.J., Jesuit priest, author and friend, died in 2011 at the age of 74.

THE MISSION OF THE GEORGE W. HUNT, S.J., PRIZE

The Hunt Prize is to be awarded annually and is made possible through the vision and generosity of Fay Vincent Jr., former commissioner of Major League Baseball, who sought to honor his long-standing friend, Father Hunt. The mission of the Prize is five-fold:

- I. To promote scholarship, the advancement of learning and the rigor of expression;
- II. To support and promote a new generation of journalists, authors and scholars;
- III. To memorialize the life and work of George W. Hunt, S.J.;
- IV. To forge a lasting partnership between *America* and the Saint Thomas More Chapel and Center at Yale University;
- V. To support the intellectual formation of Catholic young adults.

CRITERIA

The Hunt Prize will be awarded to a single individual whose body of work has focused on one or more of the following topical areas:

- Catholicism and Civic Life
- Catholicism and Arts and Letters
- Modern American Fiction
- U.S. Sports
- U.S. History
- Jazz or Classical Music
- American Film and Drama
- Poetry
- Spirituality & Literature

Only English language works of which the nominee is the sole or principal author will be considered.

ELIGIBILITY

Recipients of the George W. Hunt, S.J., Prize must dedicate a substantial portion of their professional energies to writing and must fulfill the following additional criteria:

- He or she must be 45 years of age or younger on the day the prize is awarded;
- He or she should be familiar with the Roman Catholic tradition;
- He or she should be of sound moral character and reputation and must not have published works that are manifestly atheistic or morally offensive.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations for The Hunt Prize will open on George W. Hunt's birthday, at 12 a.m. on January 22, 2015 and the nomination period will close at 11:59 p.m. on March 31. All submissions may be made at: huntprize.org.

FORMAL AWARD AND CEREMONY

The winner will be announced in June 2015. The winner will be awarded a gift of \$25,000. Formal awarding will take place at the Saint Thomas More Chapel and Center at Yale University in September 2015.

The recipient of the award will deliver a lecture that is related to his or her primary works, and the lecture will be published as a cover story in *America* within three months of its delivery.

For more information: huntprize.org

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

VATICAN REFORM

At Consistory, Cardinals Sense Francis Is Getting ‘the Work’ Done



CLUTCH OF CARDINALS. Cardinals discuss reform of the Roman Curia before the consistory on Feb. 14. The pope named 20 new cardinals at the consistory.

The establishment of two new congregations—the first for Laity-Family Life, the second for Charity-Justice-Peace, which includes a new office for ecology—were among the proposals for reform of the Roman Curia that were presented to the College of Cardinals on Feb. 12 at the opening session of a two-day meeting in the Vatican. There is as yet no definitive reform plan, and the current proposals are subject to modification.

Pope Francis convened this extraordinary consistory, as the meeting is called, to brief the cardinals on the ongoing work to reform the Roman Curia and to get their feedback. Some 165 of the 207 members of the college were present when he opened the meeting, among them 19 of the 20 cardinal-designates who were to receive the red hat from the pope at a special ceremony in St. Peter’s Basilica on Feb 14.

The pope reminded the college in his opening talk that reform was “strongly advocated” by the majority of cardinals in the pre-conclave meetings. Its aim is to promote “greater harmony in the work of the various dicasteries and offices” of the Roman Curia “in order to achieve a more effective collaboration in that absolute transparency which builds authentic synodality and collegiality.”

The reform “is not an end in itself,” he stated; it is “a means to give a strong Christian witness, to promote a more effective evangelization, to promote a more fruitful ecumenical spirit, to encourage a more constructive dialogue with all.”

The pope told the cardinals that “it is not easy to reach such a goal; it requires time, determination and above all everyone’s cooperation.” It means “we must first entrust ourselves to the Holy Spirit, the true guide of the church, imploring the gift of authentic discernment in prayer.” He called for their collaboration and, as at last October’s synod, he urged them to speak boldly, with courage and openness.

Cardinals from all continents expressed appreciation for the reforms already achieved or underway in the Roman Curia under Pope Francis, particularly on Vatican finances. There is a clear feeling among the cardinals that the first Latin American pope is getting the work done, and he has the support of the overwhelming majority of them.

Since the cardinals were meeting behind closed doors, Federico Lombardi, S.J., director of the Vatican Press Office, briefed journalists. By the second day of the consistory, several cardinals raised the question of the relation between the Roman Curia and the local churches, emphasizing “decentralization” and “subsidiarity.” A key question of many has been, “Where can a question be best resolved: in the local church or in the Roman Curia?”

In a report to the consistory on Feb. 12, Bishop Marcello Semeraro of Italy, secretary for the group of cardinal advisors to Pope Francis, recalled that the function of the Curia is “to assist the pope in his daily governance of the church” and be “an instrument of unity of the church itself,” while respecting the autonomy of the diocesan bishops and the local churches.

He highlighted the need for “a rationalization” and “simplification” of the various curial offices and the need for proper and ongoing “formation” of all who work in the Roman Curia, both in

terms of spirituality and competence.

There is general recognition among the cardinals that reform can be done in stages, that it is not necessary to wait for the definitive plan before implementing changes, Father Lombardi said. This means, for example, that the two new congregations being pro-

posed—Laity-Family Life and Charity-Justice-Peace, with an office for ecology—could be established in the not too distant future. That office will obviously take on a whole new importance when Pope Francis publishes his encyclical on ecology in June or July.

GERARD O'CONNELL

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Notre Dame Teacher Formation Modeled on Religious Community

Maria Rodriguez is not a religious sister, but she lives and works like one. The 23-year-old San Diego native teaches third grade students in a Chicago Catholic school and lives in a house with other new schoolteachers.

Rodriguez and her housemates exchange ideas about their educational ministry, pray together, participate in community outreach projects with one another and live very much like the vowed men and women religious who once dominated the U.S. Catholic school system. Everyone in her household is part of the University of Notre Dame's Alliance for Catholic Education teacher formation program, which was set up with some of the same tenets that underlie religious communities.

A.C.E., as the alliance is known, "focuses on preparing young people in three pillars—in spirituality, in professional teaching and living in community," said Benny Morten, principal at St. Ann School in Chicago and a former A.C.E. teaching fellow. "Those are three important aspects of a school community itself."

"It is almost like a religious community, and I would say that's not by accident," said John Schoenig, teacher



MAKING THE GRADE. Maria Rodriguez with her third-grade students at Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in Chicago.

formation director for A.C.E. "This was an idea that worked quite well for many generations in the Catholic Church, and I think this is one of the more attractive elements of our formation model, of our framework."

"First-year teaching can be very difficult, so it's great to live in a community with other people going through the same things," said Matt Gring, an A.C.E. teacher at St. Ambrose Catholic School in Tucson, Ariz.

The University of Notre Dame in Indiana developed the program more than two decades ago to address the needs of struggling Catholic schools throughout the country. Other U.S. Catholic universities established similar programs for the same reason.

"We all work together on our own

spirituality to help each other grow, as well as coming up with ways to help our students grow," said Jessica Jones, a 22-year-old A.C.E. teacher and colleague of Rodriguez at Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in Chicago. As Jones gathered her fourth-grade students to sit around a statue of Mary in her inner-city classroom, she told them how faith could affect every aspect of their lives, from their school work to being a good citizen in their community.

"One of the unique values that the religious men and women brought to their Catholic schools was a distinct charism in addition to their catechetical formation," Schoenig said. "Your life would have been much different as a Catholic school student if you were in a school run by the Daughters of Charity than if you were in a school run by Benedictines. It's because the charism would have been there."

That notion of charism in the schools eroded as religious vocations declined and Catholic schools were staffed by lay teachers who came from many different universities, worshipped in many different parishes and had many different approaches to education, he said.

"I think we're seeing a reanimation of that...with A.C.E. and programs like it," Schoenig said.

Ryan Gallagher, a fourth grade A.C.E. teacher at St. Ann School in Chicago, said the charism in his school community has helped him grow professionally, personally and spiritually.

"It's integrated my faith with my vocation, and I can see how that's impacted the students I teach," said Gallagher, a 23-year-old native of Duluth, Minn. "I've learned that teaching is a service and that it's a vocation to serve those around you. You are doing it for your

kids and your community, your principal and everyone around you, not just for yourself.”

Solidarity on the Sea

Pope Francis once again urged solidarity with migrants who risk their lives crossing the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe; and during his general audience on Feb. 11, he assured prayers for the victims of a deadly crossing. The pope was responding to reports on Feb. 9 that 29 migrants had died of hypothermia after being rescued by the Italian coast guard. Later, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported that the loss of life in the Mediterranean over the weekend of Feb. 7-8 was feared to be as high as 300 people, including many children. Sarah Teather, a U.K. member of Parliament and chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Refugees, said: “This is a tragedy, but European leaders can’t simply wash their hands in the waters of the Mediterranean and deny all responsibility. People are fleeing war. War on our doorsteps. And our response has been to systematically close down the safe, legal routes for people to find protection and to scale back methods of saving lives.”

Ireland: Poor Showing On Child Protection

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin said he would seek assurances from religious congregations operating in his diocese that they are rigidly following child protection guidelines after a fresh round of audits raised serious concerns. In a statement on Feb. 10, Archbishop Martin said it was “appalling” that some major religious congregations had delayed fully implementing the church’s child protection guidelines and that, in some cases, this process

NEWS BRIEFS

Video of Pope Francis visiting with Latin American immigrants at a settlement camp near Rome on Feb. 8 became a global Internet phenomenon. + Congress should urge Israel to **halt confiscation** of Palestinian lands, a move that may “renew hope for a just resolution to the conflict,” Bishop Oscar Cantú of Las Cruces, N.M., the chairman of the bishops’ Committee on International Justice and Peace, wrote in a letter to Congress on Feb. 11. + **Archbishop Bashar Warda** of Irbil, Iraq, called on Feb. 9 for a redeployment of U.S. and British troops on the ground in Iraq to rid the country of the “cancer” of Islamist extremism. + Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., on Feb. 11 urged Congress to **work for comprehensive immigration reform** and not simply to focus on increased border enforcement, tougher criteria for immigrant families seeking asylum and a quicker return of immigrant children to their homelands. + Commenting on a nationwide discussion of vaccines after an **outbreak of measles** in California, Dr. Paul Braaton, past president of the Catholic Medical Association, said on Feb. 11, “We have a responsibility as moral agents to protect the common good and to immunize ourselves and our children against communicable disease.”



Vaccination Contemplation

really got underway only in 2013. The Irish church’s monitoring watchdog, the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church, published 16 reviews on the implementation of policies in religious congregations—eight male, eight female. Teresa Devlin, the board’s chief executive, said she was “disappointed that for the majority of orders, the whole area of safeguarding is only being embraced in the last couple of years.” She also said, referring to seven of the male congregations, that “there is considerable work to be done.”

Dorothy Stang 10th Anniversary

On Feb. 12, 2005, two hired gunmen killed Sister Dorothy Stang, 73, in a remote Brazilian settlement just off the Trans-Amazonian Highway. As a tireless advocate for the poor and landless

in Brazil for more than three decades, the Ohio-born nun came into conflict with ruthless landowners. Three nuns from Stang’s order, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, continue to live in the small city of Anapu in the wooden house where Stang lived until her death. On the 10th anniversary of her slaying, the nuns still advocate on behalf of the small-scale farmers, and the scourge of land conflicts in the Amazon has not been resolved. In the state of Para, where Stang was murdered, the Pastoral Land Commission, an organization founded by the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops and dedicated to combating rural violence, has documented 118 deaths since 2005 and numerous instances of harassment, forced evictions, threats and physical violence. Many of these cases have gone unpunished.

From CNS, RNS and other sources.

DISPATCH | BEIJING

Thailand's Organic Church

When Pope Francis visited Asia earlier this year, the Philippines, the third-largest Catholic nation in the world and the only majority Catholic nation in the region, received most of his attention. Also on his itinerary was Sri Lanka, which was receiving a pontiff for the first time in 20 years as it emerges from the shadow of a decades-long civil war. And in the background of the trip was China, not on the itinerary but on everyone's mind, as both the Vatican and the Chinese government dance around the idea of better ties.

So it was barely a flicker of a mention that drew attention to Thailand, not exactly a bastion of Catholicism. But 2015 is shaping up as an important year for the church in Thailand, as it celebrates 350 years in the country and the appointment of a new Thai cardinal.

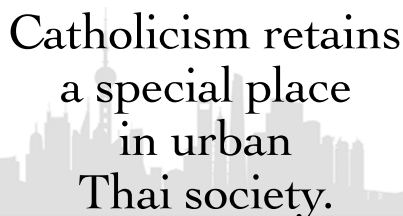
European colonization brought Catholicism to Asian countries and territories where its presence remains strong, such as the Philippines, tiny East Timor and Singapore, but Thailand has never been colonized. The faith made its way into the country more organically.

The church is pegging its anniversary on the first Synod in Ayutthaya, then the capital of the Kingdom of Siam, about 40 miles north of the present-day capital Bangkok, but Catholicism likely first arrived with French or Portuguese missionaries about 100 years earlier. The Seminary

of St. Joseph was also established there in 1665, and St. Joseph's Church still stands on the site.

Despite its long history, Catholicism never appealed to a large number of Thais. Today, the country is best known for Buddhism, and over 90 percent of Thais identify themselves as Buddhist. An upsurge in Muslim conversions, along with Islamic separatist violence in southern Thailand,

Catholicism retains
a special place
in urban
Thai society.



has also created a stronger identification of Thailand with Islam. And yet Catholicism retains a special place in urban Thai society.

King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Thailand's beloved monarch, attended Bangkok's Mater Dei School for a short period of time. Today, Catholic education remains a popular option for wealthy Thais, even if they are not adherents.

Numbering in the hundreds of thousands in a nation of 67 million, the church in Thailand has itself adopted a posture similar to that of its surroundings. Thailand has always been religiously tolerant, and the Catholic Church seeks not to steal sheep through aggressive evangelization but to encourage a spiritual life rather than secularism.

"The main obstacle for us is secularism," said Archbishop Francis Xavier Kriengsak Kovitvanit in an interview with the English-language newspaper

The Bangkok Post in January. (He will be installed as a cardinal, Thailand's second-ever, on Feb. 14.) "It doesn't mean that we are trying to oppose new inventions or technology, but it is not the same as God. For example, a computer makes our lives a lot easier, but if one person relies on it too much and it becomes an addiction, that is not good.

"Catholics believe in the value of life and we love to share what we think is useful for others," the archbishop said. "I believe people who have faith in their own religion have their own practices. We are not trying to compete or convert anyone to what we believe. We are aiming to work together with people of different religions and share our ideas of what we believe in."

The church may also play another role in Thailand, that of mediator in a political struggle. Massive protests in Bangkok have been staged by the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship, known as the Red Shirts, supporters of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, and the People's Alliance for Democracy, the Yellow Shirts, who are opponents first of Shinawatra and then of his sister, Yingluck Shinawatra.

Both of their reigns as prime minister ended in military coups; the most recent was a bloodless affair in May 2014. While keen to stay out of politics formally, the church and other religious leaders, both Christian and non-Christian, are seen as relatively impartial, and their measured presence could help set the stage for future elections and a return to democracy, although no date has been set.

STEVEN SCHWANKERT

STEVEN SCHWANKERT, author of *Poseidon: China's Secret Salvage of Britain's Lost Submarine* (Hong Kong University Press), is America's Beijing correspondent. Twitter: @greatwriteshark.

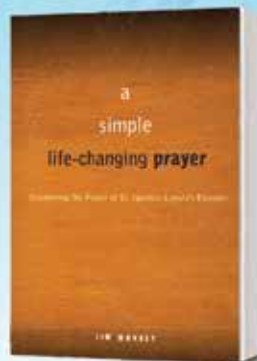
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The Law and Children

The one subject guaranteed to start fireworks today is children. Hence the pyrotechnics whenever Pope Francis talks of rabbits, sterility or contraception. Judging from my 16 years teaching family law, the law struggles with children too, for reasons similar to why individuals do. A church trying to figure out how to speak about marriage and family needs to understand this struggle, given that lawmakers are now considering redefining marriage—the last and most basic “place” where family law safeguards children.

The matter of children is fraught for many reasons. Children require parents to reorient their whole lives. It’s a big “ask.” Then there is the conflict of interests: adults are tempted to make decisions favoring themselves, even while they are also responsible to make decisions for children. At least they have the ties of blood, marriage or adoption to sway them toward children. Politicians making laws affecting children, however, have none of these ties, and it is their adult constituencies, not children, who vote and donate to campaigns.

Finally, children begin at sex, and the circumstances into which they are born have profound consequences for their long term well-being. But this means that adults must respect certain sexual and marital norms—norms many reject as harsh or unrealistic. And politicians are not eager to pass laws perceived to violate adults’ sexual or privacy interests.

Lawmakers in the United States have always attached unique incentives and processes to the forming and dissolving of marriage, on the grounds that marriage is the only union promoting the birth and rearing of children within the stable care of their parents. The legal record is clear. This rationale may be supplanted by adults’ interests, however, should lawmakers reconceive marriage as a set of adult emotional and sexual attachments, and a remedy for past discrimination against L.G.B.T. persons.

If marriage is so redefined, it would be the last act in the ongoing story told by American family law: the state’s dwindling concern to link children stably with the adults who conceived them. This is not to suggest that the state’s earlier mechanisms were perfect. It was right to abolish the disadvantaging of “illegitimate” children, even though this was intended to persuade adults toward marital children. It was also true that fault divorce was easily gamed by couples colluding to manufacture a fault.

At the same time, it was clear that adults’ interests fashioned no-fault divorce and other laws and programs dismantling protections for children. Also, little thought was given to finding new ways to do what older tools had done: protect children within their parents’ care. Even more disturbing, proponents of these new laws and customs claimed that children would be thereby better off, against common sense and without evidence. Thus proponents of no-fault divorce insisted that children would be “resilient” and even triumphant in a no-

fault world because they would escape nasty home environments. Yet later evidence showed that on average divorce harms children and that most divorces did not follow notably conflictual marriages. Proponents of large-scale contraception programs and of reproductive technologies promised new happiness for women and children when all children were “intended.” Experience, however, showed that the new sex and

parenting “marketplaces” created by these developments put women and children at a disadvantage.

A similar pattern characterizes the movement for same-sex marriage. Adults’ interests drive the train. Only children raised in same-sex unions are mentioned, and then only to speculate, without

evidence, that recognizing the adults’ unions will indirectly improve the lives of the children. Data concerning these children’s well-being is only just emerging, however, and it is not reassuring. Further, about 85 percent of these children have legally recognized mothers and fathers (from their conception in a prior heterosexual relationship involving one of the now same-sex partners) such that legalized same-sex marriage won’t affect their parents’ situation.

Chesterton was right that the “hardest thing in Christianity” is acknowledging how much other people matter. Hardest of all is accepting our obligations to those who demand the most from us and require us to make hard choices contrary to our self-interest and current social tides—children.

Adults are tempted to make decisions favoring themselves.

HELEN ALVARÉ is a professor of law at George Mason University, where she teaches law and religion and family law. She is also a consultant to the Pontifical Council for the Laity.

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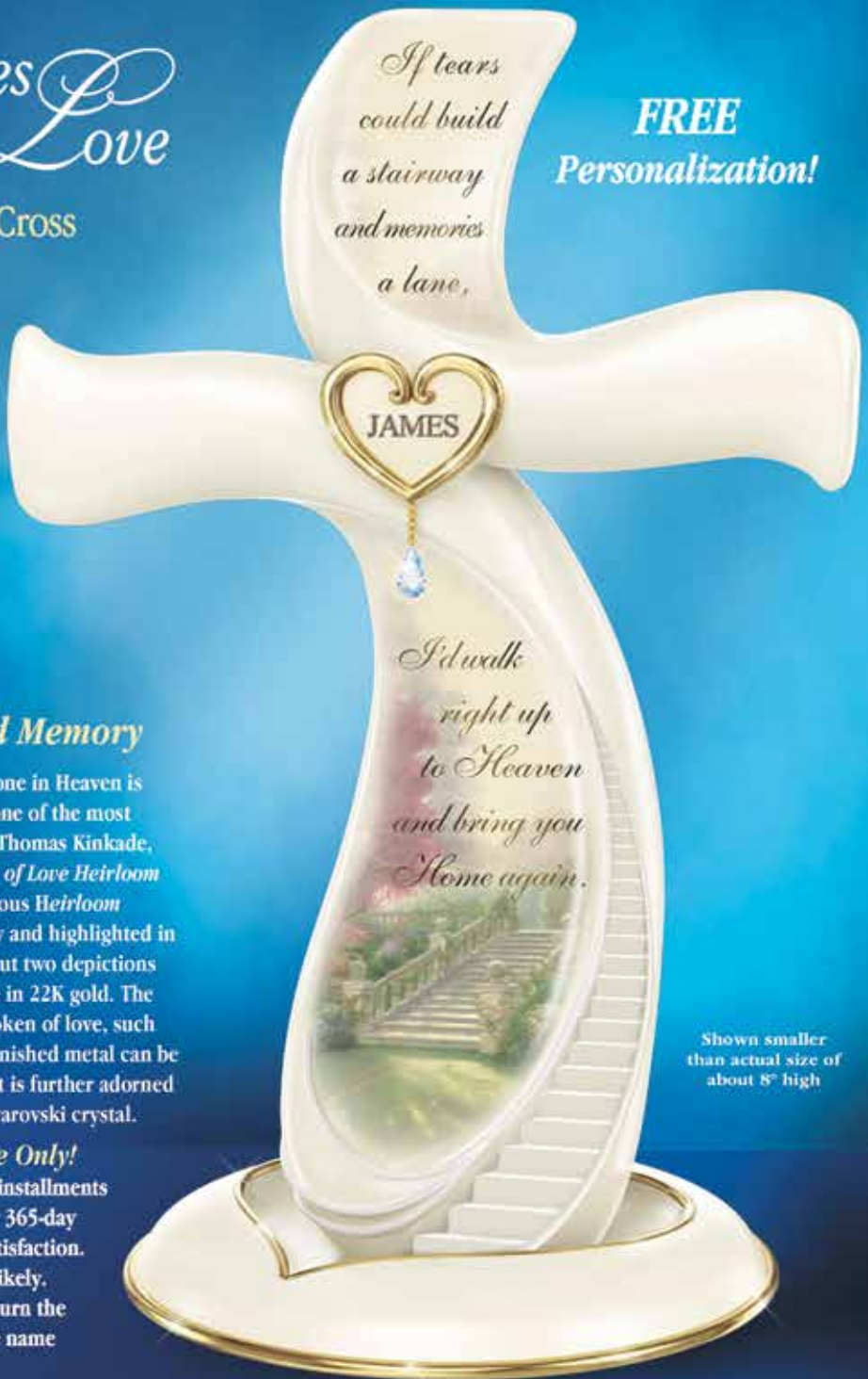
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A Rite of Passage

Should young people be required to do a year of service?

BY WILLIAM J. BYRON, S.J.

There is a link waiting to be forged between civilian national service and post-service higher educational benefits. If pursued, this link could help ease the burden of student debt and help students meet the out-of-reach prices of higher education. What I have in mind here is voluntary national service, sometimes called “community service,” although that term enjoys unfortunate and widespread misapplication as a judicial penalty. Get caught driving under the influence of alcohol and you may find yourself working a fixed number of hours of “community service.” Yet it could be a positive force in our society.

Civilian national service is distinct, of course, from military service and, as the Peace Corps so well demonstrates, it does not have to be performed within the territorial limits of the United States. Moreover, the civilian national service I have in mind is not compulsory, like military service under draft legislation. For many, two words justified compulsory military service during World War II: Pearl Harbor. No similar justification is readily available today, although a good case might be made that the drift and purposelessness many people feel are sufficiently widespread that compelling the young—say those between 18 and 26—to perform a year or two of national service might be a very good idea. I would favor compulsory civilian service because unfocused youth would benefit from it, but I know that Congress would never legislate it.

There is a movement afoot to remake America through civilian national service. The very name, Franklin Project, suggests a connection to the commitment that the founding father Benjamin Franklin had to voluntary citizen service. The Franklin Project is an ambitious effort to put national civilian service at the forefront of American consciousness.

According to Franklin’s biographer Walter Isaacson, one of the four prime movers of the Franklin Project, Benjamin Franklin died with a leather water bucket at his bedside, ready to respond to an emergency call to action by the volunteer fire corps that he launched in colonial Philadelphia. He was a true believer in citizen service.

WILLIAM J. BYRON, S.J., is university professor of business and society at St. Joseph’s University, Philadelphia, Pa.

The Experts Speak


Retired Army General Stanley McChrystal is another member of the Franklin Project leadership group. He started calling attention to the need for national service in an Aspen Ideas Seminar in 2012. He later laid out a rationale for national service in an op-ed piece in *The Wall Street Journal* (5/30/2013) by describing Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address as a “call to service” that was grounded in the famous words: “It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.” Lincoln was calling all Americans, says McChrystal, to honor the sacrifice of their countrymen who died at Gettysburg by committing themselves to forms of national service that would “carry forward the nation’s work.”

General McChrystal’s point is that Lincoln at Gettysburg was looking to the future and that he believed service to the country was not to be restricted to the military. It was the responsibility of all citizens to remake America. McChrystal would favor mandatory civilian service but acknowledges that the national mood and the votes are not yet there to support making service mandatory.

In June 2013 about 250 leaders from across the public, private, philanthropic, business, higher education and military sectors gathered for a two-day, invitation-only 21st Century National Service Summit at the Aspen Institute in Aspen, Colo. A plan of action hammered out beforehand by a 60-member leadership council was dissected and discussed with an eye to launching a national effort to recruit a million Americans, primarily but not exclusively young Americans, to commit themselves to a year of civilian national service complementing the nation’s one million military service members. This would constitute a two-sided service “coin” to be spent in addressing the nation’s unmet needs like urban infrastructure repair, environmental protection, eldercare, child care and revitalizing public education. Expanding AmeriCorps and Teach for America activity would be part of this picture.

The objective these planners have in mind is to make national service “a new civic rite of passage for young Americans.” Their message to the rest of the country is: “Get out of your zip code and out of your comfort zone and into a year of transformative national service.” The nation

HELPING HANDS. AmeriCorps members put up dry wall after the tornado in Joplin, Mo.



The hope is to move the idea of national service from ‘nice’ to ‘necessary.’

will be transformed, as will the persons who render the service. The service providers will mature just as the Civilian Conservation Corps volunteers matured during the Great Depression and the 18-year-old draftees matured during World War II.

Building Bridges

It is envisioned that the rite of passage will put willing young Americans on one of two “bridges.” The first is a bridge year from high school to college; the other is a bridge year after college, before engagement on a career path. The bridge experience would be optional but expected of all young Americans. The hope is to move the idea of national service from “nice” to “necessary.” Several generations ago it was not simply presumed, as it is now, that all young Americans will complete a high school education. But that has, for all practical purposes, happened. Why could it not happen with respect to a meaningful service experience?

If the “rite of passage” idea is to catch on, something re-

sembling the post-World War II G.I. Bill, which offered educational benefits for returning veterans, might emerge. This is the link yet to be forged on the incentive side in this national conversation, which, by the way, resumed again in June 2014 not in Aspen but, not surprisingly, in Gettysburg, Pa.

In the present political climate, federal support for expanded national service is unlikely to attract much support. Hence the need for public-private cooperation, corporate and private philanthropic involvement and the expression of increased enthusiasm on the part of the young who are ready and willing to render service. Hence also the need for some nongovernmental organization like the Franklin Project to pull all the elements together, stabilize the movement and respond to the inevitable criticism that will try to suppress this initiative. Hopeful signs on all these fronts were in evidence at Gettysburg.

As one who has written on this subject and was appointed back in 1992 to the bipartisan presidential Commission

on National and Community Service (later named the Corporation on National Service), I was invited to the summits at Aspen and Gettysburg. There were several points that I was particularly interested in raising for consideration. One was based on my personal experience as a beneficiary of the G.I. Bill of Rights after World War II. For each month of military service, veterans of that war were eligible for two months of free higher or special vocational education. We “earned” it through our service.

A Paid Education

With the higher education received under the G.I. Bill, veterans moved into better and higher-paying jobs in the post-war economy and, accordingly, paid higher federal income taxes. They have been paying their higher taxes since graduating from college around 1950. This proved to be the best investment in human capital that our federal government ever made. The return to the U.S. Treasury has been enormous. One can argue that the G.I. Bill was a self-financing program—a point to be made when objections are raised today that the nation cannot afford any expansion of national service. If a full or partial educational benefit similar to the G.I. Bill were attached to this 21st-century call to civilian national service, today’s young Americans would have an appealing incentive to reinforce their natural desire to serve. If the “Year of Service” idea catches on, it could translate into

24 months of educational benefits in various forms, not least among them tuition grants and student loan forgiveness. Even if a cap, say \$10,000, were attached to the educational benefit, it would still go a long way toward bringing a college degree within reach of ready-to-learn young Americans.

I also expressed the hope that the Franklin Project will commission a study to mine the data and employ a simulation model to estimate the return to the Treasury based on the G.I. Bill expenditures from 1946 to 1950 (modest) over against the tax dollars paid since 1950 (significant) by the beneficiaries of the G.I. Bill. The data are available; informed estimates are possible.

Some structure is needed now to get the system up and running, and of course some private-public cooperative structure will be necessary to support this effort in future years.

Missing both at Aspen and Gettysburg were strong bipartisan political support and heavyweight private sector engagement. Both are needed. Names like Clinton and Bush were present, but they belong to Chelsea and granddaughter Barbara, not to their seasoned elders. No recent or would-be candidates for Congress or the presidency show any signs of enthusiasm for this movement, although Mitt Romney’s father, George, who served with me on the original Commission on National and Community Service, repeatedly remarked back then that “national service should be as visible as the Post Office.” Mitt never put legs under that idea.

John DiIulio, first director of the White House faith-based and community initiatives office under President George W. Bush, is part of this movement. He now runs the Fox Center for Leadership Development at the University of Pennsylvania, where he is a professor of political science and is doing what he can to generate Ivy League participation in the service movement. Tufts and Tulane are on board with preferential treatment for civilian service veterans. The Jesuit colleges have shown interest, but commitments remain to be made.

At Aspen the elevation and expectations were high. At Gettysburg there was an awareness that many organizational hurdles still have to be cleared. Perhaps it will be years before this movement takes recognizable shape and marks the culture shift the planners hope for.

Progress on this front, sooner or later, will mean progress toward a better America. ▲

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A Year in Vocations

About 190 men and women religious professed perpetual vows in 2014. This class of 2014 includes respondents to an annual survey conducted for the U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations by the Georgetown University-based Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, known as CARA.

Survey responses came from 77 women and 41 men. Some of the men may be on their way to ordination to the priesthood. Those who replied represent 62 percent of the potential respondents. In another survey, 62 percent would be considered a great response. For this research, it disappoints.

There is good news and bad news for those concerned about the future of the U.S. Catholic Church.

The good news first. Catholic schools affect vocational choices. Data show that Catholic school attendees are more likely to consider a religious vocation. About 42 percent of this class attended a Catholic school. The survey shows a preponderance of Caucasians in the class of 2014 and a smaller number of Hispanics. CARA reports that "one in seven (15 percent) of the Profession Class of 2014 identifies as Hispanic/Latino(a)." Yet the church in the United States is far more than 15 percent Hispanic.

The survey shows older people going into religious life. The average age is 37, and half are age 34 or younger. The youngest is 24, and the oldest is

64. They are well educated. Eighteen percent earned a graduate degree before entering their religious institute. There were 68 percent who entered with a bachelor's degree (61 percent for women and 80 percent for men.)

The new class has other significant background factors. "Nearly all responding religious (88 percent) have work experience prior to entering their religious institute," CARA reports. "Of those who were employed, a quarter (27 percent) were employed part-time, and just over three in five (61 percent) were employed full-time. Women religious are more likely than men to have been employed in health care, while men religious are more likely than women to have been employed in business and education."

Parish involvement influences the call to religious life. CARA notes that "many responding religious were active in parish life before entering religious institutes. Four in 10 (42 percent) participated in youth ministry or youth groups. Almost a third participated in Catholic campus ministry or a Newman Center. One in five participated in World Youth Day and/or in a young adult ministry or group."

CARA also noted that "almost nine in 10 (88 percent) had ministry experience before entering their religious institute, most commonly as lector (50 percent) followed by ministry in faith formation (47 percent). Four in 10 served in music ministry, and over one-third as extraordinary ministers of Communion or as an altar server.

Over one-quarter served in a social service ministry, and one in 10 taught in a Catholic school or served in hospital or prison ministry."

A key concern now is the lack of Hispanic leaders in a church that is becoming increasingly Hispanic. Young Hispanics need to see their own people in leadership. Hispanic adults need peers to whom they can relate in parish life. Yet two-thirds of this class are Caucasian. One in seven identifies as Asian, and those born outside the United States come primarily from the Philippines and Vietnam.

New vocations speak about the future of the Catholic Church. Sadly, of all who responded to the survey, Hispanic or otherwise, CARA said that "58 percent report that they were discouraged from considering a vocation by one or more persons." Therein lies a challenge for all Catholics.

Today it is critical to pay attention to our young, especially Hispanics, particularly the women, who hold an important place in the Hispanic community. Hence a significant question: How do we attract more Hispanics, especially women, into religious communities?

One step would be to attract Hispanics to Catholic schools. Another would be to draw Hispanic men and women, especially young ones, to various ministries, including those of lector, altar server and Communion minister. We need to make the presence of Hispanics in our church attractive and obvious to all.

How do we attract more Hispanics into religious communities?

MARY ANN WALSH

MARY ANN WALSH, R.S.M., is a member of the Northeast Community of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas and U.S. Church correspondent for America.

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Poems are being accepted for the 2015 Foley Poetry Award.

Each entrant is asked to submit only one typed, unpublished poem on any topic. The poem should be 30 lines or fewer and not under consideration elsewhere. Include contact information on the same page as the poem. Poems will not be returned.

Please do not submit poems by email or fax.

Submissions must be postmarked between Jan. 1 and March 31, 2015.

Poems received outside the designated period will be treated as regular poetry submissions and are not eligible for the prize.

The winning poem will be published in the June 8-15 issue of *America*. Three runner-up poems will be published in subsequent issues. Notable entrants also may be considered for inclusion on our poetry site, americaliterary.tumblr.com.

Cash prize: \$1,000

Send poems to:

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America

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Your gift makes it all possible. We are deeply grateful for the support of the many men and women who are listed below. Please know that we always welcome your feedback. More important, we welcome your own insights and analysis. You can join the community at www.americamagazine.org.

Thank you for being a part of the conversation.



Sincerely yours in Christ,

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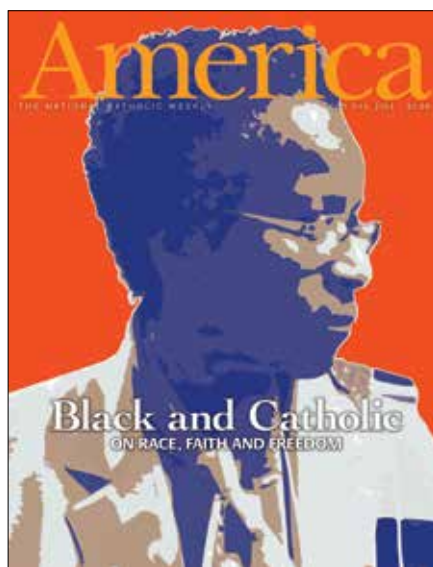
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 Mr. Edward Girres • 2010 Iowa

Mr. and Mrs. Martin J. Gleason • 1998D.C.
 Ms. Kathleen A. Golden • 2004 New York
 Dcn. and Mrs. Robert Gontcharuk • 2004..... New York
 Mr. Michael R. Goonan • 2003..... New York
 Rev. Richard J. Groshek • 1988..... Michigan
 Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Guerin • 1985 New Jersey
 Ms. Marianna N. Guido • 2013..... New York
 Dr. M. K. Gumerlock • 1997..... Oklahoma
 Rev. James A. Hablewitz • 2007..... Wisconsin
 Dr. Edda H. Hackl • 2000..... Illinois
 Mrs. Lucie C. Hagens • 1991..... Pennsylvania
 Ms. Lucille M. Hammes • 2014..... California
 Ms. Janet Hannon • 2012 New York
 Mrs. Rose A. Harrington • 1995 Connecticut
 Rev. Joseph D. Harrington • 2009..... Montana
 Rev. George J. Haspedis • 2000..... Washington
 Mr. James Hastings • 2014..... Maryland



Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Hathaway • 1983..... Pennsylvania
 Mr. Thomas W. Havey • 2008 Florida
 Mr. Thomas A. P. Hayden • 2010..... Pennsylvania
 Mr. George T. Hayes, Jr. • 2001 New Jersey
 Mr. Eugene M. Hayes • 2012..... Georgia
 Mr. Dennis M. Healy • 2006..... Texas
 Rev. Eddy Heg • 2014 Michigan
 Mr. Gary A. Hernandez, Jr. • 2012..... California
 Mr. and Mrs. Thomas V. Heyman • 1987 New Jersey
 George and Sally Hezel • 2000..... New York
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 Mr. and Mrs. Peter C. Hothorn • 2012..... Florida
 Mr. Ivan J. Houston • 2006..... California
 Mr. Robert N. Hunziker, II • 2006 Florida
 Dr. John J. Hurley • 1993..... Illinois
 Most Rev. Francis T. Hurley, D.D. • 1991 Alaska
 Rev. Charles E. Irvin • 1986 Michigan
 Mr. and Mrs. George M. Irwin • 1998..... Louisiana
 Dr. Pauline M. Jackson • 1983 Wisconsin
 Mr. Edward L. Jamieson • 2004..... New York
 Mr. and Mrs. Willis J. Jensen • 1988 Arizona
 Jesuit Community at El Retiro • 2014 California
 Jesuit Comm. at Georgetown Prep. School • 2014.....Md.
 Mr. and Mrs. James T. Johnson • 2008..... California
 Ms. Mary A. Jolley • 2002 Alabama
 In Memory of Mr. Patrick C. Joyce • 1987 Maryland
 Ms. Donna Juenker • 2014..... New York
 Msgr. Peter V. Kain • 1988..... New York

Mrs. Vickie V. Kalbian • 1990Virginia
 Dr. Mike J. Kaminski • 2007 Washington
 Deacon John P. Kelly • 1996..... Texas
 Ms. Mary Ann Kelly-Wright • 2002 Minnesota
 Msgr. Leo A. Kely • 1988 New Jersey
 Ms. Madonna M. Kennedy • 2008..... Missouri
 Kenn Kern & Erin Pick • 2014..... New York
 Ms. Beatrice Kernan • 2014 New York
 Francis J. Kicsar • 2002 Wisconsin
 Barbara S. Kiernan, Ph.D. • 2001..... Georgia
 Dr. Thomas M. Kirchberg • 2014..... Tennessee
 Robert and Marie Knoblock • 1997 New Jersey
 Rev. Eugene R. Koch • 1991..... Iowa
 Mr. Stanley P. Koczak • 1987 Pennsylvania
 Mr. William E. Kretschmar • 1997North Dakota
 Ms. Mary Jo Krohn • 2013 Illinois
 Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth A. Kukorowski • 1997 N.C.
 Rev. Msgr. Raymond J. Kupke • 1989 New Jersey
 Mr. and Mrs. Larewnc J. Kwacala • 2014 Illinois
 Mrs. Joanne La Porte • 2014 Maryland
 Mariano and Jane La Via • 2000..... South Carolina
 Mr. and Mrs. David F. Lanning • 2014 Ohio
 Msgr. Richard P. LaRocque • 1996..... Connecticut
 Ms. Barbara A. Larsen • 2003 California
 Ms. Celine M. Larson • 2012 Wisconsin
 Rev. Allan R. Laubenthal • 2006..... Ohio
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 Col. James E. Lawrence, USAF (Ret.) • 1999 Virginia
 Mr. Bernard J. Lechner • 1988 Florida
 Ms. Sarah N. Leonard • 2002 New York
 Ms. Mahri Leonard-Fleckman • 2013 Massachusetts
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 Rev. Frank E. Lioi • 2008 New York
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 John and Dolores Loftus • 2002 New York
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 Nicholas and Anne Lombardo • 2006 Virginia
 Rev. Msgr. Alfred P. LoPinto • 1989 New York
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 John McGaley, M. D. • 2004 New York
 Rev. Eugene F. McGovern • 1988 New York
 Fr. Patrick McGurk • 2000 Montana
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 Rev. Henry McKee • 2002..... Pennsylvania
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Rev. Robert Meissner • 1993..... Michigan
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Rev. Lyle L. Schulte • 1989..... Wisconsin
Deacon Anthony J. Sciolino • 1998 New York
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Msgr. Peter Vaghi • 2014 Maryland
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Mr. Bernard J. Verkamp • 1987..... Indiana
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Rev. Ronald Wozniak, S.J. • 2014..... New York
Dr. Joseph R. Zajac • 2001 New York
Mrs. Colette C. Zito • 1996 New York

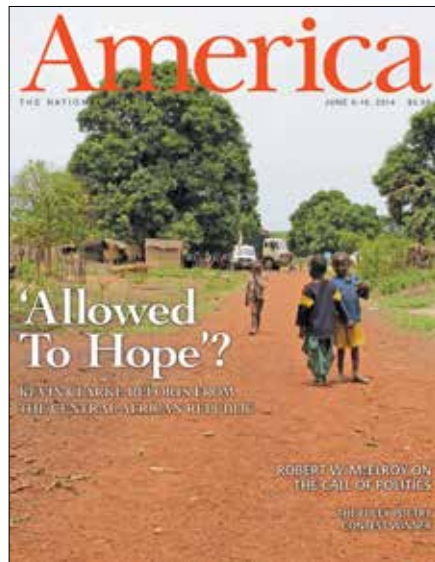
THE AVERY DULLES ASSOCIATES

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Rev. Albert R. Adamich • 1998..... Illinois
Mr. John R. Agnew • 2012 Florida
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Mrs. Frederick L. Bissinger • 1989 Maryland
Rev. Joseph J. Blanco • 2013 Colorado
Mr. Charles Blay, Jr. • 2013 California
Ms. Sara Bloom • 2014 Missouri
Robert A. Boguski • 2014..... California
Mr. and Mrs. Philip Bonanno • 2000..... Massachusetts
Mr. Ronald Bonesteel • 2014 Kansas
Mr. John G. Boor • 2005..... Minnesota
Mr. Raymond H. Booth • 2014 New York
Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius H. Borman • 2004 Colorado
Mr. and Mrs. James and Judith Boyle • 2014 New York
Mr. Robert J. Boyles • 2003 California
Rev. James P. Bradley • 2011..... New York
Mr. John T. Bradt • 2012 New York
Dr. Robert F. Brady, Jr. • 2006 Maryland
Rev. Edward B. Branch • 2014 Georgia
Ms. Susan Brandon • 2014 Hawaii
Mr. Michael C. Braun • 2002 Wisconsin

Ralph Bremigan • 2014.....Indiana
 Mr. James P. Brennan • 1996..... Pennsylvania
 Rev. William J. Brennan, S.J. • 1997..... California
 Rev. William Brennan • 2006..... New Jersey
 Mr. Richard J. Brennan • 2007..... Florida
 Ms. Kathleen M. Bresnan • 2012..... California
 Mrs. Phil V. Brislaw • 1988..... Washington
 Ms. Lois Broden • 2014..... Texas
 Ms. Marie H. Brown • 2004..... California
 Mr. Jerome A. Brzezinski • 2003..... Michigan
 Ms. Theresa Krolkowski Buck • 1993..... West Virginia
 Mr. Thomas B. Buckley • 2013..... New York
 Mr. Edward F. Buckley • 2014..... Virginia
 Dr. and Mrs. Louis V. Buckley • 1997..... Connecticut
 Mr. and Mrs. Buffalano • 2014..... Maryland
 Mr. and Mrs. Bugge • 2010..... Florida
 Dr. Timothy P. Bukowski • 2004..... North Carolina
 Ms. Maryanne Bunda • 2007..... Michigan
 Mr. James D. Burke • 2003..... Pennsylvania
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard and Arlene Burke • 2014..... Conn.
 Rev. Laurence J. Burns • 2000..... Iowa
 Rev. Edward Byrne • 2006..... New York
 Mrs. Eileen K. Byrne • 1983..... Illinois
 Rev. Msgr. Harry J. Byrne • 1987..... New York
 Mr. Joseph J. Byrne • 2012..... Massachusetts
 Mrs. Ellen L. Cady • 1998..... Michigan
 Mrs. Cathi M. Callahan • 2012..... Georgia
 Mr. Pat W. Camerino • 1983..... Texas
 Mr. Richard O. Campbell • 2002..... Colorado
 Ms. Ellen M. Campbell • 2004..... California
 Mr. Paul V. Carey, Jr. • 2014..... New York
 Dr. and Mrs. Harry D. Carrozza • 1982..... Arizona
 Mr. John J. Casey • 1987..... Missouri
 Mr. and Mrs. Stuart A. Cashin, Jr. • 1993..... Georgia
 Ms. Maria E. Cata • 2014..... Ohio
 Rev. Robert F. Caul • 1992..... Rhode Island
 Rev. Thomas M. Cembor • 2014..... New Jersey
 Mr. D. Edward Chaplin • 2006..... Pennsylvania
 Rev. Paul F. Chateau • 2004..... Michigan
 Ms. Kathleen S. Christenson • 1988..... California
 Mr. Louis J. Cissone • 2013..... Florida
 Col. Dennis E. Clancey, U.S.M.C. • 1988..... Virginia
 Rev. Douglas P. Clancy • 2014..... Connecticut
 Mr. James E. Clark • 1989..... New York
 Mr. John E. Clarke • 2009..... Wisconsin
 Mr. Edmund W. Clarke, Jr. • 2004..... California
 Ms. Mary M. Clarke • 2009..... New York
 Mr. Peter Clarke • 2012..... South Carolina
 Mr. Kevin Clarke • 2014..... New York
 Deacon Kevin E. Cleary • 2008..... New Jersey
 Ms. Jane E. Clifford • 2009..... New York
 Ms. Ellen M. Coffey • 2009..... Minnesota
 John M. Coffey • 2014..... New Mexico
 Mr. Edward Cole • 2012..... Michigan
 Rev. Gerald D. Coleman • 2009..... California
 Mr. Ronald P. Collins • 1990..... Washington
 Mr. and Mrs. Daniel F. Collopy • 1991..... D.C.
 Mr. and Mrs. Francis W. Collopy • 1996..... Colorado
 Rev. Edward A. Colohan • 2001..... Connecticut
 Rev. Douglas G. Comstock • 2008..... New York
 Mr. Michael J. Conk • 2012..... Virginia
 Charles L. Conlon, M. D. • 1997..... Texas
 Mr. Donald A. Connolly • 2005..... Maryland
 Mr. Neil A. Connolly • 2012..... New York
 Rev. Robert L. Connors • 1998..... Massachusetts
 Mr. Coleman J. Conroy • 2013..... Virginia
 Mr. John J. Conway • 2006..... Michigan
 Mr. and Mrs. Thomas E. Coogan • 2014..... Colorado

Mr. and Mrs. Jack J. Cooper • 1993..... Pennsylvania
 Mr. Jack Cooper • 2009..... Pennsylvania
 Ms. Eileen Corrigan • 2013..... Ohio
 Rev. Raymond J. Cossette • 1993..... Minnesota
 Ms. Clare Costello • 2013..... New York
 Dr. Paul Cottle • 2014..... Florida
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Coughlan • 1999..... Connecticut
 Mr. and Mrs. John P. Courtney • 1987..... Delaware
 Mr. Fred G. Cowden, Jr. • 1997..... New Jersey
 Mr. Richard D. Coy • 2014..... Tennessee



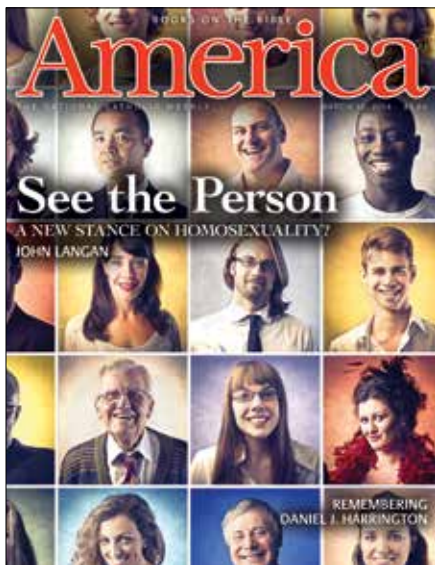
Ms. Carol B. Crosson • 2014..... New Jersey
 Rev. Daniel J. Crowley • 1999..... Massachusetts
 Anne and Richard Cummings • 2003..... New Jersey
 Ricky J. Curotto • 1999..... California
 Mr. William Cusick • 2012..... California
 Mr. Richard F. Czaja • 2006..... New York
 Mr. Venceslau D'Silva • 2004..... New York
 Ms. Joan T. Dabelko • 2014..... New York
 Rev. James Dallen • 2013..... Washington
 Ms. Jaime Dance • 2014..... Connecticut
 Fr. Clement T. Davis • 2012..... Indiana
 Mr. John P. Day • 1997..... New Hampshire
 Ms. Julia De La Torre • 2014..... Texas
 Rev. Joseph Deane • 2008..... Texas
 Rev. Stephen Deaver • 2005..... Nebraska
 Mr. and Mrs. Carl and Theresa Debarbrie • 2003..... N.Y.
 Rev. James P. DeBisschop • 2003..... Illinois
 Ms. Carol DeGroot • 2014..... Wisconsin
 Rev. Louis E. Deimeke • 2002..... Nevada
 Ms. Rosa Del Saz • 2014..... New Jersey
 Mr. Richard P. Delaney • 1988..... Texas
 Mr. Andre L. Delbecq • 1999..... California
 Mr. Edward J. Dempsey • 2004..... Connecticut
 Rev. Richard Dempsey • 2009..... Illinois
 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph S. DeNatale • 1991..... Massachusetts
 Rev. Lawrence M. Deno • 2008..... New York
 Ms. Mary Ann Deskins • 1992..... Kansas
 Msgr. Timothy H. Desrochers • 2008..... Michigan
 Mr. and Mrs. Stephen C. Detommaso • 2000..... Arizona
 Mr. Richard Dey • 2012..... California
 Mr. and Mrs. Digan • 2014..... Indiana
 Rev. Eamon Dignan • 2006..... Maryland
 Mr. Anthony J. Dipalma • 2000..... New Jersey
 Rev. Jerome A. Dixon • 1989..... Pennsylvania

Charles F. and Helen A. Dolan • 2006..... New York
 Mr. Max M. Doll • 2014..... North Carolina
 Ms. Lenore J. Domers • 2007..... Wisconsin
 Mrs. Barbara M. Donahue • 1999..... Massachusetts
 Ms. Catherine A. Donahue • 2012..... Oregon
 Ms. Dorothy A. Donovan • 2010..... Massachusetts
 Mr. Charles T. Dooley • 2014..... California
 Mr. and Mrs. James P. Dougherty • 2010..... Indiana
 Mr. Arthur T. Downey • 2005..... Maryland
 Mr. Michael E. Driscoll • 1994..... Connecticut
 Mrs. Constance L. Dubick • 2000..... Ohio
 Rev. John P. Duffell • 1988..... New York
 Mr. Maurice J. Dufilho, III • 2010..... Texas
 Mr. and Mrs. Anthony J. Dunleavy • 2006..... Pennsylvania
 Michael and Susan Dunn • 1999..... Maryland
 Msgr. William A. Dunn • 2006..... Ohio
 Rev. James M. Dunne • 2008..... New York
 Mr. Stephen P. Dunphy • 2013..... California
 Dr. Pierre Durand • 2006..... California
 Mrs. Rosemary C. Durkin • 2007..... Connecticut
 Mr. Kevin C. Efrogmson • 2014..... Nevada
 Miss Jane Egan • 2014..... New Mexico
 Sister Bea Eichten • 2012..... Minnesota
 Mr. Harry A. Eick • 2007..... Michigan
 Msgr. William E. Elliott • 2012..... California
 Dr. Edward A. Ellis • 1991..... Florida
 Mr. Richard A. Ellison • 2002..... New York
 Mrs. E. H. Engert, Jr. • 2004..... Louisiana
 Mrs. Sheila E. Erlach • 2000..... Nevada
 Ms. Mary Anne Ernst • 2006..... New York
 Mrs. Eileen F. Essaye • 2000..... District of Columbia
 Rev. Philip Fabiano • 2014..... Florida
 Ms. M. Patricia Fallon • 1983..... Massachusetts
 Mr. Edward H. Fallon • 2003..... Kentucky
 Mrs. Paula H. Fangman • 2005..... Kentucky
 Rev. Bernard Farley • 2012..... Pennsylvania
 Fathers of the Society of Jesus • 2014..... New Mexico
 Ms. Virginia L. Faulkner • 1988..... California
 Mr. and Mrs. Laurence T. Fell • 1990..... New York
 Fr. Robert J. Fenzl • 2000..... Wisconsin
 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph P. Ferguson • 2007..... Virginia
 Luis Fernandez-Rocha • 2014..... Florida
 Ms. Gilda Ferrara • 2009..... New York
 Rev. Donald J. Fiedler • 2003..... Arizona
 Ms. Marcia M. Finisdore • 2014..... Pennsylvania
 Ms. Barbara Fink • 2006..... Ohio
 Dr. Richard D. Finucane • 2006..... Florida
 Mr. Richard J. Fishbune • 2012..... Minnesota
 Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Fitzgerald • 2012..... Maryland
 Mr. William J. Fitzgerald • 1997..... Michigan
 Mr. Denis Fitzgibbons • 2014..... Arizona
 Dr. Edith M. Flanigen • 2006..... New York
 Mr. John L. Flannery • 1993..... Connecticut
 Mr. John P. Fluetsch • 2014..... California
 Rev. James B. Flynn, Ph.D. • 1988..... Massachusetts
 Mr. Robert Flynn • 2003..... California
 Mr. Charles Flynn • 2014..... New York
 Mr. Patrick M. Folan • 1987..... Massachusetts
 Mr. Joseph H. Foley, Jr. • 1996..... Georgia
 Ms. Nancy Fontenot • 2007..... Louisiana
 Mr. Leonard B. Foote, Jr. • 2014..... Florida
 Mr. William J. Fortune • 2001..... Colorado
 Mr. David Fowler • 2014..... Texas
 Mr. Charles A. Frazee • 1996..... California
 Mr. Bertram F. Frederick • 2007..... Florida
 Mr. Ronald P. Gagnon • 2008..... Arizona
 Mr. Joseph F. Gannon • 2008..... New York
 Mr. Frank J.E. Gapp • 2004..... Michigan

Dr. and Mrs. Efrain Garcia • 1997 Texas
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Mr. Robert F. Gayer • 2014 Arizona
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Kenneth C. Gertsen, M.D. • 1995 Maryland
Ms. Mary V. Gibbons • 1985 Michigan
Mr. David Gibson • 2008 New York
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Mr. John Girardi • 2003 California
Mr. Dirk Giseburt and Marilyn Stahl • 2009 Wash.
Mr. and Mrs. Francis J. Gleason • 1988 New Jersey
Mr. John P. Gleason • 2006 Illinois
Dr. Michael Glatto, M.D. • 2010 Pennsylvania
Ms. Nina G. Glorioso • 2008 Louisiana
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Rudolf and Carolyn Ann Goetz • 1995 Michigan
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Rev. Eugene S. Golas • 1988 Michigan
Rev. John Golas • 2008 Connecticut
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Ms. Nancy Good • 2014 California
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Fr. Joseph T. Graffis • 1988 Kentucky
Mrs. Dina Grant • 2012 New York
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Ms. Mary Gresens • 2013 Michigan
Ms. Margaret E. Grossenbacher • 2003 New York
Mr. John W. Gruber • 2014 Pennsylvania
Dr. Kathleen A. Gruenhagen • 2007 Georgia
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Rev. James G. Gutting • 1989 Pennsylvania
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Mr. Jerome Hackenmueller • 2014 Wisconsin
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Ms. Judith Halli • 2014 Alabama
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Halpin • 1990 Massachusetts
Mr. and Mrs. Francis L. Hanigan • 1987 Texas
Rev. Joseph F. Hanley • 1989 South Carolina
Ms. Martha A. Hanns • 1998 Washington
Mr. John J. Hardiman • 2007 New York
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Mr. and Mrs. Harper • 1987 California
Mr. Thomas J. Harrington • 2012 Massachusetts
Mrs. Doris Z. Harrington • 1985 Connecticut
Judge William T. Hart • 1991 Illinois
Mary Louise Hartman • 1999 New Jersey
Rev. Robert Hawkins • 2002 Rhode Island
Rev. Robert L. Hayden • 2009 New York
Ms. Carol A. Hayes-Gegner • 2013 Maryland
Mrs. Ellen W. Healey • 1972 Indiana
Rev. Philip A. Hearn • 2009 New York
Mrs. Theresa Hein • 1990 Colorado
Mrs. Grace E. Heising • 2001 Pennsylvania
Joseph Henchey • 2014 New Jersey
Mr. & Mrs. George and Mary Jane Hendel • 2014 Minn.
Mr. John A. Hendry • 2013 Louisiana
Rev. Douglas J. Hennessy • 1995 Illinois
Rev. John C. Hergenrother • 1992 Wisconsin
Mr. Bob Hernandez • 2014 California
Mr. Andrew J. Hernon • 2005 New York
Mr. John D. Herrick • 1999 Florida
Mr. Richard J. Higgins • 1984 District of Columbia
Dr. E. Ann Hillestad • 2002 Texas
Mr. Raymond J. Hils • 2013 Ohio
Prof. Katherine Hirschboeck • 2014 Arizona
Rev. Charles Hoffman • 2014 Wisconsin
Rev. Ralph R. Hogan • 2009 Rhode Island
Mr. Homer • 2014 Maryland
Mr. and Mrs. Francis J. Hone • 1987 New York
Ms. Helen S. Howlett • 2006 Wisconsin
Rev. Michael G. Hrydziuszko • 1997 Michigan
Most Rev. Howard J. Hubbard • 1989 New York
Mr. Thomas P. Huber • 2012 Hawaii
Mr. William H. Huber • 1997 New Jersey
Mr. Raymond C. Hubley • 2000 Minnesota
Dr. Selma Hughes • 2004 Texas
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Rev. Thomas P. Hunstiger • 2012 Minnesota
Ms. Martha Hunt • 2014 California
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen & Arlene Hurlburt • 2014 Texas
Mr. Michael W. Hurley • 2012 Virginia
Mr. John J. Hurley • 1996 New York
Leroy J. and Virginia L. Hushak • 2002 Ohio
Rev. Leon Hutton • 2004 California
Rev. John M. Hynes • 1995 Delaware
Most Rev. Joseph L. Imesch, D.D. • 1987 Illinois
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Rev. John Jaquiel • 2013 Pennsylvania
Rev. Robert J. Jallas • 1994 Illinois
Mr. Alfred James, III • 2012 Kansas
Mr. Raymond James • 2014 Florida
Mr. John G. James • 2003 New Jersey
Mr. Edward L. Jamieson • 2014 Massachusetts
Mr. William Jankos • 2012 California
Dr. Robert N. Jarman, M. D. • 2013 Oklahoma
Mr. John L. Jenkins • 2012 Indiana
Jesuit Comm in Western N. C. • 1996 North Carolina
Ann F. Johnson • 1997 Virginia
Ms. Edna Jones • 2014 Tennessee
Dr. Mary Ann Jordan • 2000 New York
Msgr. Milam J. Joseph • 1996 Texas
J. R. Joy • 2010 California
Mr. John E. Joyce, Jr. • 1983 New Jersey
Mr. Philip H. Joyce • 1988 Pennsylvania
Rev. Bernard W. Kahlhamer • 1981 Minnesota
Rev. Ronald N. Kalas • 1988 Illinois
Rev. William D. Karg • 1998 Ohio
Fr. Jerome G. Kautzman • 2010 North Dakota
Fr. Frederick J. Kawka • 2010 Michigan
Mr. Harry W. Keaty • 2005 Washington
Rev. John Keegan • 2012 New Hampshire
Francis X. Keeley, M.D. • 1993 New Jersey
Rev. Msgr. Patrick J. Keenan • 2006 New York
Mr. Charles Keenan • 2014 New York
Mr. Thomas E. Kelleher • 1988 Massachusetts
Rev. Thomas J. Kelley • 2008 Pennsylvania
Rev. Edward J. Kelly • 2012 Pennsylvania
Mr. & Mrs. William & Annmarie Kennedy • 2014 Mass.
Rev. Paul Kennedy • 2014 Pennsylvania
Mrs. Margaret Kenny • 1988 Illinois
Mr. Peter C. Kenny • 2010 Massachusetts
Ms. Barbara B. Kerwin • 2012 Wisconsin
Dr. David P. Killen • 2007 Washington
Mr. Stephen D. Killian • 2010 Iowa
Dr. and Mrs. Edward and Leonore Kizy • 2014 R.I.
J. Leo Klein, S.J. • 2006 Ohio
KLM Foundation • 2013 California
Rev. Kenneth Koehler • 2012 Colorado
Rev. Paul P. Koszarek • 1998 Wisconsin
Mr. John N. Kotre • 2001 Michigan
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Rev. William F. Krlis • 1989 New York
Joanne Kroon • 2014 New York
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel J. Kubasiak • 2007 Illinois
Kevin M. Kucik • 2012 Illinois
Ms. Sandra F. Kuhn, A.U.D. CCC • 2014 New Jersey
Mr. Gabriel J. Kulcon • 2014 Pennsylvania
Mr. Michael A. Kulungowski • 2012 South Carolina
Rev. L'Heureax • 2010 Minnesota
Rev. Joseph A. La Plante • 1995 Minnesota
Mr. and Mrs. Leon R. La Porte • 2012 Maryland
Miss Doris M. Laffan • 1992 New York
Mr. and Mrs. F. Vern Lahart • 1993 Florida
Mr. Christopher Lane • 2000 Colorado
Ms. Alice Lange • 2010 South Dakota
Mr. Toby Lange • 2014 Washington
Mr. and Mrs. Glen A. Lanier • 2013 Idaho
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Rev. Eugene F. Lauer • 2013 Pennsylvania
Fr. Saulius P. Laurinaitis • 2003 Ohio
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Most Rev. John J. Leibrecht • 1991 Missouri
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Rev. Thomas P. Leonard • 1985 New York
Mr. Bryan A. Leone • 2014 Connecticut
Ronald and Linda Lesko • 2009 Maine
Ronald JP Lesko • 2014 Maine
Cardinal William J. Levada • 2014 California
Leonor Limarzi • 2014 District of Columbia
Ms. Nancy E. Lindsay • 2008 District of Columbia
Ms. Kathleen Lombardozi • 2003 Montana
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Ms. Mira L. Loran • 1993 Illinois
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph F. Lynch • 1998 Massachusetts
Col. (USA Ret.) and Mrs. Lynch • 2014 Virginia
Rev. Paul V. MacDonald • 2006 Massachusetts
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Mrs. Jean M. Maher • 1997..... New York
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 Rev. Edward A. Malloy, C.S.C. • 1988.....Indiana
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 Jean M. McCawley • 2005.....Massachusetts
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 Rev. John F. McGinley, O.S.F.S. • 2013..... Pennsylvania
 Jean McGoff • 2011.....Indiana
 Mr. John G. McGoldrick • 2002..... New York
 Msgr. Stephen D. McGough • 1998..... Pennsylvania
 Dr. Leonard F. McGovern • 2005..... Alabama
 Rev. Richard W. McGowan, S.J. • 1999.....New Mexico
 Deacon and Mrs. Ronald L. McIntyre • 1990..... Michigan
 Mrs. Virginia M. McKeon • 2010..... New York
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 Mr. Edward McKeown • 2013..... Tennessee
 Capt. Paul F. McLaughlin • 2002..... Florida
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 Marita L. McMahon • 1996..... New York
 Bill and Anne McSweeney • 2014..... Florida
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 Mr. Thomas Mehs • 2014.....Colorado
 Ms. Ellen M. Mehu • 1999.....Maryland
 Margaret Mellon • 2014.....District of Columbia
 Miss Anne Menton • 1989..... New York
 Mr. Michael G. Merriman • 1995.....Oregon
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 Ms. Patricia L. Mikus • 2009.....Massachusetts
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 Rev. Theodore J. Miller • 1984.....Ohio
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 Rev. Msgr. Philip D. Morris • 1995..... New Jersey
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 Ms. Janet H. Murphy • 2014..... California
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 Carolyn A. Myers • 2012..... Texas
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 Rev. R. W. Nalley • 1998..... Michigan
 Dorice M. Narins, Ph.D. • 2005.....North Carolina
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 Mr. Richard T. Nolan, Jr. • 1999..... New York
 Mr. Robert E. Nolan • 2000..... Wisconsin



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 Dr. Luke E. O'Connor • 2003..... Connecticut
 Rev. Robert B. O'Connor • 1989..... New York
 Rev. Maurice J. O'Connor • 1999.....Massachusetts
 Mr. Kevin O'Connor • 2013..... Minnesota
 Rev. William J.J. O'Donnell • 1996..... Pennsylvania
 Mr. and Mrs. Patrick M. O'Donnell • 1988..... Pennsylvania
 Mr. Joseph M. O'Donnell • 2012..... Minnesota
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 Mrs. Diedre M. O'Donnell-Griswold • 2007.....Mass.
 Mr. John F. O'Keefe • 2013..... California
 Oblate of St Francis Desales • 2014.....District of Columbia
 Mr. James C. O'Brien • 2014.....Massachusetts
 Dr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Ogonek • 1998.....Ohio
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 Mr. Gerald M. Pauly • 1994..... California
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 Mr. Ovidio Penalver • 1997..... Washington
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 Mrs. Doris Pesci • 2007..... Pennsylvania
 Rev. David L. Peters • 1988..... Illinois
 Rev. Thomas G. Pettei • 2014..... New York
 Mr. Joseph Pettit • 1992..... Virginia
 Mr. and Mrs. John G. Phelan • 2014..... New Jersey
 Rev. Michael J. Phillips • 2005..... New York
 Erin Pick • 2014..... New York
 Ms. Mary K. Pickett • 2008..... South Carolina
 Ms. Joyce M. Piliero • 2006..... Maryland
 Martin J. Pino • 2010..... Massachusetts
 Pola J. Piotrowski, M. D. • 2009..... Illinois
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 James and Mary Plummer • 1991..... Oregon
 Mr. John Polanin, Jr. • 2002..... New Jersey
 Ms. Suzanne Polen • 2001..... Pennsylvania
 Mr. Joseph D. Policano • 1982..... New York
 Mr. Marcus P. Porcelli • 1997..... New Jersey
 Msgr. John Raymond Portman • 2003..... California
 Mr. and Mrs. Pierce J. Power • 1979..... Florida
 Rev. Bruce Powers • 2013..... New York
 Mr. William T. Prince • 2013..... Virginia
 Thomas E. Ptaszynski • 1999..... Connecticut
 Ms. Tricia T. Pyne • 2012..... Maryland
 Mr. Richard Quigley • 1987..... New York
 R.J. Mellusi & Co. Inc. • 2014..... New York
 Rev. Brian M. Rafferty • 2007..... Maryland
 Mr. Eugene C. Rainis • 1993..... New York
 Dr. James F. Rambasek, M.D. • 2013..... Ohio
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 Rev. Martin Rauscher • 1987..... New Jersey
 Rev. Fred Rauscher • 2013..... New Jersey
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 Roderick and Nancy Read • 2012..... California
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 Mr. George E. Reid • 1995..... New York
 Rev. William J. Reilly • 1995..... New Jersey
 Ms. Elizabeth Reilly • 2013..... New York
 Mr. Thomas F. Reilly, Jr. • 2014..... New York
 Ms. Helen L. Relation • 2014..... Massachusetts
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 Ms. Maria C. Reynolds • 1996..... Maryland
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Mr. Percival Riveaux • 2014 New York
 Dr. James M. Roach, M. D. • 2012 California
 Mr. Dennis J. Roberts, II • 1998 Rhode Island
 Father Rodimer • 2014 New Jersey
 Mr. John Rogers • 2014 New York
 Ms. Sally J. Rogers • 2014 New York
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 Most Rev. Peter A. Rosazza, D.D. • 1987 Connecticut
 Rev. Paul J. Rossi • 2003 California
 Ms. Patricia P. Rossman • 2012 Iowa
 Mr. Stephen C. Rowan • 2014 Washington
 Mr. Paul J. Roy • 2009 Massachusetts
 Mr. and Mrs. Michael and Margaret Rudolf • 2014 Ala.
 Rev. Msgr. John Ryan • 1987 California
 Mr. Paul F. Ryan • 1989 Massachusetts
 Mr. and Mrs. Duffy and Mary Ryan • 2014 Illinois
 Marianne Ryan • 2014 Illinois
 Ms. Evelyn M. Saal • 2007 New York
 John and Lou Ella Saam • 2013 Michigan
 Mr. John Saavedra, LCSW • 2014 California
 Saint Paul Church • 2014 Connecticut
 Col. James E. Sanner, USA, Ret. • 2002 Texas
 Mr. Terrance E. Sauvain • 2002 Maryland
 Mark and Margaret Scheibe • 1988 Washington
 Mr. Nicholas P. Schiavone • 2009 New York
 Mr. Bernard L. Schiml • 2012 Ohio
 Sr. Joan Schmidt, C.S.J. • 1996 New York
 Dr. Eugene J. Schmitt • 1985 Ohio
 Rev. David J. Schmitt • 2013 West Virginia
 Mr. R. A. Schoettinger • 2004 Ohio
 Rev. Norman R. Schwartz • 1998 Florida
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 Ms. Demetra Schwieger • 2007 Washington
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 Dr. A. Lois Scully • 1989 California
 Mr. James Seeberg • 2014 Illinois
 Ms. Macrina H. Seitz • 2004 Maryland
 Maryann Semancik • 2014 California
 Ms. Georganne M. Serico • 2003 New York
 Most Rev. Carlos A. Sevilla, S.J. • 1998 Washington
 Mr. and Mrs. James R. Shanahan • 2014 Maryland
 Rev. Richard J. Shannon • 2008 Illinois
 Mr. Paul Shay • 2012 Pennsylvania
 Mr. and Mrs. Jack Shea • 1984 California
 Charlotte G. Sheehan • 2000 Illinois
 Mr. James F. Shields • 2014 Pennsylvania
 Ms. Carla B. Siegesmund • 2014 Texas
 Penelope Sieh de Hueck • 2012 South Dakota
 Mrs. Mary J. Silva • 2001 California
 Sidney S. Simmons • 2012 Florida
 Mr. Gilbert Simonetti, Jr. • 2014 Maryland
 Mr. Jenaro D. Simpson • 2006 Delaware
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 Most Rev. Richard J. Skiba, S.S.L. • 1983 Wisconsin
 Dr. Stuart D. Sleight • 2004 Michigan

Mr. and Mrs. Richard W. Smith, Jr. • 2014 Mass.
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 Msgr. Alfred E. Smith • 1989 Maryland
 Deacon James E. Smith • 2008 Oklahoma
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 Fr. Arthur J. Smith • 2014 New York
 Mr. Ted Sohn • 2010 New York
 Rev. Richard Spicer • 2014 Washington
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 Kathryn Springs • 2011 Colorado
 Msgr. John M. Steiner • 2014 Washington
 Mr. and Mrs. G. Gregory Stephen • 1993 Illinois
 Ms. Carolyn Stevens • 2014 Colorado
 Rev. Michael Storge, S.J. • 2014 British Columbia
 Ms. Ann M. Stuart • 1993 Colorado
 Rev. Richard Sturtz • 2012 New York
 Mr. and Mrs. Roger W. Sullivan • 1990 Massachusetts
 Mr. Barry F. Sullivan • 1996 New York
 Ms. Rosemary T. Sullivan • 2007 New York



Ms. Mary Ann Sullivan • 2014 Iowa
 Mr. John Sureau • 2014 New York
 Ms. Ann Marie Swartz • 2014 New Jersey
 Mr. & Mrs. Dennis M & Linda H Sweeney • 2014 N.Y.
 Mr. and Mrs. John W. Swope • 2005 Pennsylvania
 Mr. Anthony J. Tambasco • 2002 Virginia
 Mr. Richard J. Teahan • 1988 New York
 Rev. Michael Tegeeder • 2008 Minnesota
 Ms. Katharine M. Teipen • 2004 Ohio
 Mr. Homer Teng • 2006 California
 Ms. Elisabeth M. Tetlow • 2005 Louisiana
 The Brotherhood • 2010 New York
 The McMeel Family Foundation • 2014 Missouri
 Fr. Donald Thimm • 2012 Wisconsin
 Mr. Stephen H. Thomas • 1992 Indiana
 Ms. Clare Thompson • 2013 New Jersey
 Mr. and Mrs. John and Rosa Thorpe • 2014 Texas
 Mr. Robert J. Timlin • 2014 California
 Mr. and Mrs. Stephen J. Tobon • 1982 New York
 Ms. Margaret S. Tolbert • 2014 Texas

Mr. and Mrs. Enrique Torres • 1994 Florida
 Mr. and Mrs. James and Susan Tracy • 2014 Nebraska
 Mr. Carl Treuter • 2012 New York
 Mr. William J. Tucker, Jr. • 1983 Missouri
 Rev. Joseph H. Uecker • 2007 Texas
 Dr. William Ulwelling • 2000 New Mexico
 Rodger and Judy Van Allen • 2012 Pennsylvania
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 Rev. Thomas L. Vandenberg • 1996 Washington
 Mrs. Patricia H. Vanderslice • 1989 Maryland
 Edward and Eileen Vastola • 1991 Missouri
 Mr. Robert Venable • 2008 Indiana
 John J. and Claire T. Ventrosa • 1995 New York
 Mr. Eugene E. Vilfordi • 1995 Texas
 Mr. J. Malcolm Visbal • 2000 California
 Paul & Jane Vitale • 2008 Idaho
 Rev. Eugene F. Vonderhaar • 2005 Ohio
 Mr. Joseph P. Vorbach • 1999 Virginia
 Ms. Diane Wagner • 2014 Colorado
 The Rev. Walter H. Wagner • 2003 Pennsylvania
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 Mr. John T. Walsh • 1987 Massachusetts
 Ms. Mary Walsh • 2012 New Jersey
 Ms. Mildred Wanja • 2014 Texas
 Rev. Richard J. Ward • 1989 Washington
 Dr. Margaret M. Waters, Ph.D. • 2006 New York
 Mr. Thomas E. Wavro • 2002 Massachusetts
 Mr. Kent R. Weber • 2003 New Jersey
 Mrs. Ninette P. Webster • 1988 Mississippi
 Mr. & Mrs. Henry and Donelle Weichman • 2014 Texas
 Mr. John J. Weis • 2012 New Jersey
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard J. Wekerle • 1993 Idaho
 Mr. Edward Welch • 1993 Michigan
 Mr. George J. Welch • 2010 New York
 Mr. John C. Weldon • 1989 Washington
 Rev. Loren J. Werth • 1994 Kansas
 Mr. & Mrs. James and Maureen Westwater • 2014 Md.
 Mr. Homer S. White, Jr. • 2003 Kentucky
 Mr. Donald J. Whittam • 2002 New Jersey
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard and Lucy Wilhoit • 2014 Minnesota
 Mrs. Olive E. Wilkins • 2001 Washington
 Mr. Larry Williamson • 2012 South Dakota
 Mr. Thomas S. Willis • 2014 Florida
 Ms. Mildred Wilson • 2014 Texas
 Fr. George C. Wolf • 2012 Nevada
 Mrs. Catherine Spohn Wolff • 1983 California
 Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Wolski • 2012 Illinois
 Msgr. Richard W. Woy • 2004 Maryland
 Mr. John C. Yockey • 2012 Arizona
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 Stephanie A. Young • 2012 Illinois
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 Fr. Gary M. Zender • 2011 Washington
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 Mr. and Mrs. George A. Zink, Jr. • 2004 Indiana
 Mr. Joseph F. Zuber • 1982 Michigan
 Ms. Connie Zukowski • 2005 Illinois
 Ms. Mary Zukowski • 2013 Illinois



Francis and Congress

Pope Francis will address a joint session of Congress on September 24. He will do this as head of the Holy See, the first pope from the Americas and the leader of the worldwide Catholic Church.

It is an event loaded with significance at many levels. I want to glance at some of them in this dispatch, and discuss issues that his presence and speech might raise on his first visit to the United States.

From a historical perspective, the pope's presence in Congress offers an opportunity for a wide-ranging reflection upon the history of religious freedom and religious tolerance in this country.

For much of America's early history, the papacy was a focus for religious hatred and bigotry. Catholics in the United States were portrayed as an alien presence, answering to a foreign potentate who was an enemy of the most fundamental democratic principles of American society.

Two events help recall something of that anti-Catholic climate. First, the negative reaction that was triggered when Pius IX, in October 1853, sent a block of marble from the ancient Temple of Concord in the Roman Forum as a gift from the Holy See for the Washington Monument that was then being built. Meant as a tribute to George Washington, the gift sparked an anti-Catholic backlash by the Know-Nothing Party, some of whose members stole "The Pope's Stone" in March 1854, smashed it and threw the pieces into the Potomac River.

A second event, over 80 years later,

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showed that the anti-Catholic spirit was still alive, when Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, the Vatican secretary of state and future pope (Pius XII), visited in 1936. Sensitive to that anti-Catholic sentiment, President Franklin D. Roosevelt received him at his residence in Hyde Park, N.Y., instead of at the White House.

By 1979 the climate had changed to such a degree that President Jimmy Carter was able to welcome John Paul II to the White House, the first pope to enter there. Later, after the United States and the Holy See established diplomatic relations on Jan. 10, 1984, President George W. Bush felt free to give Benedict XVI an official welcome at the White House in April 2008.

A new and very different chapter of history will be written when Francis visits. Not only will he be received at the White House by the nation's first black president, Barack Obama, he will become the first pope to address Congress.

It is very rare for a pope to speak to a national legislative body. St. John Paul II broke the ice in 1999, when he addressed the parliament in Poland and, in 2002, in Italy. Benedict XVI addressed the parliaments of the United Kingdom (2010) and Germany (2011). Both St. John Paul II (1988) and Pope Francis (2014) addressed the European Parliament.

It is a sign of the vibrancy and progress in the American tradition of religious freedom that Pope Francis has been invited to address Congress. Indeed, his presence offers an opportunity to examine that tradition anew

at this juncture in history. It provides a chance to reflect on the nature of religious liberty as both a freedom to believe and a freedom to practice, and to review contemporary elements of religious bigotry that infect both American and world culture. It also opens the door to explore the nature of the culture of encounter that Francis advocates and that supports and reflects true religious freedom.

Francis will speak to Congress at a particular moment in the history of the United States when the substantive and unifying nature of the common good of society is being fractured by the forces of partisanship and economic division. He could invite Americans to look beyond their particular identities of class, party and race to truly forge a

society that treats the good of all as the goal of social and political action.

As a descendant of European immigrants, Francis has much in common with many Americans; and like so many who live in this land, he too was born in Latin America. It would come as no surprise then if he were to address the immigration question when he speaks to Congress.

His words to the Congress could also serve as a call to the United States to reflect upon its presence in the world, and how it might best use its great economic and military power to confront the issues of global poverty, the stewardship of the environment, the future of nuclear weapons and the advancement of peace in the world, starting in the Holy Land and the Middle East.

GERARD O'CONNELL

As a son of immigrants, Francis has much in common with many Americans.

The Monk and Me

New habits of friendship

BY KAYA OAKES

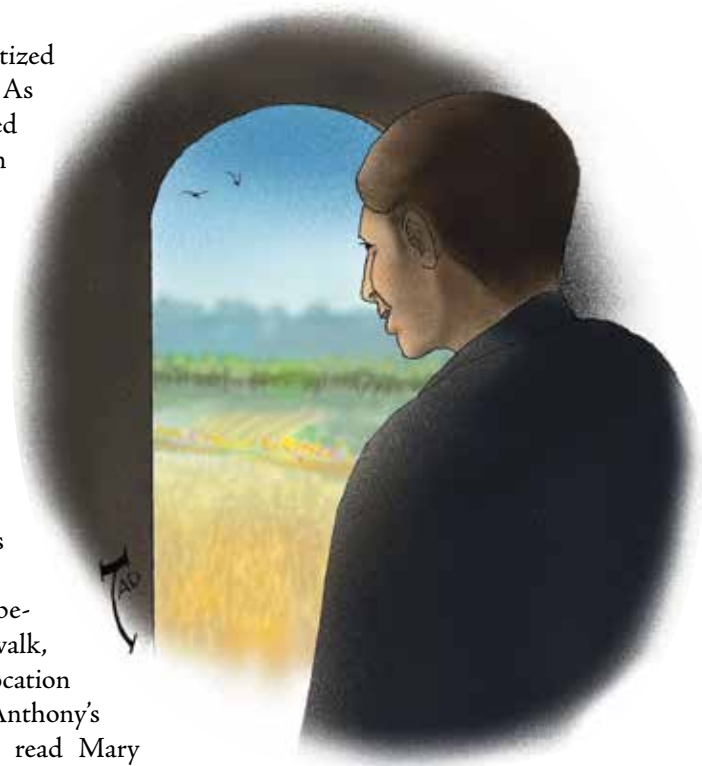
I met the monk, before he was a monk, on Facebook. The message icon flickered to life when an actor we both know made the connection: two writers, two creative people, two weirdoes, two Catholics. Perhaps we'd like to get acquainted? The monk back then had a different name; let's call him Anthony, the desert father, the first monk. I went into the café where he worked, a busy spot near the school where I teach, and introduced myself. We were both members of the vanishing demographic of 30- and 40-somethings in our respective parishes, both taller than average, both of us crazy for Baroque music and difficult books, both of us, back then, just finding our way into a life of faith. I had returned from a 20-year lapse; he'd just been baptized. We were, back then, new arrivals to this messy thing called religion.

Anthony's parish was shrinking; even at the Easter Vigil its pews were half full. But he had wandered in during his search for a church, at a time when he could barely articulate the thing that was pulling him into religion, which hadn't been a particularly pressing issue during his childhood and had played almost no part in his adult life up until then. A charismatic pastor and a small but fiercely loyal congregation made it easy to go, week after week, to ask questions and have them answered, to begin the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, to be the

single person baptized at the Easter Vigil. As an actor, he was used to having lights on his face; his parish rents a humming spotlight at Easter and shines it onto the baptismal pool. One new Catholic is wrapped in a white garment, and the entire church applauds him.

Even at the beginning of his walk, thoughts about vocation filtered through Anthony's consciousness. He read Mary Doria Russell's *The Sparrow* and considered becoming a Jesuit; he got to know some of the local Dominicans and took my husband and me to a Christmas concert at their priory. Then one year, a Benedictine began attending Anthony's parish; we were eating Chinese food together when Anthony told me he was thinking about meeting the Benedictine vocation director.

I have friends who are priests. We text; we tweet; we go out for cocktails and eat enchiladas and see movies. They have iPhones and laptops and live in community, but they do not live away from the world. Like me, they are always in it. Like me, they are able to choose when they come and go. Anthony will not be able to leave the monastery for a full year during his novitiate. His time on the computer is



ART: TADA DUNNE

limited, and using the phone is difficult. The closest city is an hour's drive. Needless to say, he doesn't have a cell phone.

But before he was a novice, Anthony went off to the monastery as a candidate. He left his job and packed up his apartment, and I drove to pick up him and his remaining belongings: three boxes and a backpack. The rest had been donated and given away. On his final night outside the monastery, we sat in front of my laptop and looked at pictures of where he was going. He'd been on several vocational retreats; now the rubber would meet the road. Each part of the monastery had a story he could already tell. The characters behind the austere looking faces of the

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Benedictines came to life in my friend's voice. And the next day, I drove him to the train station, and for three months he entered that life.

Benedictines give candidates a month's break before they enter the novitiate. So Anthony came back. I picked him up once again at the train station and found my friend dazed after hours of travel. The daze lasted for several days. He'd vanish every couple of hours into the room I use as an office, his breviary shoved into a pocket. I'd forgotten about the Liturgy of the Hours. In fact, I could barely recall which one was Compline and which one was Lauds. One night, I overheard him talking with my husband in the kitchen: "So what exactly are vows?" asked the guy I'd married, sincerely curious to find out. And my friend explained poverty, chastity and obedience as I eavesdropped from the living room.


Prayer as Life

What is it like having a friend who's a monk? On the one hand, I think about the things we can't do. No more concerts, or brunch after Mass. No more conversations over the counter of the café where he worked, no waving hello as I troop by on my way to a day of teaching. When I tell friends from the secular world that my friend is in a monastery, they're not hostile; they're fascinated. They imagine bread and water, hair shirts, cheese making, beer with a high alcohol percentage. I know from our conversations that it's more like cafeteria food and vocational classes. Hard physical work and hard mental work. Prayer, prayer and more prayer. Long solitary walks on the monastery grounds, days structured around the Rule of Saint Benedict, days patterned after a way of life that's gone on for 1,500 years. Even the most faithful of my friends who aren't vowed religious pray maybe once or twice a day, and it's often hasty and untidy, because we are bombarded by life. To

know a monk means knowing someone who is a professional at prayer. In comparison, everyone else is going to be an amateur.

When friends say they'll pray for me, my first instinct is to laugh. Why me? Why not those people dying in Sudan, the writer my age with aggressive breast cancer, the priest with senile dementia losing his way during Mass? I am a relatively healthy, somewhat gainfully employed person who gets paid to teach people to write. But when the monk says he'll pray for me, I understand something else: that there is a calling to live life just for God, to be awake early to pray in song, to end each day prayer. The conversation of life becomes one in which God is constantly listening. It is not a calling I'll ever share, and it is one most people will struggle to understand. In the past, there were hundreds of men at his monastery. His novitiate class consists of two, both of them guys who had lived for decades in the secular world, who had stewed and discerned before choosing a life that, from the outside, makes little sense. When people imagine the life of a monk or a cloistered nun, they imagine what is given up, not what is gained. For those who choose a

monastic path, prayer becomes life, and it becomes action. Work is prayer, community is prayer. Breath, too, is prayer and life.

I open Facebook. There is a picture of Anthony, now rechristened with a monastic name. There was already a Brother Anthony, so he had to have a new name; but more, he wanted a new one. A new form of life is, after all, a rechristening, a new way of being made Christ. Before my own confirmation at the age of 38, I'd paged through a book about saints, trying to find the name that the priest would give me, the name of the saint who would guide my path, a name that would be known only to a handful of people. It is my secret name; no one uses it except me. But now my friend is called only by his monastic name. His emails come addressed from this new person. Packages of coffee and books I send his way are labeled to the name the abbot bestowed on him. It is the name of a saint who was known for his humility and love of the poor, given to my friend, who has always given so much of himself to others and to God. A few clicks, and there are the photographs of him shouldering his way into his new habit, black and hooded. He smiles. He looks like himself. 



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On Paying Attention

Faculty opinion is divided at the university where I teach. Some faculty members permit electronic devices to be used during their classes. Others, including myself, have banned them. In fact, the longer I teach the more I am convinced that “chalk & talk” is exactly what Socrates ordered.

Last week, I was walking through one of our science buildings. Through a door window I could see a chemistry class in session, but I could not hear it. The instructor was enthusiastically lecturing, using a power-point presentation, on proteins. I could see the laptops opened by the students in the last row of the amphitheater. The computer screens displayed a football game, headline news, Lindsay Lohan, e-mail, Alec Baldwin and Oprah. In fact, we had two Oprahs, miraculously giving the same chemistry lecture while simultaneously wearing a purple dress and a black pant suit.

Entire books and seminars are now advising us on how to foster a new culture of politeness in the classroom. Undoubtedly, a good dose of Miss Manners would be helpful in correcting our academic incivility. (It might also help revive the fine art of the notebook doodle.) But issues of classroom decorum mask a deeper question: How do we learn to pay attention? How can we focus on the teacher, on our fellow students, on the issue at hand and, most important, on the truth lurking behind the issue?

Among recent philosophers, Simone Weil (1909-1943) has placed attentiveness at the center of peda-

gogical concern. According to Weil, attention represents the supreme act and virtue of the mind. Even when we fail to find the correct solution, an hour of attentive study of a mathematical problem places us humbly but firmly before the truth and reveals to the mind the silver vicissitudes of the quest for the truth. Attentiveness is not limited to intellectual pursuits. Authentic friendship is built on careful attention to the words, silences and needs of the other person. Social activism demands solidarity, as we choose to share the lot of the oppressed group we have carefully observed. Prayer is the ultimate act of attention, as we make the choice to listen to God, whether God decides to speak or not. “Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity.”

Centuries ago Nicolas Malebranche (1638-1715) similarly placed attention at the heart of his metaphysical system. For Malebranche, most human beings live confused lives, erroneously believing that human nature is only a tumble of sense impressions and passions. Careful attention to the real will disclose that the most fundamental part of our nature is our rational soul and that God alone is the true cause of all mental and physical change. According to Malebranche, our confusion is moral as well as metaphysical. Only in attentiveness to the moral order established by God do we begin to glimpse the conversion required to replace our disordered passions with durable virtues. “Attention is the natural prayer of the soul.”

In retrospect, our greatest educational debt is often to the teachers who doggedly taught us to pay attention. One high school teacher showed us how to read a poem. This reading involved actually listening to, savoring, wondering about and pulling apart the verse. One college teacher taught us how to see a painting. We learned how to notice colors, contrasts and composition of which we had no previous

knowledge. Another instructor showed us how to listen to a piece of symphonic music. We suddenly heard the mandolin and guitar gamboling into the fourth movement of Mahler’s Symphony No. 7. There are stretches of boredom in these acts of attention, especially in the apprenticeship stages. But the labor ultimately yields a spiritual joy of which Ms. Lohan is probably unaware.

It is hardly a secret that the key battle on any collegiate retreat is whether we will pay attention to God or dull this attention in favor of something else: our text messages, our homework, our smuggled stretch of hip-hop. Whether on retreat or not, at the center of the spiritual life is the simple courage to be quiet and to permit God to be God. The current revival of eucharistic adoration in our parishes and university chapels is in part the effort to see and hear Christ alone. The spiritual clutter disappears as attentive adoration becomes all.

Perhaps distraction at prayer is a serious sin after all.

At the center
of the
spiritual life
is the simple
courage to
be quiet.

JOHN J. CONLEY

JOHN J. CONLEY, S.J., holds the Knott Chair in Philosophy and Theology at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore, Md.

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IDEAS | JIM McDERMOTT

PODCAST PEOPLE

'Serial' kills the radio stars

The year 2014 boasted one of the great serialized American dramas of the last 20 years and the debut of another wonderfully quirky one. Neither starred household names. And neither was broadcast on AMC, FX, Netflix or HBO. In fact, they were not onscreen performances at all. They were podcasts.

Like all its tech-lingo brethren—*cyberspace*, *blog*, *emoticon*—*podcast* is a blighted word, colorless and sickly, the linguistic equivalent of recirculated air. Those unfamiliar with the term might prefer to overlook it rather than

try to decipher it.

Put simply, a podcast is audio content that you download. It is a broadcast made for your i-device. As a communication medium it began in the last century, as amateurs with microphones uploaded recordings of themselves talking endlessly about the things they loved—"Lost," Iowa politics, Red Sox Nation. If you knew where to look, you could find just about anything. But you had to know where to look.

Then in 2005 Apple began to offer a directory of available podcasts on its iTunes Store. Suddenly every

"Grandma's Best Pierogis" show had as a potential audience the entire iTunes user base (now well over 800 million people).

The medium started to take off. Ricky Gervais, Stephen Merchant and Karl Pilkington's podcast version of their popular British radio show had 4.5 million downloads in its first two months. The American comedian Adam Corolla had 59 million downloads in his first two years. Not only chat shows, but science shows, history shows, game shows and old-timey radio plays multiplied. After Wall Street cratered in 2008, NPR created a podcast called "Planet Money" to cover financial stories. (Even now it continues to produce excellent short pieces that make economic issues comprehensible to normal people.) Soon popular radio programs began to offer downloadable versions of their shows.

Still, by their nature, most podcasts, even the successful ones, play to micro-niche markets. One of the most consistently popular podcasts on iTunes over the last five years, "WTF with Marc Maron" (in which that wry comedian talks with other comedians about their lives and hardships), has had over one hundred million downloads. But each episode averages just 220,000 listeners—small when compared to the number of viewers reached through television.

A Modern Murder Mystery

Then this fall the producers of the popular radio show "This American Life" released **Serial**, a heavily researched, 12-part podcast reinvestigating the brutal murder in 1999 of Hae

Sarah Koenig and Dana Chivvis at work on "Serial."

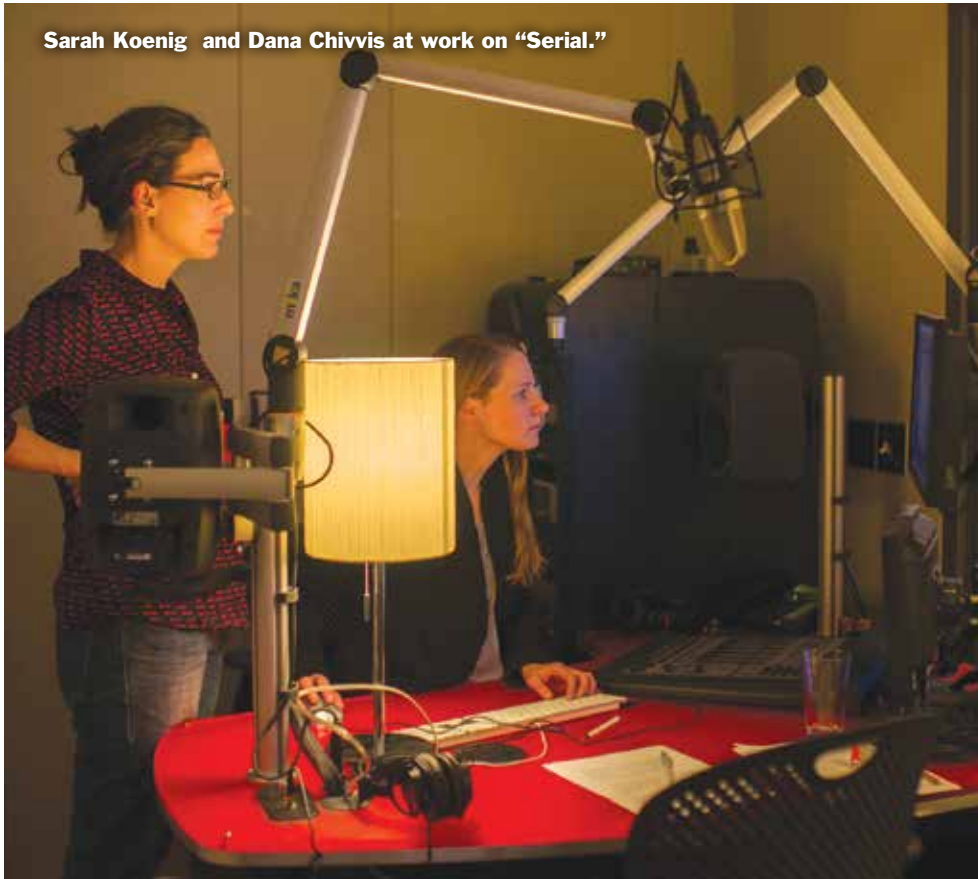


PHOTO: THIS MODERN LIFE/ELISE BERGERSON

Min Lee, an 18-year-old Baltimore high school student. Adnan Syed, her classmate and ex-boyfriend, has spent 16 years in prison for the crime. But the case has serious holes: the chief witness was a teenage drug dealer whose story even now keeps changing; the defense attorney never pursued important leads (like Adnan's alibi); and Adnan himself was by all accounts a placid, likable guy with no criminal record or history of violence. Hae herself had found their breakup largely amicable.

Within weeks of its debut, "Serial" was the number one podcast on iTunes not only in the United States but also in the United Kingdom, Canada, Germany and far-away Australia. After each episode the website Reddit, which helps users to create discussion groups on any topic, had tens of thousands of people posting their thoughts and questions about the case. By season's end, "Serial" had an astounding one million downloads per episode, making it the most popular podcast ever.

True crime shows have a built-in audience; who doesn't want to be Sherlock Holmes (or a voyeur)? But it is the reporter Sarah Koenig who made "Serial" so uniquely compelling. Koenig spent over a year researching this show, working through the testimony, police reports, phone records; reenacting sequences of events; interviewing everyone she could find who knew Adnan and Hae or was connected to the events; and over and over going back to Adnan himself with new questions, new theories, new information. She is deeply respectful both of the life that has been lost and the plights of those who remain. But her purpose is not to exonerate Adnan as much as it is to try to understand. Who is he, really? What happened?

In "Serial" we journey with Koenig through a broken criminal justice system and a fallen world. The deeper she goes, the murkier it all becomes.

How to Succeed in Business

At the same time that Sarah Koenig was deep-diving into a moral abyss, the former "This American Life" producer Alex Goldberg began **StartUp**, an always honest, often humorous podcast about Goldberg's attempts to start a podcasting business.

In each half-hour episode, Goldberg offers the next challenge in starting his company. And he does so with remarkable transparency. Every mistake that he makes, every awkward conversation or fear is presented without decoration for all to see. So in the pilot we hear his first pitch to an investor; it is such a stammering, weak-kneed mess that the investor stops listening and tries to coach him.

Other episodes have presented Goldberg in an uncomfortable discussion about ownership percentages with a potential business partner; Goldberg being mocked by his wife when she discovers his idea for the name of his company comes from Esperanto; and most recently, his company going through its first crisis, when an interview with a child is done without making it clear to the boy's mother that it was actually for an advertisement. (In the episode, Goldberg not only comes clean about

their mistake but lets the rightfully angry mother talk about how it made her and her son feel.)

It is a brave move to show yourself warts and all, as Goldberg does. Yet the more he does so, the more we identify with him. Who doesn't know what it is like to have a dream, to find it at risk, to potentially screw it up? We end up rooting for Goldberg and his team the same way we hope others might somewhere root for us.

This Religious Life

It is too soon to say whether podcasts like "Serial" and "StartUp" can bring the medium into the mainstream. In any case, they reveal the great potential of podcasts to tell stories that are deep and meaty, individual and profound.

That potential should make us Catholics take note. Where is the podcast that reports in-depth stories of faith, loss and redemption? What about a podcast about life in a parish, religious community or hospice? With very little money, equipment or initial expertise, much is possible. And great stories are waiting to be told.

JIM McDERMOTT, S.J., a screenwriter, is *America's Los Angeles correspondent*.
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KEEPING IT REAL

MERCY IN THE CITY

How to Feed the Hungry, Give Drink to the Thirsty, Visit the Imprisoned, and Keep Your Day Job

By Kerry Weber
 Loyola Press. 160p \$13.95

THE MANY SIDES OF PEACE

Christian Nonviolence, the Contemplative Life, and Sustainable Living

By Brayton Shanley
 Wipf & Stock Pub. 192p \$22

“I suffer from a shrinking heart,” I confessed to the priest, and I was not referring to a bizarre physiological condition. It was summer, a tough season for me, an inner-city Catholic Worker. The isolating cold of winter had passed, and the chaos of my neighbors’ lives tumbled out onto front stoops and into the street, impossible to ignore.

Two new families had moved into the neighborhood, bringing with them bedlam and drugs. They conversed in expletives and yelled constantly at their sweet, tiny children who fluttered about unattended. A Fourth of July argument over money between two of them devolved into an hours-long tirade. I fell asleep listening to fireworks and two of the women hollering: “You’re a slut.” “No, you’re a slut.”

Life within the Catholic Worker community was equally tumultuous. One of our homeless guests, who professed sobriety from heroin, was secretly abusing pharmaceuticals. One night, she smuggled in her male lover whom we found in her bed and ordered to leave immediately. I felt pity for the man so exposed among strangers.

We had a rash of thefts. Two laptops and several hundred dollars of petty cash stolen in nine months. It

was not the loss of things that irritated me, but the maddening feeling of someone violating our trust.

I am accustomed to the chaos. I live at the Saints Francis and Therese Catholic Worker in a gritty neighborhood of Worcester, Mass. My husband Scott and I along with several others co-founded the small lay community back in 1987. Over the years, we have offered hospitality to hundreds of men and women in need and tried to witness, albeit falteringly, to the peace of the Gospel. It’s a vocation that guarantees you a front-row seat to deception, turmoil and a lot of anguish.

Last summer, I didn’t want such a view. “Come on, people, get a life,” I kept thinking.

I was in this hardened, some might say “martyr’s” mindset when I read *Mercy in the City: How to Feed the Hungry, Give Drink to the Thirsty, Visit the Imprisoned, and Keep Your Day Job*, Kerry Weber’s account of her endeavor to practice the seven corporal works of mercy within a single Lent. Weber loves this purposeful season, untouched by crass commercialism, and seeks to make it more meaningful with her self-imposed challenge. The managing editor of *America* magazine, she already has an overly full schedule as a young writer living in New York City.

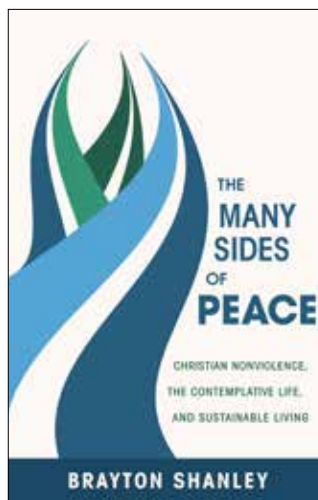
Nonetheless, she rises early to distribute sandwiches on a soup line and pass out cups of water to runners during a 5K race in Central Park. She volunteers at the clothing room of the New York Catholic Worker, travels to attend a class for prisoners at San Quentin, interviews a laconic gravedigger, visits ailing nuns and stays overnight at a shelter for homeless men.

Can a person feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, visit the imprisoned and keep her day job? Weber’s answer seems to be yes, if you are willing to go short on sleep.

I was initially judgmental about this book’s intent. The works of mercy are not a to-do list for the task-obsessed, nor should they be reduced to an extracurricular project. But Weber writes with persuasive warmth and wisdom, gleaning rich insights from her sometimes hilarious attempts to finish the mercy assignment by Easter’s deadline. Her determination inspires. Through persistent commitment to her mission, she discovers conversion is rarely a cinematic event in which we instantly flash from ignorance and sin to understanding and redemption. Rather, it is realized in the moment-to-moment decisions of our lives, in our willingness to plod through our own resistance to make room for God. Her experience

with the works of mercy helped her see “how much of faith is a choice” and the need to respond to its call each day.

“There are so many ways to say yes,” Weber writes. “Mercy is not something



we bestow upon one another from on high in a sort of grand gesture, but rather something much quieter, more humble. It is an invitation, an openness, a kind of accompanying. To have mercy is to give mercy. And to give mercy is to empty oneself out to make room for the love of another."

Saying yes to the Nonviolent God of Love is the concern of my dear friend Brayton Shanley. For more than 30 years, he and his wife Suzanne Belotte have lived in a Catholic lay community attempting to implement the ideas of Gospel-centered nonviolence. Their homestead in Hardwick, Mass., is a flourishing example of how to live in right relationship with all God's creation. *The Many Sides of Peace: Christian Nonviolence, the Contemplative Life, and Sustainable Living* is based on a collection of Brayton's writings of the past 15 years on Christian nonviolence and the health of our environment.

In this time of looming ecological Armageddon, can we leave our ways of violence and war, our fear-driven addiction to acquisition, and live a simple, sustainable life of other-centered faith

in the nonviolent God of love? Brayton's answer is we must. But you may indeed have to quit your day job.

"Virtuous living comes from love that is radical enough to bring about an authentic way of being and a pattern of living that realistically addresses the signs of the times," he writes. Big conversions are proposed in this far-ranging book, which explores nonviolent alternatives to war, our habits of violence and our ecologically destructive life-style.

These are how-to manuals for a life of faith. Mercy and peace are lovely ideas. Who can argue otherwise? Yet far too many of us believe they will mysteriously arrive in some utopian future. Weber and Brayton put them in the here and now. To spend a night with the homeless, after a long day of work, to build a straw bale house with composting toilet, are acts of faith in a merciful and ever-greening God.

Almost a year has passed since I received these books for review, during which our whirling world seemed to spin into a merciless state of affairs. I have traveled to the Middle East to

interview refugees from yet more wars and continue to cook supper for the poor who will always be at the door. Of poverty's many forms, the deepest deprivation may be disbelief that a merciful God really loves us. I am as wanting in this conviction as any person.

Each year we circle toward the season of the Incarnation, when Christ says yes to us despite our warring ways, despite our disbelief. How good then to have these books upon my desk, to be reminded that mercy is accompaniment, my accompanying my yelling neighbor, a man no poorer than I, who apologized so poignantly after his Fourth of July outburst. How good to be reminded that coursing beneath the murderous chaos of the day is Eternal Love waiting for my embrace. "Life is a Thou not an it," writes Brayton. I say yes to that and to the suggestion of the priest, who upon hearing about my shrinking heart last summer, advised going on retreat.

CLAIRE SCHAEFFER-DUFFY, who writes for several Catholic publications, is at the Saints Francis and Therese Catholic Worker in Worcester, Mass.

They Build a Hogan in Coal Canyon, Arizona

You must sit down and taste.
—George Herbert

That morning, Gilmore and Mary Frances
sacrificed a lamb for us.

Gilmore said,
With a cool hand,
I slit the throat,
the lamb did not suffer.

We gathered around the lambskin-draped picnic table.

Direct from the open fire,
we ate everything.
The kidney was the best.
It was tiny—
we shared.

We ate
the ribs,
the shanks,
the liver,
the lungs,
the heart.

With a stick, Frances turned the intestines inside out
and washed them with canyon water.
Greenish liquid dribbled into a bucket.
The bundles of intestines, like braids,
sizzled on the open fire.

STELLA JENG GUILLORY

Stella Jeng Guillory lives in Washougal, Wash. Her poetry has appeared in Bamboo Ridge, the Hawaii Writers' Quartely; Sister Stew: Fiction and Poetry by Women; La'ila'i and VoiceCatcher; the winter issue, 2013.

A SENSE OF SOLIDARITY

HEALTH CARE AS A SOCIAL GOOD Religious Values and American Democracy

By David M. Craig
Georgetown University Press. 280p
\$29.95

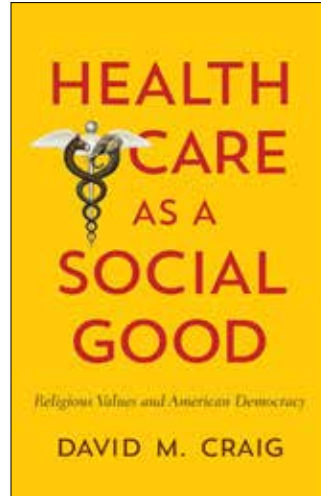
President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (A.C.A.) on March 23, 2010, and it's been dogged by conservative attempts to reverse it ever since. The fundamental belief that motivates most, if not all, conservative opposition is unmistakable: Health care should be a privilege rather than a right. If you can't afford health insurance on your own, that is not the government's problem. While congressional Republicans shout in unison "Repeal Obamacare!" few have the confidence to make the case openly that the inability of some people to afford the cost of their own medical care is their own problem. Not to be outshined, the Supreme Court in early November announced it would hear another challenge to the A.C.A. Depending on how the judges come down, they could end up outlawing

some of the federal tax subsidies that are helping people buy individual insurance policies. It's hard to imagine a more appropriate time for this book to appear.

In David Craig's own words, the crux of his book's argument is a simple slogan: "Health care works only if everyone is in it together." But this is not a simple book. It could not be, because the economic and policy intricacies of U.S. health care and the reform debate are mind-boggling. Yet Craig does a truly remarkable job with his detailed and comprehensible analysis of the competing moral languages of U.S. health care—as a private benefit/choice, as a public benefit, and as a social good. And he breaks new ground in arguing for the place of religious values in health policy, markets, and politics. In short, social discourse regarding health care reform, and religious values talk there-


in, identify the core of this important book.

The title of the book's introduction is telling: "Hearing Health Care Values." Rather than beginning with first principles of health care justice as many authors would do, Craig explores U.S. health care through stories of health policy. And what does he hear? Folks "are engaged in values-driven conversations about how to join their efforts in pursuit of good health care while seeking constructive compromise." These conversations include religiously based languages and values. While conceding that religion and democracy often don't mix well, Craig draws his line in the sand to claim a place for religious values talk



and political activism in social discourse regarding health care reform. This move is never easy, yet Craig's provocative and nuanced approach sets a new standard, while contributing impressively to the current health care reform debate.

Furthermore, this novel methodology of listening to health care stories enables Craig to defend the thesis "that Americans have helped build U.S. health care together through more than a half century of public policy, yet they do not recognize the extent to which they have bought in to one another's care." He identifies this shadow reality as his first step in developing "a moral basis for a progressive vision of health care as a social good." Conservative market reformers generally see health care as a private good (embodying individual responsibility), while liberal rights advocates view it as a public good (embodying social responsibility). What is lacking in both views is a sense of social solidarity. Rather than argue from first principles to defend



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his notion of solidarity, Craig “discover[s] a record of social norms, public values, and a commitment to our shared humanity as Americans” and persuasively argues that this “testifies to a hidden solidarity implicit in U.S. health care.”

What are citizens concerned about the public good to do with this hidden solidarity? We are to summon it forth! For Craig, this will steer “health care reform toward the goal of affordable, quality care for all.” For those who care deeply about the current direction of health care reform, this is our challenge.

As the national debate about “Obamacare” intensifies, Craig defends the A.C.A. by asserting it provides “the policy foundation for a novel effort at social stewardship.” It does so by avoiding “both the public allocations of

a single-payer system and the free play of individual preferences in market reform.” But the A.C.A. needs much help to succeed. What is lacking is a public narrative that provides necessary “moral stuffing” to assist in generating social solidarity. From where might this narrative come? I couldn’t agree more with Craig’s marching orders: “religious languages and community engagement are necessary to engender this...active solidarity for national health care reform that secular liberal and economic arguments have not produced.” I pray that religious leaders—Christian, Jewish and Muslim—heed his challenge and proclaim the good news of social solidarity in order to promote just health care reform.

KEVIN P. QUINN, S.J., is president of The University of Scranton in Scranton, Pa.

KELLY CHERRY

A CAREFUL QUARTET

THE LIAR’S WIFE

Four Novellas

By Mary Gordon

Pantheon Books. 304p \$25.95

Mary Gordon is a writer we need to pay attention to. No, her prose is not stylistically exciting. She favors the mannerly sentence, the back story, characters hyperconscious of their shortcomings. Yet it is exactly these qualities that permit her to examine with care and concern the theological, ethical and moral questions she wants to raise. I remember reading with particular pleasure her 2005 novel, *Pearl*, in which a girl of 20 determined on martyrdom, has chained herself to the flagpole of the American Embassy in Dublin.

Ireland, Catholicism, women and girls are among Gordon’s recurrent themes. In the first novella of *The Liar’s Wife*, the title story, a quiet, fretful

woman named Jocelyn recalls her brief first marriage to an Irishman named John Shawnessey. Indeed, Johnny has just now driven up to her house in a Frito-Lay truck that, she thinks, will scandalize the neighborhood, bringing with him a peroxide blonde with outsized saline breasts and only a tenuous grasp of grammar. Johnny is a born entertainer, singer of stories, teller of tall tales, Irish as a shamrock, and at 75 he knows time is closing in on him. Despite Jossie’s worries about being alone in her house, Johnny proves to be kind, considerate and vulnerable. As the evening goes on, Jossie herself becomes more forgiving, less standoffish. She sees that blond Linnet is capable

of good, if not always correct, behavior, that Johnny’s love of people illustrates for her a freer, more open life. She’s learned that judging people by their houses, vehicles, jobs or grammar is a poor, constraining way to live. This is a sweet, light story but not a great one.

The next novella is a great one. “Simone Weil in New York” is the collection’s masterpiece. The central character is a French woman named Genevieve Levy, living in New York with her infant son, married to a Jewish doctor stationed in the South Pacific. In 1942 she is pushing her son in a pram when she runs into her former philosophy teacher. Simone Weil is in New York because she wanted to get her parents well out of war’s way. Weil has schemed to parachute nurses into occupied France, and she plans to go with them. Alas, she is ill, malnourished, rude, stubborn and inconsiderate of Genevieve and her brother, Laurent, a brilliant psychologist whose body is continually wracked by cerebral palsy, “his spine a flat table, parallel almost to the ground.... [If] he had to talk to people when he was standing or walking, he would have to awkwardly twist his head, look up at them from a sidewise angle.” Laurent is better able than his sister to tolerate the bumptious but frail Simone Weil; Genevieve is obliged to reckon her former teacher’s pronouncements against the exigencies of a world being horribly deformed by Nazi Germany.

Although Genevieve had hoped to study philosophy in depth, her life is now full with caring for Laurent and for her baby, both of them utterly reliant upon her. When Genevieve was 16, Mlle. Weil wrote her a letter in which, referring to the problem of love, she said, “What matters is not to bungle one’s





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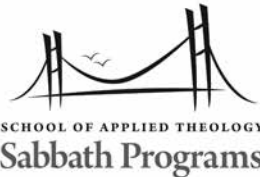
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life." Genevieve recognizes that she is glad to have "bungled" her life with love for her husband, her son, her brother and her friends Joe and Lily. Before the story is over, she, an unbeliever, will be shocked by Weil's self-depriving version of Christianity and even more shocked when Weil asserts her "duty to die." Yet the shocks continue to arrive as she encounters Weil's thoughtless anti-Semitism. Weil's is a philosophy of death.

"Thomas Mann in Gary, Indiana," is also excellent. At first the main character's voice is not convincingly masculine, but it becomes so as Bill Morton, 17 in 1939, good-looking, well-behaved and smitten with the theater, grows older. Later in the story we learn he is now 90, a retired neurologist, remembering his adolescence, remembering the great thing that happened to him: his teachers chose him to introduce to the student body the novelist Thomas Mann, who was traveling in the United States to explain to Americans what was happening in Europe and urging American youth to fight. Bill feels singled out and honored, then overhears a conversation that lets him know he was selected only because he was attractive (perhaps to Mann, too), and articulate. But he was reading as much of Mann as he could. "What I remember being excited about were the ideas about the past....And that there is no such thing as the present...." He is tremendously energized by Mann's speech but has already begun to think of himself as an average kid, chastising himself for his own "meagerness." Would this have happened had he not learned that his teachers considered him mediocre? Would he have gone on being tremendously energized about ideas? This story saddened me, though Bill Morton believes his life has been a good one. This is not a criticism, of course, only an expression of what I felt.

The finale of this quartet of novellas is "Fine Arts," about a young woman

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who goes to Italy to research works by the Renaissance artist Civitali for her dissertation. Gordon writes beautifully of visual art and Theresa, the student, is credible and engaging. Alas, the ending is almost frivolous, a fairytale. But maybe Gordon was intent on balancing the two inner stories against the outer two.

All of the stories are entertaining and—because she invites us to think about things that matter—enlightening. I am glad to have read *The Liar's Wife* and surely others, perhaps especially readers of *America*, will be too.

KELLY CHERRY is author of *A Kind of Dream, stories about five generations of an artistic family*.

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God's Word for Us

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT (B), MARCH 8, 2015

Readings: Ex 20:1–17; Ps 19:8–11; 1 Cor 1:22–25; Jn 2:13–25

“This is my beloved Son. Listen to him” (Mk 9:7)

There is no question about the centrality of the Ten Commandments to Judaism and subsequently to Christianity. The Ten Words, as the Old Testament itself calls them (Ex 34:28; Dt 4:13), or Decalogue, which God spoke to Moses, resonate down through the centuries into our lives. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Nos. 2056–63), however, stresses not just the importance of the commandments but their embeddedness in the lives of the people of Israel.

These words God spoke come in the context of the Exodus story and in the covenant God made with Israel. As a result, the catechism claims that the Commandments “properly so-called come in the second place: they express the implications of belonging to God through the establishment of the covenant. Moral existence is a response to the Lord’s loving initiative” (No. 2062).

Waldemar Janzen, in *Old Testament Ethics*, speaks of the Ten Commandments and the other collections of laws found in the Old Testament as examples of God’s ways, saying, “The positive laws in their smaller or larger collections offer samples pointing to an integrated value system, an ethos, that lies behind them and that generated them” (p. 88). The Ten Words are not the end of moral obligations but the beginning of a life in response to the complete call to love God and to love our neighbor.

It is this deep desire to help us see beyond laws as the rote fulfillment of commands, as check marks to tick off—a temptation all of us face in our religious lives—that drives Jesus in the Gospel story most often referred to as the Cleansing of the Temple.

There were laws governing the Temple’s operations and the sacrificial system, and these laws also were revealed by God, but in the practice of them Jesus perceives something lacking. So “he told those who were selling the doves, ‘Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace!’ His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for your house will consume me.’” It is this zeal for God’s house that motivates Jesus and ought to push us to look beyond the surface events.

For it is not obvious what precisely is wrong with buying and selling animals for sacrifice or with exchanging money for pilgrims who have traveled from far-away countries and need to pay the half shekel temple tax (Ex 30:11–16), but then Jesus “found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.” The Passover celebrates the Exodus, that time when the Ten Words were spoken by God, and looks to the past and the future of salvation,

and Jesus found the response to God’s salvation wanting.

What was lacking? This is a question difficult to answer. Was it simply the buying and selling that seemed incongruent in God’s Temple? Or is Jesus pointing us to the depths of salvation? Janzen says that “the grandeur and centrality of the Decalogue within the canonical story...remains uncontested. This code stands at the head of all subsequent legislation gathered under the name of Moses and, in a sense, comprehends the purpose of that legislation. It is God’s call to Israel to respond to salvation with a new way of life. This new life can be summarized elsewhere as a total commitment to love (Dt 6:4–5)” (p.



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

How is Jesus challenging you to change, cleansing your life, challenging your regular way of business?

ART: TAD A. DUNNE

89). Did Jesus see the total commitment to love lacking?

What if we imagine Jesus cleansing our own lives, challenging our regular way of business, our claims that we are following all the rules and doing what the Commandments say? Would Jesus push us beyond the rules or the way things are done? The rules, his actions say, while essential, are not the end of the story. God calls us to a deeper commitment, to a purification of our lives, which calls on us to make central not commandments but the reality of God who spoke those commandments. Jesus asks us to shape our lives in conformity with love, for “moral existence is a response to the Lord’s loving initiative.”

JOHN W. MARTENS

JOHN W. MARTENS is an associate professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn. Twitter: @BibleJunkies.

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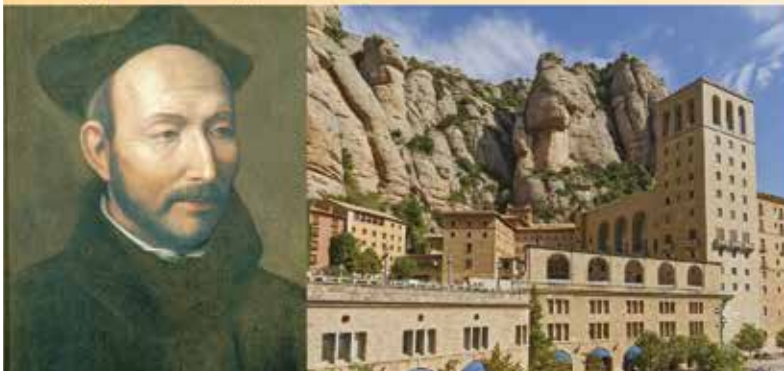


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