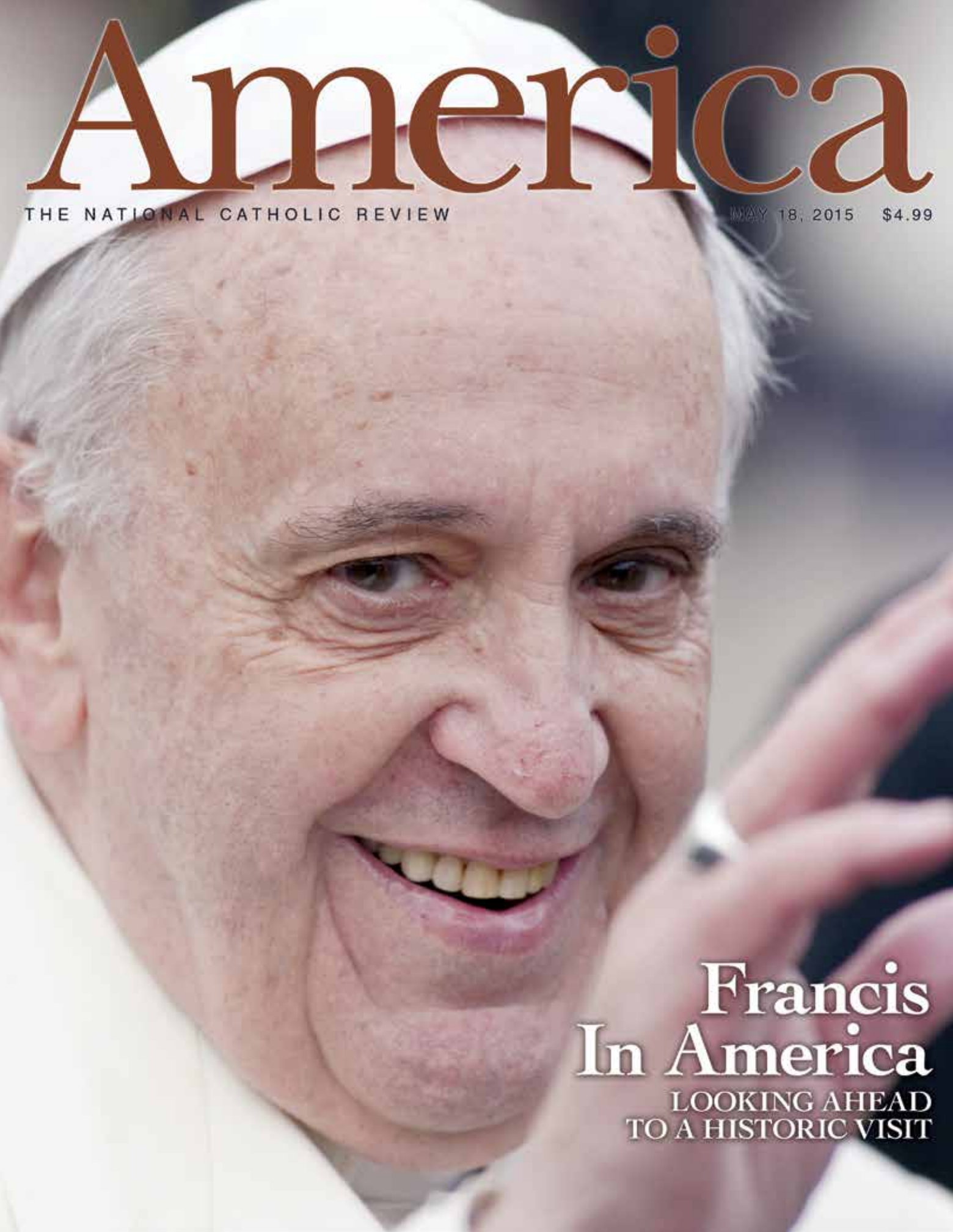


America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REVIEW

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Francis In America

LOOKING AHEAD
TO A HISTORIC VISIT

If someone handed this issue of **America** to Pope Francis and he was able to spare some precious minutes to read it, he would get a good idea of some of the major issues facing the U.S. church. That was the idea, at least, when we dreamed up this papal preview issue a few months ago. I have to say, after looking through it again, that I think we've largely succeeded in painting a portrait of the church Pope Francis will encounter during his pastoral visit to the United States this coming September. It is incomplete, of course; many important issues, events and people didn't make it into these pages. As always, there's plenty of additional coverage at our website, including digital-only content, radio and video.

First in the lineup is an excellent article by Mark Gray and his colleagues at the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University. Dr. Gray and his team crunch the demographic numbers of the "average American Catholic." Like us, you'll probably find a few surprises in the data. We also welcome Professor Jeffrey Sachs back to these pages with his analysis of the curious intersections of the social gospel and the American economy.

Continuing an editorial theme we set with our special issue on women in the life of the church last year, Elizabeth Tenety looks at the rapidly evolving roles of women in management and other positions of leadership in the U.S. church today. Bishop Gerald Kicanas, meanwhile, looks at another of our consistent editorial themes, immigration, and asks us to move beyond statistics to see the person. Rachel Espinoza and Tawny Hoover bear witness to the graces and challenges encountered by

couples who are practicing natural family planning in accord with the church's teaching and their own consciences. Lastly, as we have done historically for papal visits, we have asked a smattering of American Catholics what they would say or do if they had five minutes with the pope during his visit.

This is a big issue, but its size is appropriate. This is a big country with a big church, and the pope's visit in the autumn will be unlike any other papal visit or media event in U.S. history. Already the buzz is big and the expectations are high.

America's art director has even designed a logo for this event, which appears on this page and will accompany future coverage of the papal trip.

As exciting as it is to present this issue to you, we do so with heavy hearts. Mary Ann Walsh, R.S.M., **America's** U.S. church correspondent, a true friend and valued colleague, died on April 28 after a battle with cancer. She had an extraordinary career as a Catholic journalist, including nearly 20 years in media relations for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. She very much enjoyed her new role here at **America**, where she was free to express her own opinion and speak in her own voice again. We enjoyed hearing from her. So did our readers; her columns and other writings were popular both in print and on our website.

As this is the last issue of **America** in which Sister Mary Ann's name will appear in the masthead to your right, we dedicate this issue to her memory. She was very much looking forward to covering the papal trip. Regrettably, she won't be reporting on it for us. But she now undoubtedly will have one of the best seats in the house. R.I.P.

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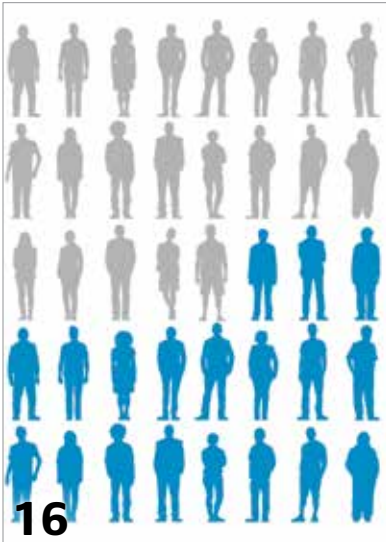
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ON THE WEB

Tributes to **Sister Mary Ann Walsh, R.S.M.**, from her colleagues and friends. Full digital highlights on page 23 and at americamagazine.org/webfeatures.



The Streets of Baltimore

The battle for Baltimore, which subsided with the indictment of six police officers, is the latest in a series of conflicts between citizens and police that occur, as President Obama said, “it seems like, once a week now.” The riots are a symptom of a national economic, racial and moral disease. It calls for soul-searching, the president suggested, when a community’s young men are more likely to “end up in jail or dead” than to complete school.

On April 12, the police officers stopped Freddie Gray, 25, because he was in a high-crime area, made eye contact with the officers and ran. They threw him in the back of a truck and took him to jail. By that time he was unable to walk, his spinal cord snapped. In and out of a coma, Mr. Gray died within a week. The city has failed to explain how he sustained the fatal injury. Anger rose in the black community, and as the riots following Mr. Gray’s funeral spread through the city on April 27, the city’s leaders and the Gray family condemned the violence of the mostly young men who smashed cars, looted stores and set fire to a church-sponsored housing project.

Baltimore, with national help, must revitalize its economy, stamp out police violence and do all it can to keep its young people in school, where they can learn about the long history of human and civil rights. Taking to the streets to protest injustice is a vital part of that history. But as Martin Luther King Jr. said: “Violence as a way of achieving racial justice is both impractical and immoral. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible.”

Crisis in Katmandu

“Let such a calamity never happen to anyone anywhere,” Amrit Maharjan told Catholic News Service on April 29, standing on the rubble of his three-story house in the suburbs of Katmandu, Nepal. As of this writing, 5,000 people have been declared dead from the magnitude 7.8 earthquake, which struck on April 25. Rescue crews are still unable to reach some of the towns surrounding the main city, leaving individuals to fend for themselves as they search for relatives amid the rubble. Some worry that the number of dead could eventually eclipse 10,000.

Caritas Nepal and other relief agencies are aiding in the rescue efforts, especially in the regions beyond the capital. For many the progress has been too slow. Relief agencies were initially delayed in reaching the quake zone by severe congestion and heavy rains. Meanwhile, those who survived are eager to salvage what they can from the destruction and

find new places to live, even if just under a tarpaulin.

Nepal faces a long, slow recovery that will require billions of dollars in international aid. Unfortunately, this will almost certainly divert attention and resources away from preparatory measures that could ameliorate the effects of another earthquake. Nepal’s Parliament is considering a bill that would set up a disaster risk-management commission, but observers worry that it does not focus enough on preparation. Meanwhile, building codes are haphazardly enforced, and builders are reluctant to pay extra for earthquake-resistant materials. Experts say that a similar quake in California would cause 100 times fewer deaths because of preparatory steps already taken. Kunda Dixit, editor of *The Nepali Times*, pointed out these deficiencies many times in the past, but his warnings went unheeded. The world is now, finally, paying attention.

Saving Surgeries

In a report published this month by the British medical journal *The Lancet*, a panel of 25 medical experts concluded that two-thirds of the world’s population lack access to “safe and affordable surgery” and that the deficiencies in care will have dire effects on human health and welfare—including death from such treatable problems as appendicitis, malaria and tuberculosis.

Medical professionals from over 100 countries contributed to the report, “Global Access to Surgical Care: A Modelling Study,” which revealed some alarming statistics. Of all deaths in 2010, for example, one-third (about 17 million) came from conditions that could have been corrected by surgery but were not. The study’s authors noted that because of failure to avert this crisis, the cost to the world economy could reach more than \$12 trillion between now and 2030. The study was conducted with four aspects in mind: timeliness, surgical capacity, safety and affordability. Research found that in the poorest countries, access to medical and surgical care is critically lacking in all these areas. As noted in the study, the disparity is glaring: in the United States there are 35 surgical specialists per 100,000 people; in Bangladesh there are barely two.

Nearly five billion people on this planet do not have the care they need to keep preventable medical problems from becoming fatal ones. The authors of this study believe that “sustainable financing mechanisms” and a “firm commitment to universal health coverage” to the tune of \$420 billion are urgent and necessary. It may seem like a steep cost to pay, but the price in lives lost is even greater.

Fair Trade, Not Free Trade

It has been praised as “the most progressive trade bill in history” by President Obama and denounced by Senator Elizabeth Warren, Democrat of Massachusetts, as a secret “deal” that would “undermine U.S. sovereignty.” One thing is certain: after seven years of negotiations, the classified 12-nation trade agreement known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership is shifting traditional partisan battle lines in Washington.

In late April the Republican-led Senate Finance Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee agreed to give trade promotion authority to the administration, which means that Congress can vote on but not make amendments to a final deal. The fast-track bill must now make it through both chambers, where resurrected fights over free trade threaten to derail a signature goal of Mr. Obama’s second term. Opponents of the T.P.P., including prominent Democrats, say the accord will accelerate the steep decline in manufacturing jobs brought on by the North American Free Trade Agreement two decades ago. Supporters see in Asia’s rising middle class an opportunity to expand American exports. They warn that if the United States does not write the rules for trade with the world’s fastest-growing economies, China will.

From the perspective of Catholic social teaching, the right of free trade is subordinate to human dignity and authentic development: “God intended the earth and everything in it for the use of all human beings...created goods should flow fairly to all” (“Populorum Progressio” [1967], No. 22). Many details of the Pacific trade deal remain undisclosed—a lack of transparency that is already troubling—but the provisions that have been made public should be judged on how they enhance in a sustainable manner the rights of all people to safe employment and a fair wage.

Labor. President Obama has said the T.P.P. will create jobs at home and establish enforceable labor standards—on minimum wages, collective bargaining rights and workplace conditions—that will not only help workers in countries like Vietnam and Malaysia but will also level the playing field for U.S. workers by making foreign labor more expensive. Opponents warn that worker protections on paper will not necessarily be enforced. Further, the Congressional Research Service reports that even with labor laws in place, U.S. manufacturing stands to decline by as much as \$44 billion by 2025. Though gains in the service sector would be even larger, without serious investment in worker training and infrastructure projects that create jobs, low-skilled workers are

unlikely to share in the net economic benefits of the deal.

Intellectual property. The T.P.P. is expected to include strong protections for intellectual property. Most controversially, the United States is reported to be pushing for a 12-year “monopoly period” for drug makers, during which competitors cannot make cheaper generics. Drug companies say this will provide incentives for innovation. Critics hold that life-saving drugs are of little value if patients cannot afford them. The Vatican has criticized the pharmaceutical industry’s profit-driven focus on “health issues that have greater market potential” in wealthy countries, while the world’s poor “bear an inequitable burden of both communicable and non-communicable diseases.”

Environment. A leaked draft of the T.P.P.’s environmental chapter has met with heavy criticism from environmentalists. In a joint letter, the Natural Resources Defense Council, Sierra Club and World Wildlife Fund say provisions do not go far enough to prevent illegal logging, overfishing and trading in illegal wildlife products, and that the regulations that are included are not legally enforceable. The draft shows that the U.S. negotiators have called for stronger enforcement mechanisms but are facing opposition from almost all the T.P.P. countries.

Twenty years after Nafta, most economists agree, liberalized trade has resulted in net economic gains for the United States and reduced poverty in developing countries. But the rewards have been unequally distributed. While U.S. executive salaries have never been higher, thanks to the high-risk, high-reward environment of the globalized economy, postindustrial cities have yet to rebound.

In “The Joy of the Gospel,” Pope Francis wrote, “Each meaningful economic decision made in one part of the world has repercussions everywhere else.” Overcoming what he calls the “globalization of indifference” requires seeing those connections. From the Gambian who risks his life on the Mediterranean to the students trapped in Baltimore’s failing schools, millions of lives are dictated by economic forces beyond their control. In the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the United States must not waste an opportunity to advance a different kind of globalization: of solidarity with workers across nations and shared resolve to confront the threats to human health and the environment that know no boundaries.



REPLY ALL

Religious Freedom Facts

Re “Bridging Our Divisions” (Editorial, 4/27): It is indeed unfortunate, but not unpredictable, that “religious liberty has become a partisan issue.” The legal adage quoted by Justice Ginsburg in her dissent to the Hobby Lobby case, “Your right to swing your arms ends just where the other man’s nose begins,” is particularly apt to the current debate regarding state religious freedom laws. The situation is not helped by politicians and activists on both sides who do not take the time to understand existing laws or the legislative reforms they endorse.

Religious practitioners are protected not only by the First Amendment but also by various state and federal laws. The Indiana Constitution, for example, which was adopted in 1851, provides, “No law shall, in any case whatever, control the free exercise and enjoyment of religious opinions, or interfere with the rights of conscience.” As recently as 2001, the Indiana Supreme Court interpreted this clause as meaning, “the police power of the State is limited and may not materially burden” the freedom of religion. In keeping with this preference for religious freedom, Indiana’s recently adopted antidiscrimination law specifically exempts churches and nonprofit, tax-exempt religiously affiliated organizations, including schools.

ELLEN BOEGEL
Online Comment

Explaining Saigon

Thanks to Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., for his historical reflection, “Return to Saigon” (4/27). Some years ago Henry Kissinger related the following tragic story at the U.S. Army War College, where I was teaching at the time. He was directing the evacuation of the embassy in Saigon from the White House. He stated that there was a bureaucratic slip-up, resulting in not enough helicopters actually being deployed

for what was needed to evacuate the many people who were awaiting rescue. Meanwhile, Capt. Stuart Herrington was a member of the security unit for the evacuation. He had been telling the Vietnamese that the United States would evacuate all of them, but it soon became clear that would not be the case. Years later at the Army War College Herrington and Kissinger met, whereupon Kissinger told Herrington, “I owe you an explanation.”

GABRIEL MARCELLA
Online Comment

Tax Pollution, Not Labor

From the perspective of Catholic social teaching, “The Taxman Cometh,” by Joseph Dunn (4/13), omits much. First, the Center for Tax Justice has documented that taxes in our country are barely progressive overall, while active state-level tax “reform” efforts in recent times are heavily regressive.

Second, our national tax structure encourages the mining and burning of fossil fuels, while taxing labor (and thus hiring). This is against Catholic social teaching to steward the environment. If we end tax incentives for fossil fuel mining and phase in a tax on the burning of fossil fuels, we could significantly reduce business and personal taxes, with special help to the poorest, or else give an equal-dollar amount, Alaska-style rebate to all Americans. Several studies suggest that such a plan would stimulate the economy and dramatically reduce heat-trapping air pollution that most threatens the poorest.

JOEL NIGG
Portland, Ore.

Justice for All

Re “Called to Account. Finally” (Current Comment, 4/6): It is good news, wonderful news, that the murderers and assassins of Central and South America, many trained in the United States at the School of the Americas, renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, are running out of places to hide. There is, however, also a rather glaring omission in this

comment. Killed at the same time as the six Jesuits in El Salvador were their housekeeper/cook, Elba Ramos, and her daughter, Celina Ramos. I write in hope that when the murderers are apprehended and stand trial they will be charged and held accountable for all eight deaths.

(DEACON) DOUG MYLER
Blue Springs, Mo.

Finding Forgiveness

Re “Lord, Have Mercy,” by Jeanne Bishop (4/6): I teach a bible study and am part of a group of Catholics that brings the Eucharist to a maximum-security prison, where about 70 percent of the men have committed murder. Every man who has spoken to me about his crime has said, “You wouldn’t recognize me if you met me when I first entered the prison system.” All of the men I talk with are remorseful and most can’t forgive themselves because they don’t know if their victims or their victims’ family could ever forgive them. I tell them they are created in the image and likeness of God and when I look into their eyes I see Christ looking back at me. Ms. Bishop’s letter to David Biro was beyond kind, bringing him out of the darkness into the light of Christ.

MARILYN MAURIELLO
Online Comment

Business Sense

Re “A Space for Women” (Editorial, 3/30): If I were running a business or a political campaign or a secular non-profit organization, I would, of course, want to hire and retain men and women who could advance the mission of the organization and assure its continuity and growth. Now assume that as I interview female candidates, I point out to them that they are absolutely welcome here, but certain positions in leadership are not open to them. Other positions might become open to them, and our company has a committee studying that, which will get back to me at some indefinite future date.

I can only imagine that the woman

to whom I spoke would first wonder what planet I was from, then slam the door while leaving the building and probably call an attorney. Most definitely she would take her talents elsewhere. It's 2015. Women are prime ministers of great democracies. They are C.E.O.'s of such major corporations like General Motors, Yahoo!, IBM and Pepsico. Women are among the top physicians and lawyers, and presidents of major universities. We're running out of excuses.

JOSEPH J. DUNN
Online Comment

Healthy Grace

Re "Transformed From Within," by Rev. Ryan Rooney (3/30): I want to thank Father Rooney for his honesty and service to the church. Though I have never had a weight problem, I did not walk until I was 3 years old and there was a fear that it could be spina bifida. Time revealed that it was simply slow development. At the suggestion of a local doctor, my mom enrolled me in ballet classes, and that started a lifetime of exercise. It has bothered me most of my life that people comment about my "fitness" as though it were genetically related, i.e., "easy" for me. As the author writes, it is a daily effort (enjoyable in the end).

My parents also instilled in me an appreciation for the gift of food. I think of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's concept of cheap grace versus costly grace. Our relationship with food is costly grace. I do not grow my own food. Someone else's labor gets me my food, and I must appreciate that. I must go shopping for my food; I must cook my food; I must clean up after my cooking. All this takes time. Most of all, I must savor every bite while eating it. With more natural foods available now, it is easier for me to appreciate what I eat as God's gift. Good eating and physical exercise make life in God better and better over the decades!

MARGI SIROVATKA
Online Comment

Closing Shop

Re "The Rights of Unions" (Current Comment, 3/23): The statement that "From the standpoint of Catholic social teaching, [right to work] laws are problematic: they privilege the rights of the individual over the good of the group" is simply not true. In 1895 Pope Leo XIII wrote, "whilst it is proper and desirable to assert and secure the rights of the many, yet this is not to be done by a violation of duty...not to touch what belongs to another; to allow every one to be free in the management of his own affairs; not to hinder any one to dispose of his services when he please and where he please" ("Longinqua," No. 17). These are precisely the principles that right to work laws uphold.

That right to work laws are aimed

at destroying labor unions may or may not be true. The main purpose of such laws is to eliminate the closed shop (coercive unionism), to assure that a person is not compelled to pay tribute to a union for the privilege of employment. The argument that non-members should pay into the union because they receive the same benefits that the union has secured is specious at best and a downright lie at worst. The union is capable of including in the contract with the employer a clause that restricts the union benefits to union members in good standing.

I agree that unions are imperfect institutions. However, Catholics should assist rather than resist political attempts to make the current union system obsolete.

DANIEL F. HEALY
Seattle, Wa.

f STATUS UPDATE

In "Confirmation Bias" (4/27) Michael A. Marchal makes a case for moving confirmation back to age 7, before first Eucharist, and creating "an alternative, nonsacramental rite for personal reaffirmation of baptismal vows later in life." Readers weigh in.

Celebrating the sacrament of confirmation with adolescents, when they are smack-dab in the middle of "searching faith," has never made sense to me. It's a sacrament of initiation, not a sacrament of maturity. Pope Pius X erred when he moved first Eucharist to age 7 and left confirmation sitting out there alone.

KEVIN CARROLL

We have created the sacrament of confirmation in our own image as some graduation rite into "adult faith" instead of the sealing of our baptismal

promises. Perhaps we should do as the Orthodox do and receive chrismation (all three initiation sacraments) just after birth and then concentrate on doing lifelong catechesis from that point forward.

MAGGIE SCHECK GEENE

A 7-year-old barely understands Communion, let alone confirmation. It seems confirmation is and has been a choice. That said, high school students are sometimes not ready for confirmation. Lumping the sacraments together at second or third grade takes all choice away from the individual and puts it in the hands of the parents. The church needs to study developmental stages and then decide how to offer confirmation with the sensibilities of the post-modern era in full view. Let's meet the people where they are.

ANNE HANSEN

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.

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
announces
the presentation of the
Signum Fidei Award



Pope Francis

In recognition of his extraordinary service to the vulnerable and marginalized members of society and for the promotion of human solidarity.

The *Signum Fidei Award* commemorates "Servant of God" Brother James Miller, FSC, an alumnus of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota who was shot and killed in 1982 for his defense of the indigenous youngsters he served in Guatemala. He is fondly remembered for his heroic contribution to humanity as a Christian educator, apostle to the poor and underprivileged, and advocate for justice and solidarity.

The award's name, *Signum Fidei* or *sign of faith*, is taken from the great seal of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools; and it is to this international educational network that Saint Mary's University of Minnesota belongs.

With Saint Mary's *Signum Fidei Award*, the university recognizes an individual, group, or organization for extraordinary service to the vulnerable and marginalized members of society.

It also recognizes and honors work that promotes human solidarity.

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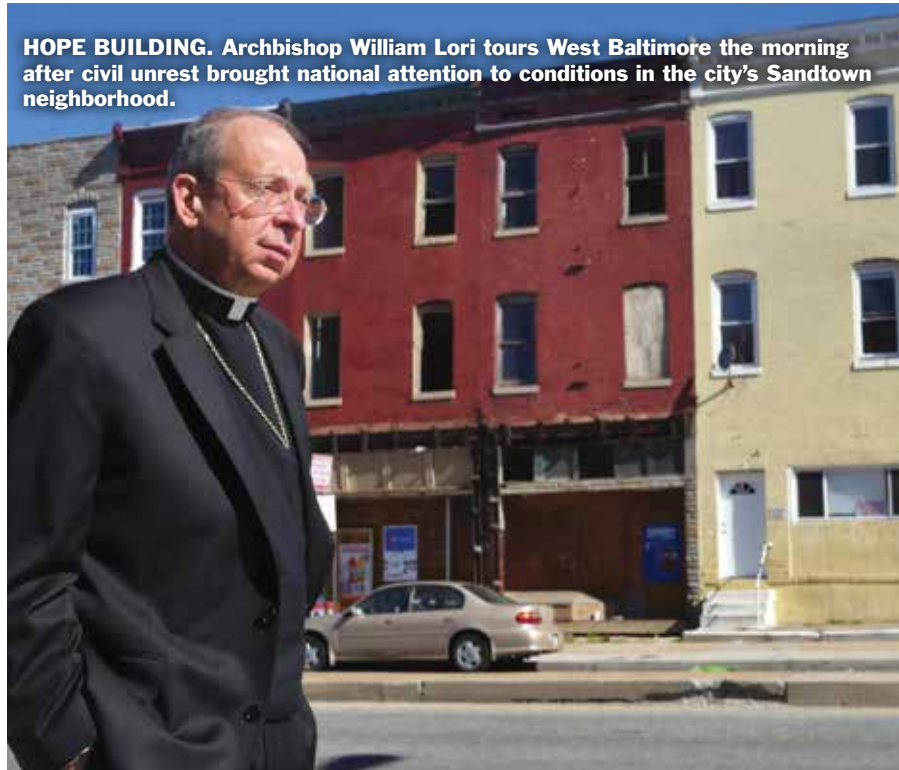
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URBAN LIFE

Archbishop Lori Seeks to Return Hope to ‘Two Baltimores’



HOPE BUILDING. Archbishop William Lori tours West Baltimore the morning after civil unrest brought national attention to conditions in the city's Sandtown neighborhood.

Three days after Archbishop William Lori's city of Baltimore was rocked by civil unrest that began as a young man who died while in police custody was laid to rest, the archbishop was pondering how the local church could respond to the crisis in the city's streets.

"We're not the police force; we're not the government," Archbishop Lori said in an interview with *America* on May 1, "we are a community of faith." And our faith tells us, he said, "that we should be a force for peace, for justice, for reconciliation and bridge-building." But hope was another commodity, he suggested, that the church could offer, because "hope is in really short supply in these neighborhoods."

Like many U.S. cities, there are in a way two Baltimores, Archbishop Lori said, one where buildings are being rehabbed and businesses opened and another "where chronically bad conditions have existed for generations," where 52 percent of adults are unemployed and 25 percent rely on food stamps, where many struggle with poor transportation to reach low-wage jobs far from their neighborhoods, where a feeling of isolation and disenfranchisement pervades. "The systemic problems roll along," said Archbishop Lori, "and then when an event like the death of Freddie Gray comes up, these things come to the surface."

Many people may view angry protesters or the handful of residents who participated in looting and rioting on April 27, "and the first and only thing they can say is

words of condemnation," Archbishop Lori said. "But I think if one lived in those conditions and neighborhoods and saw no way out, the anger, the boiling over becomes not justifiable, but understandable."

Archbishop Lori had spent the last few days meeting with local Catholic and ecumenical leaders and visiting the center of the rioting that broke out on April 27 after the funeral of Freddie Gray. Gray, 25, died while in police custody after suffering a spinal-cord injury. His death became the latest in a national string of deaths of young, unarmed African-American men, and in one case a 12-year-old child, at the hands of urban police.

While Archbishop Lori believes the church can act as a bridge-builder between communities estranged from the police forces that are meant to serve and protect them, he believes first that the criminality of such acts must be addressed. "Certainly we have to recognize those [police officers] who do their job well every day and put their lives on the line," he said, "but then we have to recognize, and it's true in almost any profession, including my own, people who not only err, but they err intentionally and who treat people in a way that is brutal and unjustified with excessive force and who sometimes target people because of the color of their skin."

The state's attorney for Baltimore City, Marilyn Mosby, announced on May 1 that Gray's death had been ruled a homicide and that six Baltimore police officers would face criminal charges, ranging in seriousness from misconduct in office and false imprisonment to manslaughter and second degree homicide.

Worried that attention to Baltimore's structural problems will fade when the media lights move

on to the next “news story du jour,” Archbishop Lori argues it is time for a conversation, one he described as “overdue,” about U.S. communities that are being left behind. “Bishops have to equip themselves to participate in that conversation,” he said.

He believes the term “structural sin” applies to the civic crisis at the heart of the continuing controversy over police

brutality. “I do think we should also have a national conversation that brings stakeholders to the table and that results in looking at what needs to be done to address [these] systemic problems.” Archbishop Lori plans to start by reaching out to the city’s ecumenical leaders to begin strategizing about how to bring hope back home to Baltimore.

KEVIN CLARKE

U.S. CHURCH

Remembering Sister Mary Ann

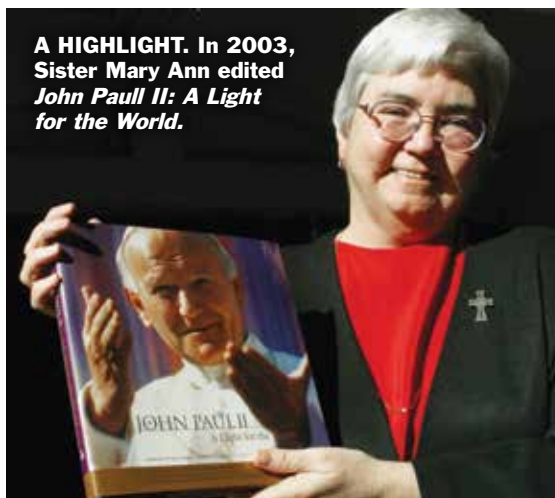
Sister Mary Ann Walsh, a journalist and a longtime spokeswoman for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, died on April 28, succumbing to a recurring cancer. True to form, she transformed her last days into an opportunity for a final lesson in living with dignity and grace.

She described her experience as “like a living wake.... You get letters from people telling you all that you did and you had no idea. ‘You helped us with our marriage’; ‘You helped us with our adoption’; ‘My husband was sick with depression and you were there for us.’ And I wonder, ‘When did I do all that?’ It’s humbling.”

She was 68 and passed away in a hospice in Albany next to the regional convent of the religious order she entered as a 17-year-old novice in 1964. In March, the Catholic Press Association had given her its highest honor, the St. Francis de Sales Award, in recognition of her lifetime achievement in Catholic media.

“The editors, staff and supporters of **America** mourn the passing of Sister Mary Ann Walsh, **America**’s U.S. Church Correspondent,” said **America**’s editor in chief, Matt

Malone, S.J. “Sister Walsh was a valued colleague and friend, a writer of exceptional talent and insight, whose



faith animated her entire life.”

He called Sister Walsh “the first female religious to serve on the editorial staff of **America**,” a trailblazer “even in this last phase of her professional life, a career that spanned four impressive decades.”

“I admired her steadiness of character and inventiveness in exercising her often difficult responsibilities,” said Drew Christiansen, S.J., a Georgetown University professor and former editor in chief of **America**. “But nothing became her in life as her passage from it,

with so many of her sisters gathered around her week after week and tending to her. She and they gave us all a model of a Christian death.”

Walsh had moved to her native Albany from Washington last September after it was discovered that the cancer that had been in remission since 2010 had returned. She was able to receive better care there and live out her days with other members of the Sisters of Mercy.

“Sister Mary Ann,” as she was known to the many journalists she sparred and joked with and, with regularity, befriended, worked at the communications office of the American hierarchy for 20 years, retiring in the summer of 2014 just before she fell ill again. She became director of media relations for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops—the first woman to hold that position—after coordinating media for World Youth Day in Denver in 1993, which featured an enormously successful visit by then-Pope John Paul II.

She was born in Albany on Feb. 25, 1947, the only daughter of Irish immigrants, and as a high school student had been drawn to the Sisters of Mercy and their commitment of service to the poor, especially women and children. She worked as a correspondent for Catholic News Service in Rome and Washington before taking the U.S.C.C.B. job.

Last summer, Sister Mary Ann joined **America**. “It’s the ideal job, a job of opinion, after working in an institution that thought opinion was anathema,” she said in an interview in February.

In an account of her illness written by her community, Sister Walsh said she struggled to let herself be taken care of. “I find it hard to receive mercy,” she explained in a video posted by

the Mercy sisters. “I’m used to being independent, and if somebody helps me put on my shoes, for example, that’s humbling. I don’t expect it.”

But “Mercy has jumped in from every corner to help me, in ways both large and small,” she said. “I want for nothing.”

Nepal Response

Caritas aid missions are reporting that villages in remote areas of Nepal have been utterly devastated by the earthquake. Speaking from Pokhari Danda in Gorkha, about seven miles from the epicenter, Stefen Teplan of Caritas Germany said: “Sixty percent of the village is destroyed. More than food and water, what is needed most is temporary shelter before the monsoon sets in.” The death toll from the 7.8 magnitude earthquake increased to over 7,000, with thousands still reported missing. Over 130,000 houses have been destroyed and 85,000 houses partially damaged. Caritas has reached 4,000 families in the Katmandu Valley with plastic sheets, blankets and food. Teams have also reached some of the worst affected rural areas. The priority is shelter. “The people who have lost their homes are exposed to the rain and cold weather at night. They really need international solidarity,” said Angan Baj, the emergency response manager for Caritas India.

Defending Serra

Defining Blessed Junípero Serra as a “working-class missionary,” Archbishop José H. Gómez of Los Angeles said the 18th-century Franciscan deserves to be made a saint and to have his record as a defender of native peoples made known. Pope Francis’ announcement that he will canonize Blessed Serra in September “has opened old wounds and revived bitter memories about the

NEWS BRIEFS

Catholic workers in the **contested region of Abyei**, who complained in April that the world has lost interest in the unresolved border feud between Sudan and South Sudan, are launching new efforts to make peace between the two ethnic groups that claim the isolated region. • For a Vatican charity concert on May 14 to raise money for the papal almoner’s office, Rome’s immigrants, poor, elderly and marginalized will be getting **front-row V.I.P. treatment**, while benefactors will be seated in the back. • Exactly one year after a botched execution in Oklahoma, on April 29 the Supreme Court reviewed the effectiveness of a specific drug used in the state’s **lethal injections** to determine whether its use constitutes cruel and unusual punishment. • Two priests who may have already received papal approval were elected as bishop-candidates for two **Catholic dioceses in Henan, China**, in late April, signaling a possible opening of a more positive phase in Sino-Vatican relations. • Pope Francis has set up a five-person committee, announced on April 30, which will make recommendations for **streamlining and modernizing** the Vatican’s many communications structures.



Forgotten Abyei

treatment of Native Americans during the colonial and missionary period of America’s history,” the archbishop said. Speaking on May 2 at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Archbishop Gómez said the legacy of Blessed Serra, who founded nine California missions, has been “distorted” by “anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic propaganda.” He added, “It is clear that Pope Francis—the first pope from the New World—understands the Christian roots of the Americas and the continent’s importance for the church’s mission in the 21st century.”

Vatican Wants Action On Climate Change

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon is banking on Pope Francis to be a unifying moral force to get the world

onboard in the fight against global warming. He spoke at the Vatican on April 28 at an international gathering about the moral dimensions of climate change and sustainable development. “The reason I’m coming to the pope,” Ban told reporters, is that “I need the moral support and spiritual support of religious leaders.” In a statement released at the conclusion of the summit, “Climate Change and the Common Good,” participants warned of the catastrophic potential of climate change. They concluded, “Prudence and justice demand that we take note of these risks and act upon them in time, for the sake of all humanity, but especially for the weak, the vulnerable, and the future generations whose well-being depends on our generation’s actions.”

From CNS, RNS and other sources.

DISPATCH | MIAMI

Progress in Panama

In his message to the Summit of the Americas in April, Pope Francis called Panama, the host country, a “point of encounter between the North and the South.”

And to the surprise of cynical journalists like me attending the event, the pontiff’s hope that Panama would be a political as well as geographic bridge was actually affirmed. The seventh Summit of the Americas, unlike its six predecessors, proved that North American-Latin American cooperation may not be as illusory as we were beginning to think it was.

Since its launch in 1994, this regular gathering of Western Hemisphere heads of state had become best known for two very dismal features: the Latin American left hijacking the event to bash the United States, and the United States looking as if it wished it were anywhere but at the Summit of the Americas.

As a result, whatever worthy development theme each summit advertised—health care, education, infrastructure—evaporated in the pressure cooker of U.S. insensitivity and Latin American hypersensitivity. Inter-American dialogue inevitably yielded to disputes about *yanqui* hegemony, the drug war and especially Communist Cuba.

But this time in Panama, the only commotion the Latin left could whip up took place outside the convention center, when a security guard for Evo Morales, the left-wing president of Bolivia, attacked a television news cam-

eraman with a Taser. The Bolivian’s anti-U.S. address later that afternoon got little of the rapt media attention he is used to at these assemblies.

By the same token, the U.S. delegation seemed genuinely, unusually engaged at this summit. A jovial President Obama looked for once like a man with a hemispheric purpose, putting forth projects like the \$1 billion initiative

The Summit of the Americas proved that cooperation may not be illusory.

by the United States to stem nightmarish poverty and criminal violence in Central America. Most important, however, was the deft way Obama himself hijacked the summit—turning it into a showcase for the thaw between the United States and Cuba, who have begun normalizing relations that were severed in 1961.

Cuba’s President Raúl Castro, basking in his country’s first invitation to the summit, was just as eager to spotlight his rapprochement with Washington. So eager, in fact, that he seemed to leave comrades like Morales in the lurch as he heaped praise on Obama in his own speech.

As if to bear out the hopes of Pope Francis—who played a large role in brokering the U.S.-Cuba reconciliation—Obama and Castro made the Panama summit a point of encounter instead of a point of attack. They even held a historic face-to-face meeting, the first between U.S. and Cuban heads of

state since 1956.

Their performance could have repercussions well beyond the Florida Straits. It might do nothing less than change, or at least challenge, the historically tortured dynamic between the U.S. superpower and the developing nations with whom it shares the New World.

That means a hemisphere where things can get done—where those working themes the summits trumpet see realization instead of rhetoric—because it has finally left the Cold War behind for a post-ideological approach to inter-American action.

And action is sorely needed. The only drawback to all that applause for U.S.-Cuba détente was that it drowned out the Panama summit’s subject: “Prosperity With Equity.”

As the first Latin American pope noted in a letter read at the summit, Latin America’s wealth inequality remains among the world’s worst. “There cannot continue to be unjust inequalities that offend human dignity,” said Pope Francis.

To their credit, many Latin American countries have closed epic wealth gaps, adding millions of citizens to the middle class. But the chasm is still too wide. And while it is good to see the region create more of its own problem-solving organizations, there are too many issues that cannot be tackled semi-hemispherically. Immigration, drug-trafficking, human rights—not to mention Latin America’s addiction to low-wage, low-tech commodities-export economies—these have to be resolved by North America and Latin America together.

The next Summit of the Americas is slated for Lima, Peru, in 2018. But I’m lobbying to keep it in Panama. Once you’ve found a point of encounter, you should stick with it.

TIM PADGETT

TIM PADGETT, *Latin America editor for NPR affiliate WLRN, is America’s Miami correspondent.*

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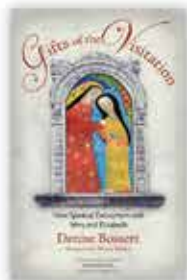


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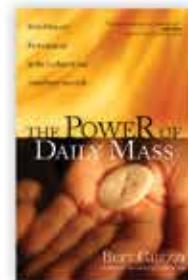
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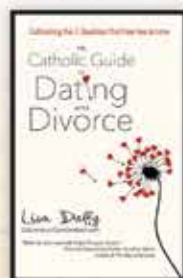
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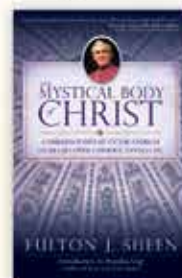
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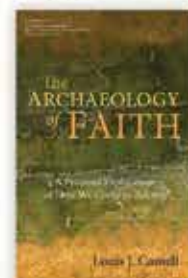
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Forming Catholic Voters

The race is on. Hillary Clinton is searching for “everyday Americans” to persuade us she is one of us. Marco Rubio campaigns as the voice of a new generation. Jeb Bush may be a general election candidate without a primary election constituency. Scott Walker uses his victories over unions to say he can confront other adversaries. Martin O’Malley warns against dynasties and looks for an opening. Other candidates seek an opportunity to break through. Washington insiders hope for Bush versus Clinton, a back to the future strategy.

One thing can be counted on. A majority of Catholic voters will support the winner, as they have done in 10 of the last 11 presidential elections. E. J. Dionne points out “there is no Catholic vote and it is really important.” The greatest differences involve Catholics who go to church weekly (57 percent supported Romney) and those who do not (56 percent supported Obama) and Hispanics (69 percent are or lean Democratic) and other Catholics (53 percent are Republican or lean that way).

Given the impact and diversity of Catholic voters, a key moment will be Pope Francis’ address to Congress. I have already offered in **America** my thoughts on his message and impact.

Another factor is the U.S. bishops’ updating of *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*. This statement, issued every four years in the

year preceding a presidential election, calls on Catholics to be informed and principled voters. It is widely used as a moral framework for political choices and sometimes misused to advance partisan agendas. As someone who has helped bishops develop these statements in the past, here are some challenges for this year’s edition.

First, the statement needs to reflect Pope Francis’ principles and priorities. Francis does not bring new doctrine but new urgency and authenticity. He warns against obsessing on sexual morality in public life, without retreating from the obligation to protect unborn children, vulnerable elderly people and family life. His powerful metaphor of a “throw-away culture” offers new context to call Americans to defend the lives and dignity of all and to care for God’s creation.

Second, bishops challenge Catholics to reject the intrinsic evils of abortion, euthanasia, torture and racism. These negative obligations continue with a million abortions a year, advocacy of assisted suicide, debates on torture and divisions on racial injustice. *Faithful Citizenship* insists there are also affirmative obligations to care for the poor, to promote family life, to pursue peace and justice. In our polarized environment, some insist the first are matters of “principle” and the second are issues of “prudential judgment.” This oversimplified formulation ignores that resisting evil requires prudential judgment. In addition, the misuse of the term “prudential judgment” can ignore moral principles and excuse inaction on immigration and poverty

to respond to more powerful interests.

Third, bishops should challenge rhetorical obsession with the “forgotten middle class” or “everyday Americans” without a moral priority for those at the bottom. Catholics should join Pope Francis in looking at economics and politics from the bottom up and the outside in, needed counterpoints to the Washington status quo. For Christians, poll-tested rhetoric should yield to the soul-testing measure of care for “the least of these.”

We should avoid the temptation to adapt our faith to advance our politics.

Fourth, the killing and persecution of Christians and others because of their faith demand much greater priority. An emphasis on protecting religious ministries from unjustified governmental mandates in the courts

should not overshadow the urgency of action to protect the lives of believers around the world.

Polling and pastoral experience demonstrate that bishops should not be apologists for any administration, chaplains for any party, cheerleaders for any candidate. They should help us avoid the temptation to adapt our faith to advance our politics.

The papal address to Congress and an updated *Faithful Citizenship* statement can provide a moral framework and a powerful example for how to carry out Francis’ description of the political vocation of Catholics: “Catholics tasked with political life must keep the values of their religion before them, but with a mature conscience and competence to realize them.”

JOHN CARR

JOHN CARR is *America*’s Washington correspondent and the director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University. He previously served as director of the justice and peace department of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

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BY MARK M. GRAY

What does the typical American Catholic look like? Surveys conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate tell us she is a 48-year-old, non-Hispanic white, married woman with a Catholic spouse. She is of the post-Vatican II generation (born between 1961 and 1981). Born in 1968, she is probably named Mary, since the fourth most popular girl's name for that year was Mary, and that name is not a bad choice, given the Catholic cultural odds, over Lisa, Kimberly or Michelle for our Catholic demographic stand-in.

CARA has been studying the Catholic Church for more than 50 years. In the last five, we have completed multiple national surveys of self-identified Catholic adults and of pastors. From these we can statistically discern what the "typical" or "average" Catholic experiences in the United States in this second decade of the 21st century.

'Mary' by the Numbers

"Mary" has attended college, owns a home and lives in a western state. The annual household income for her family is more than \$65,000. She has a teenage son or daughter still living at home, and she works full time.

She has another adult child who no longer lives at home. Neither of these children is named Mary (this name fell out of the top 50 in 2002 and has been outside the top 100 since 2009). As a child, Mary did not go to Catholic schools as her parents did, and she did not enroll her children either. While she attended parish-based religious education, her children did not.

Currently, she attends Mass at least once a month and always on Ash Wednesday, Easter and Christmas. She keeps up with her parish community by reading the parish bulletin. Her household gives about \$10 at the offertory collection. Mary does not use much Catholic media other than the bulletin and is not very active in their parish outside of attending Mass. She will probably never see this article. Her faith is important to her, but there are other things in her life

MARK M. GRAY is a senior research associate at the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University and the director of CARA Catholic Polls.

that are equally important.

Surveys of pastors tell us Mary likely attends a parish established in the early 1920s that currently has room in the pews for about 450 people. Her parish has about 3,000 parishioners, of whom about 2,500 are registered (including Mary). She attends Mass on a typical Sunday with about 1,000 of them. They have four Masses to choose from—one in Spanish.

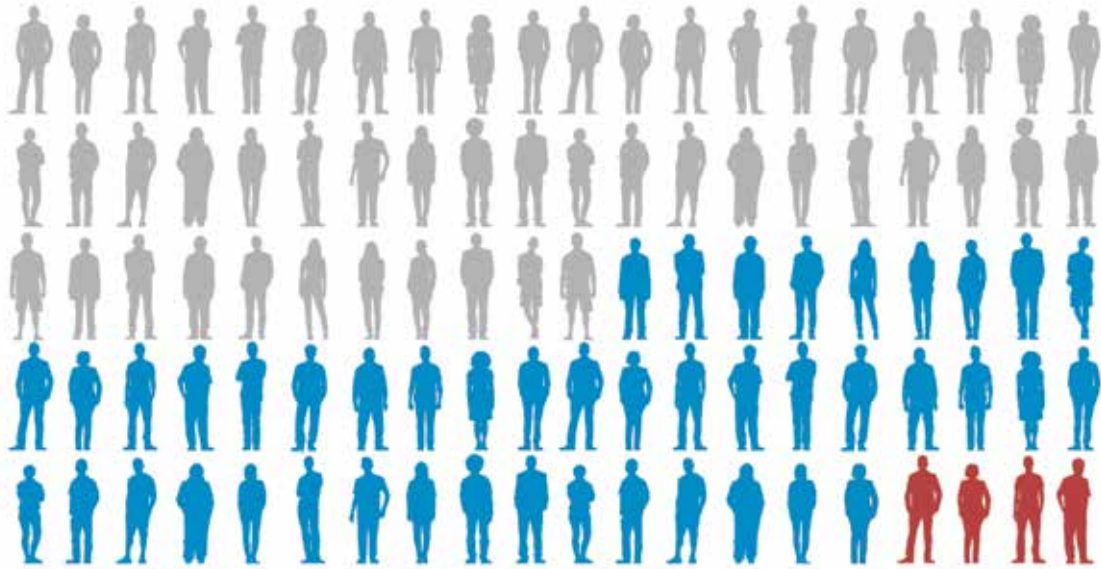
The parish used to have an elementary school, but this closed five years ago. Any interested students are now sent to a regional Catholic school shared and supported in collaboration with other nearby parishes. Her parish has a resident diocesan priest as pastor and a deacon. Most of the parish leadership is older than Mary—in their 50s, 60s and 70s. About 10 people are on the parish staff, and five of these individuals are in ministry positions.

Mary has heard that her diocese may go through a reorganization in the next decade. The bishop is doing his best to balance a difficult staffing equation. Soon the diocese's parishes will outnumber the total number of active diocesan priests, which will require some parishes to share pastors and staff or to merge.

Of course this singular "average" portrait obscures an enormous amount of diversity within Catholicism in the United States. Mary could just as easily be "Maria," her Hispanic counterpart among the 38 million "mainstream" Catholics who attend Mass at least once a month. Maria is slightly younger than Mary and has more children. She is less likely to be working and is living in a household that on average earns less than Mary's.

Maria is also likely to attend Spanish-language Masses. She is also more likely than Mary to attend Mass weekly. Mary and Maria could be fellow parishioners, as Catholicism has become the most racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse religion in the nation. In some parishes materials need to be translated into five or six languages.

Families like Mary's and Maria's represent about 45 percent of Catholics. Another 4 percent of Catholics are "the core" of the Catholic community. These are the individuals who do not just attend Mass weekly; they are part of the small community that makes Masses and other activities



45% of Catholics go to church once a month and on major holidays.

4% are “core” Catholics, who attend Masses weekly and make other church activities happen.

happen in parishes. They are avid Catholic media consumers and are involved in a variety of devotional practices. They say the rosary and attend to every detail of Lent and Advent. If you are reading this article, you are probably one of them. They are knowledgeable and active in their faith in almost every way. In many ways, they come closest to living the faith life that the church envisions for Catholics.

Going to the Periphery

That still leaves the majority of self-identified Catholics out there on the periphery, some 51 percent, with much more distant stories. Among this majority there are distinct subgroups as well. Some attend Mass at Christmas and Easter only. Some have not attended Mass in years, but nonetheless consider themselves as Catholic as anyone else who has been baptized Catholic.

Even further out in the orbit—away from the core Catholics and the mainstream Catholic life of Mary’s and Maria’s families—are the former Catholics. About two-thirds of those raised Catholic in the United States continue to self-identify into adulthood; a third do not. Most leave in their teens and early 20s. Yet even among these former Catholics, something remains.

Pew Research Center surveys of former Catholics indicate that about half of those who leave become Protestants. Only 12 percent of the people in the other half are atheists

and 16 percent agnostics. Most, 71 percent, no longer have any religious affiliation. The only faith they still likely know is Catholicism.

Among this group, 35 percent say religion is still “some-what” or “very” important in their lives, and 71 percent believe in God. They continue to talk to God; 42 percent say they pray a few times a month or more often. Three-quarters pray with some frequency. In other words, there is still a weak gravity that keeps them within reach of the Catholic Church. The most common reasons cited for leaving the church are that they just gradually drifted away (71 percent), followed by weakened beliefs in their religion’s teachings (59 percent). Some do come back as “reverts.” About one in 10 Catholics today say there was a point in their life when they left for a time.

Among those on the outer rings of the periphery who still self-identify as Catholic but who have not attended Mass in years, there is still much about their faith that is alive—just outside the walls of any parish. When praying, they more often speak of a conversation with God, rather than of reciting or discerning something. While they are unlikely to have a home altar, they may have a crucifix hanging above a door or around their neck. They see a donation to storm victims as an important practice of their faith. Grace before family meals at Christmas and Easter is something meaningful to them, not just a tradition.

During Lent, they may seek out a fish dinner on Fridays. They follow the pope in the news. They envision a closer relationship with their parish as they age. They chalk up some of the reason for their lack of participation in parish life to their busy schedule, career and family obligations. There will be time for church (and confession) later. They also hope for an afterlife. They have their doubts, but their faith comforts them and they see a place in heaven for themselves. They do not think God will send them to hell for not going to Mass when they are Catholic in so many other ways.

The fact remains that the sacramental practice of the Catholic faith is still rooted in the parish—try asking a priest to marry you at the beach. But 21st-century Catholics are a mobile bunch, none more than the millennials (born in 1982 or later), who often foresee a life of many careers and many cities before ever settling down.

Why register with a parish if you do not expect to be a member of the community for long? People move, parishes do not. The Catholic Church built an abundance of parishes in the Northeast and Midwest for immigrant communities of the 19th and 20th centuries. In some areas empty walls are all that remain.

Diverse and Diverging

At CARA we speak of a “Tale of Two Churches.” If you are in the Northeast or Midwest, you probably feel the church is in decline, with parishes closing and fewer people in the pews each year. If you reside in the South or West, there always seem to be new parishioners around you. There are differences as well among rural, suburban and urban parishes. It is in the suburbs of the South and West where Catholicism likely seems most alive or even growing too fast, where finding parking spaces is becoming an issue. In rural parishes, Catholics probably do not expect to find a priest in the parish outside of Mass. In urban areas there are far too many spaces in the pews to choose from.

In the South and West, there are hundreds of vacant lots that could be the new parishes of the 21st century. Yet it is questionable if they will ever be built. The church is a feudal institution. Bishops are responsible for their diocese, and pastors for their parish. Not many bishops have spare priests to share with dioceses in need that are looking to build new parishes. What remains is a mismatch between the Catholic population and its real-world institutions.

Regardless of where one lives, every Catholic finds some-

thing, at least one thing, that they love about their faith, or they will probably leave it. For some it is a social justice issue; for others it is about protecting life; for others it is providing service and ministry. They all also to some degree find things they disagree with the church about. Just look at life issues, and it soon becomes evident that less than 10 percent of Catholics would fill out a “ballot” in agreement with Catholic teaching and give answers entirely consistent with the church. There are few truly “good Catholics”

by absolute doctrinal standards. By a more pastoral standard, there is an abundance. Apart from attending Mass, Catholics are most likely to say helping the poor and needy is most important to their sense of what it means to be Catholic.

How can so many Catholics openly disagree

with the church about one thing or another? For one, they often do not consider their relationship with God to be as problematic as their relationship with their pastor. When asked what best reflects their image of God, a majority of Catholics are most likely to agree that “God is a positive influence in the world that loves unconditionally, helping us in spite of our failings.” They are 10 times more likely to agree with this image than that “God is judgmental of humans, but rarely acts on earth, reserving final judgment for the afterlife.”

Some of what appears to be disagreement may also reflect misunderstanding. Fewer than two-thirds of Catholics, for example, believe that the bread and wine used for Communion really become the body and blood of Jesus Christ. How can so many disagree with this central teaching of the faith? Surprisingly, it is because many are unaware that this is what the church teaches! Only 46 percent of Catholics are aware of what the church teaches about the real presence and agree with that teaching. An additional 17 percent agree, but do not know this is what the church teaches. A third do not agree with the teaching but are unaware of the teaching. Finally, only 4 percent of Catholics know what the church teaches about the real presence and do not believe it.

Indeed, one of the most challenging problems for the church is religious education. The number of children and teens enrolled in parish-based religious education in U.S. parishes declined by 24 percent since 2000. A majority of members of the pre-Vatican II generation (born before 1943) and the Vatican II generation (born between 1943 and 1960) attended a Catholic primary school (51 percent). But only 37 percent of post-Vatican II generation (born

1961 to 1981) and 23 percent of millennial generation (born in 1982 or later) Catholics did the same when they were growing up. Currently, fewer than one in 10 Catholic parents has a child enrolled in a Catholic school and about one in five has a child in parish-based religious education. Most Catholic young people today are receiving no formal religious education. The as yet unnamed generation following the millennials (born 2004 and later?) may be the “Wikipedia generation”—informed about their faith mostly from online resources unrelated to the church and used when needed.

So perhaps we can expect more confusion about the real presence among Mary’s and Maria’s children. In any case, there will certainly be more children and more Catholics. That is the surprise ending to this story. CARA expects the Catholic population of the United States will approach 95 million by 2050. Despite the falling retention rates, natural increase (more births than deaths), the reverts and immigration will keep the Catholic population growing while many other Christian traditions see their numbers fall in the decades ahead.

One cannot predict the outcomes of papal conclaves or what will happen at the conclusion of the Synod of Bishops on the Family this fall. But it is certain that the pope of 2050 will preside over a significantly larger Catholic population in the United States than exists now. **A**

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A Call to Virtue

Living the Gospel in the land of liberty

BY JEFFREY D. SACHS

Pope Francis has declared that the joy of the Gospel can help the world to overcome the globalization of indifference to others. Undoubtedly, he will bring this message when he visits the United States. But when he does, he will face a society in thrall to a different idea—that of the unalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The urgent core of Francis’ message, which is the message of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, challenges this American idea by proclaiming that the path to happiness lies not solely or mainly through the defense of rights but through the exercise of virtues, most notably justice and charity.

Pope Francis sees a crisis of the human spirit in our time, characterized by our inability to hear the suffering of others. This is a crisis not of material want, of the scarcity of material goods as taught by modern economics, but of morals. We suffer a poverty of the spirit in the midst of material plenty, a failure to live properly in an age of unprecedented material affluence.

This is an idea that is foreign to the ideology of rights that dominates American ideological discourse. In the United States, we learn that the route to happiness lies in the rights of the individual. By throwing off the yoke of King George III, by unleashing the individual pursuit of happiness, early Americans believed they would achieve that happiness. Most important, they believed that they would find happiness as individuals, each endowed by the creator with individual rights.

There is, no doubt, grandeur in this idea. As children of God, individuals have rights to be free of persecution, to be treated as ends and not means, as Immanuel Kant put it. The dignity of man requires the rights of man, as Thomas Paine declared.

Yet from the point of view of the Gospels, such rights are only part of the story, only one facet of our humanity. The Beatitudes, regarded by Pope Francis as key to the Gospel truth, are actually not at all about individual rights but about virtues, meaning the right path to the right kind of life. The

Sermon on the Mount is not a defense of the individual but a call to humility, love and justice.

In modern terms, we would say that rights must be balanced by responsibilities. Kant said that the rights of individuals must be combined with duties, as guided by the categorical imperative. According to Kant, we have the duty to behave according to those maxims, and only those maxims, which can be made into universal laws.

Yet Jesus, and the ancient Greek philosophers, meant something different from responsibilities or duties in the way Kant understood them. It is useful for us to consider Aristotle’s views, for through St. Thomas Aquinas Aristotle’s vision of the good life was harmonized with Jesus’ teachings on the mount. For Aristotle, the issue was not the balancing of individual rights and responsibilities, as we would put it today, but the fact that we live our lives not only as individuals but also as members of society.

The Right Kind of Living

How strange to the American eye and ear is Aristotle’s declaration in the opening pages of *The Politics* that “the state is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part.” Aristotle does not mean that the state can willfully crush the individual, but rather that the individual finds meaning in life, and the path to happiness, as a citizen of the *polis*, the state. In a phrase that reverberates powerfully still today, Aristotle noted that “man is a social animal.”

For Aristotle and for Jesus, as in the Beatitudes, the path to happiness is through the exercise of virtue, which means the right kind of living by each individual as a member of society. Aristotle’s message is that happiness (*eudaimonia*) is achieved through the practice and cultivation of virtues, including moderation in the pursuit of material wealth and the exercise of good citizenship. Jesus’ message is that happiness, and indeed salvation, cannot be found through material goods, or through the pursuit of happiness as consumers and moneychangers, but through the virtues of humility and justice, including most importantly “feeding the least among you.”

The church teaches that an individual’s happiness can be achieved only in solidarity with the community, in the individual’s “firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good,” in the words of Pope John Paul II.

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As the church's social doctrine declares, "The human person cannot find fulfillment in himself, that is, apart from the fact that he exists 'with' others and 'for' others"—a fact supported by psychological studies confirming that the act of giving is a powerful spur to an individual's sense of well-being.

Can such rarefied ideas really help us to face the challenges of our own time? Can they really help to illuminate Pope Francis' mission to overcome the globalization of indifference? I believe they can. For while the United States is a society of many glories, including the protection of the individual from state tyranny and the achievement of material well-being beyond any prior period of history, it is a society that has been wounded, even gravely, by its flawed and limited vision of humanity.

In current political discourse in the United States, the unalienable rights of the individual have been transmuted into the modern doctrine of libertarianism. This doctrine not only puts individual rights on a pedestal above all others but also actively denies any claim by society to hold individuals to account for their behavior toward others, other than to respect their liberty. In today's America, the very idea of virtue has been privatized, individualized and increasingly commercialized. Each individual is at liberty to define virtue as he or she sees fit.

The results are disturbing. Trust between Americans is waning, as is recorded each year in survey evidence. A pall of corruption hangs over government, banking and other parts of the economy, even the health care sector. Americans are richer but no happier. Yet even as the United States has become more unequal in income and wealth than at any other time in its modern history, libertarians argue that the widening gulf between rich and poor gives no cause for any policy response. In the name of individual rights, the poor are left to suffer and the super-rich are excused from the requirements of virtue and common decency.

It is a long, fascinating and somewhat mysterious story how the American defense of the individual against tyranny in 1776 became the defense of the individual against demands of social justice and the recognition that virtues like compassion and moderation are the underpinnings of happiness. Perhaps in America's highly diverse society, the only point of agreement across the numerous religions and cultures was the right to be left alone. Perhaps America's remarkable commercial achievements meant that the norms of the marketplace—especially consumer choice—would eventually become the deep norms of society itself. Perhaps the advertisers and "merchants of persuasion" in public relations successfully convinced Americans that happiness



SHELTER THE HOMELESS. Commuters walk past a woman resting in a public walkway near a ferry terminal in Seattle, Wash., in January.

would be found in one more purchase and one more possession.

A Compelling Message

Pope Francis is telling the world, and the world is listening, that the path from indifference to the suffering of others can be found through the reinvigoration of the Gospel virtues. This, I believe, is a compelling message, though one that is very strange indeed to the modern, and especially American, psyche. Americans might rather expect a call to legal responsibilities—"You must pay your taxes"—than a call to virtues. Yes, they will tend to dismiss such claims of social responsibility ("It's my right to keep my money, since I earned it"), but at least they are familiar with the language of rights and responsibilities.

Yet the call to virtues is deeper and ultimately more compelling. Pope Francis is not coming as a scold but as a guide to help us find a solution to the paradox of the poverty of the spirit in the rising sea of affluence. He is not speaking the language of duties and responsibilities but of human meaning. He is not rejecting the libertarian defense of human dignity but saying that dignity is found not only through individual rights and free markets but from within, by each person pursuing the virtues of charity, justice and compassion in solidarity with the common good. This, after all, is the message of hope that brought the multi-

tudes to hear Jesus preach.

As a macroeconomist, I have tried to put the challenge of compassion into the hard financial terms of the national income accounts. For 20 years I have tried to work up the balance sheet of social justice, so to speak, in order to measure the scale of investments that society needs to make in order to overcome extreme poverty; control epidemic diseases like AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and Ebola; and convert our energy systems from climate-changing fossil fuels to safe, low-carbon energy sources like solar, wind, geothermal and hydroelectric power. The paradox that I have found time and again is that for a tiny investment of material goods—perhaps 2 percent to 3 percent per year of our global income—we could mobilize our technological excellence to end the scourges of extreme poverty, disease and environmental degradation that cause great global suffering and that in fact threaten our very survival. Solutions to our global material problems, whether climate change or epidemic control, are within our grasp, but only if we try.

We face, therefore, a moral crisis, not a material crisis. We face a problem not of means but of ends. As Aristotle might have said, we have the *techne* (the technological know-how) but not yet the *phronesis* (the moral wisdom) to choose survival over death. We are trapped by an indifference that ironically has been magnified by America's exaggerated defense of liberty at the expense of virtue. Words do matter; and the Gospel teachings, like the teachings of Aristotle, Buddha and Confucius, about the path to happiness through compassion can become our guideposts back to safety.

Pope Francis will come to the United States and the United Nations in New York on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, and at the moment when the world's 193 governments are resolved to take a step in solidarity toward a better world. On Sept. 25, Pope Francis will speak to the world leaders—most likely the largest number of assembled heads of state and government in history—as these leaders deliberate to adopt new Sustainable Development Goals for the coming generation. These goals will be a new worldwide commitment to build a world that aims to harmonize the pursuit of economic prosperity with the commitments to social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

The S.D.G.'s can become a beacon for policy makers, civil society activists, scientists, business people and especially young people to infuse commitments of social justice and environmental sanity back into our politics and daily lives. Pope Francis' message will help provide a universal language of virtue and happiness for the goals to be adopted by the member states of the United Nations. I believe that with such encouragement, the United States and the world can be stirred to choose a better course towards security, human dignity and well-being in the coming generation. **A**



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ST JOHN

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the same was in the beginning with God.
2 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.



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*Profesor de Patrología y Cristología en la Pontificia
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**"Mi Señor Yahvé me dió una lengua de
discípulo" (Is 50,4-7) La Palabra del Señor,
fuente de buenas nuevas para los desvalidos**
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The Migrants' Lament

Imagining their plight requires only a little heart and faith

BY GERALD F. KICANAS

Refugees and immigrants can be found all around the world. Some nations open their arms to them; others raise their fists. Some welcome them; others reject them and turn them away. Yet immigrants and refugees continue to arrive, seeking asylum, searching for security, wanting a decent life.

When I served with Catholic Relief Services, I met Syrian and Iraqi people in refugee camps in Turkey, Lebanon and Egypt. Their stories shocked and upset me. Their lives had been suddenly uprooted. They were forced to leave behind everything they valued to save their lives.

One man carried his aged, diabetic mother over hills as he crossed the border from Syria to Lebanon. Another brought his pregnant wife and two children across the border, terrified that they would be caught and detained. Still another, a 73-year-old man, left his medications behind as he fled the only town he had known, having lost two sons who cared for him.

Countless lives have been disrupted in similar ways all around the world. When peaceful nations hear such tragic stories, how can they not seek to help? It is true that accepting refugees can cause economic, political and societal distress that can seem overwhelming, but we must have hearts that understand human suffering and respond with compassion.

Seeking Dignity

Suffering abounds around the world. So many people today struggle for a decent, dignified way of life. How can we not see that? That indignity is the reason people are willing to travel by cramped, unseaworthy boats, the reason they forge on for hundreds of miles on foot or journey across oceans and through dangerous deserts into lands and cultures they do not know. They are seeking safety, a semblance of dignity, a better life for themselves and their families.

The Tucson Sector of the U.S. Custom and Border Protection agency, where I live, has become the center of migrant movement into the United States. I have met immigrants from Mexico and Central America who made the journey north in hopes of a better life in the United States, only to be sent back.

I have met migrants stacked in crowded *casas de huéspedes* (guest houses) in Altar, Sonora, waiting to make their trek north. Most were young men carrying knapsacks and images

of Our Lady of Guadalupe to protect them on their journey.

I have visited the *comedor* in Nogales, Sonora, where a Jesuit program called the Kino Border Initiative feeds migrants deported from the United States and runs a shelter that houses deported women and children for their protection. When you meet migrants and hear their stories, you quickly see that they are just like us. These migrants want only a decent way of life and jobs to sustain themselves and their families. They want their children to have a chance at a better life.

I met a young man 16 years of age at the University of Arizona Medical Center in Tucson. He was from Chiapas, but spoke neither Spanish nor English, only his indigenous tongue. He came north by train to find work to help his single mother with five children.

He leapt from the train, or the *bestia*, the “beast” as it is often called by people on this perilous journey, but lost his footing and was sucked under the churning train’s wheels. He lost his leg. He never realized his dream. His hopes to care for his family and improve his life were both devastated in an instant.

I have met so-called Dreamers, young adults living in the United States without legal status who had been brought north when they were tiny children. These young people inspire. They are filled with desire to contribute to our community, but they live in the shadows with their families.

Many undocumented persons live in the Diocese of Tucson the way they do in many other places around the United States. They live, day in and day out, in fear of losing everything they have worked for—sometimes over many years. At any time, family members living without documentation can be stopped for a minor traffic violation that can lead to their deportation and separation from their loved ones.

Recently, many unaccompanied minors and women from Central America flooded to the border. Some of these people certainly were refugees fleeing violence. Others, like people I mentioned earlier, were looking for a better life. I met many women with their children at the Greyhound bus station in Tucson as they waited to catch a bus to be united with a family member somewhere in the states. Many had experienced a treacherous, terrifying journey, oftentimes in danger of being abused by cruel people along the way. Their stories of survival are shocking. We need to understand their experience. These are women and children, babes in arms, toddler siblings led into this country by their “older” brothers or sisters, who often are no more than 12 or 13 years old

MOST REV. GERALD F. KICANAS is bishop of Tucson, Ariz.

HOME FIRE. A Kurdish refugee woman from the Syrian town of Kobani.



themselves. Imagine a parent's fears. Imagine what must be going on in these migrant's homelands that forces them to send their children into the unknown.

As federal authorities struggled to help these innocent and frightened people by finding temporary living arrangements in a school setting outside of Tucson, some Americans stood in the road intent on stopping a bus filled with these unaccompanied minors from entering their community. At the same time, others, some from our Catholic parish in Oracle, Ariz., well aware of the plight of these youngsters, sought to counter the efforts of the protestors with welcome signs. They cried loudly, "Have a Heart!" to drown out the protestors' shouts of "Stay away."

The Have-Lots and the Have-Nots

The movement of peoples around the world continues. Nations and their citizens have different responses. Fear of an "invasion" grips some, while others seek to help the "invaders." Some people worry their own lives will be compromised, threatened by helping their neighbors, while others seek to help even at a cost to themselves.

Greater unanimity of response will occur only when and if we recognize that we live in a hugely unequal world in which .05 percent of the global population holds well over one third of the world's wealth, a world in which two billion

people live on less than \$2 a day. Our efforts should be to strive, as St. Ignatius suggested, to live for others, not to hold on to our advantage. Only when we see suffering, pain and inequality and are moved by them can change of attitude happen. That change will lead to taking steps to help.

This process is at the heart of the Gospel and is the central message that Pope Francis offers as his clarion cry and heartfelt witness. Francis calls for us to become a "church without frontiers, the mother of all." See our world, as Pope Francis does, as a "field hospital" facing desperate need—and be moved to respond.

My prayer is that Pope Francis, when he visits the United States and speaks to a joint session of the Congress, will raise the issue of immigration and the challenges that exist along the U.S./Mexico border. He understands the plight of migrants and refugees as he witnessed personally in his visit to Lampedusa, Italy, where hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants land after fleeing persecution, war and poverty or tyranny in their homelands. Francis' presence will call our nation to complete the frustrated effort to pass comprehensive immigration policy reform and encourage our blessed nation to work to enhance and improve the economy of sending nations as well as to remind our country to be our brother's keeper, to help respond to the inequality still so prominent in the world. **A**

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Who Am I to Lead?

Female leadership for the 21st-century church

BY ELIZABETH TENETY

Carolyn Woo did not grow up imagining herself in a leadership role in the Catholic Church. But now she is president and chief executive officer of Catholic Relief Services, the international aid organization that reaches 93 countries and nearly 100 million of the world's poorest people each year,

"I never knew what opportunities were there," Woo says.

It was not because of a lack of exposure to the robust lives of Catholic women. Woo was educated in Hong Kong by Maryknoll sisters, who had a profound impact on her view of the world and concern for the poor. But as a girl who saw herself instead one day as a married woman, she did not imagine that leadership might be possible for her in the church. Yet today, Ms. Woo is, in many ways, the very face of Catholic female leadership in the United States.

In the United States, Catholic women are deeply engaged at nearly all levels of Catholic life, starting in their home parishes. Women are not only more likely to show up in the pews in any given week, but a 2012 study by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate found that at the local level, a majority (57 percent) of responding pastoral leaders were female, including lay and women religious serving on staff, pastoral councils, social ministries and other parish duties.

Women also are increasingly influential in roles of authority inside the church, working as pastoral associates, managing school and hospital systems, operating dioceses as chancellors and consulting with bishops as canon lawyers and communications experts. They run the "big three" social service organizations—health care, charities and relief. Women hold more than one-third of all Catholic college and university presidencies, a notably higher rate than that

of female leadership at American universities at large (26 percent).

But in other areas there are challenges. For centuries, religious life provided for women a pathway to leadership in the church. Now, as the number of religious women decreases, there are fewer formal structures that train lay women for similar roles. Women often possess the experience and



Carolyn Y. Woo

knowledge but lack the power to influence governing authorities. So with Pope Francis—whom The Boston Globe's John Allen reported to be the first pope who ever had a woman as a boss—encouraging continued conversation about women in the church, many Catholics in the United States see a new era for engagement and with it a new vision for what female leadership in the church can be.

Female Leadership in the United States

"It's good for the church and it's good for those organizations; it's good for those individuals," when women like Carolyn Woo take the helm of formal leadership at Catholic institutions, explains Kathleen Maas Weigert, the Carolyn Farrell, B.V.M., Professor of Women and Leadership at Loyola

ELIZABETH TENETY is the community and engagement editor for *America*.

University Chicago. The full involvement of Catholic women in institutional leadership roles, first largely by women religious and now by a new wave of educated lay women, is not just part of the rise of the laity following the Second Vatican Council, experts say. It is also a structural affirmation of how women historically have been central to the faith.

“The Catholic Church in America could not have developed into the institution it did without women religious, and in the end without lay women, too,” explains Dr. Margaret M. McGuinness, professor of religion at La Salle University, and author of *Called to Serve: A History of Nuns in America*. “At a time when most women were really restricted in what they could do...women religious stepped into that gap.”

Less constrained in public spaces than lay women, American women religious dedicated their entire lives to building up structures to serve the needy through health care centers, educational systems and orphanages. They had little self-consciousness about broader cultural conversations to come about the role of women in the world; instead they gained authority simply because they were the only ones doing the work. In radical pursuit of the Gospel, American women religious became de facto trailblazers.

From Sts. Elizabeth Seton, Frances Xavier Cabrini and Katharine Drexel to prominent present-day activists like Helen Prejean, R.S.M., and Carol Keehan, S.C., the names of Catholic women religious are now inextricably intertwined with American history. Lay women leaders of Catholic universities and social services organizations are entering a new age of female leadership, one that is indeed influenced by the culture’s ongoing debate over the role of women in the home and in the world.

Leadership does not begin at the top, nor is it exclusively the domain of those in formal authority. Catholic women remain the heartbeat of American parish life, and it would be a mistake, say many active female leaders, to dismiss the crucial contributions on the local level, which provides a training ground for future leadership.

“In a parish, for example, in Los Angeles that gets a lot of recent immigrants arriving—people come in from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador—you have incredible young women leading youth groups,” says Teresa Maya, C.C.V.I., congregation leader of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Tex. And like in many parishes across the

United States, Maya says that Latino Catholic churches often see the majority of ministries run and operated by female volunteers. “If you go to more established Latino communities,” Maya says, the *abuelitas* of the parish run liturgical life and social ministries. “The parish priest is almost reporting to *them*.”

Bishops also sometimes defer to women on matters of their respective expertise; a growing number of women serve as diocesan chancellors, counseling church leaders on administrative matters crucial to the running of a diocese.

“I’ve never felt that my opinion hasn’t been valued or that something that I had to say at a meeting has been discounted because I was not a priest,” says Rita Ferko Joyce, chancellor of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and the first lay woman to serve as president of the Canon Law Society of America.



TOUCH OF GRACE. Ann Froelich, pastoral associate at St. Matthew Parish in Allouez, Wis., gives ashes.

CNS PHOTO/SAM LUCERO, THE COMPASS

Trained first as a civil lawyer and then, at the encouragement of a priest, as a canon lawyer, Ms. Joyce was also the first woman and layperson to serve as a marriage tribunal judge in Pittsburgh, where she evaluates canon law around annulment petitions and makes recommendations to priests. As a married woman, Ms. Joyce says, “I found that in the tribunal processes, I looked at things somewhat differently. I don’t apply the law differently. I just listen differently.”

A Clear Path?

Like Carolyn Woo, many Catholic women did not grow up imagining themselves in church leadership roles, because until recently lay women simply have not held them or because men, as priests, bishops, cardinals and popes, are often

championed as the “true” church leaders—a worldview that even Pope Francis has questioned. More overt conflicts over the role of gender in appointing church leadership also inform the conversation.

“For women in secular society, if you want to be an astronaut, you want to be the first female president, the possibilities are endless,” explains Nicole Perone, who is 23 and a graduate student at Yale Divinity School, who serves as a lector, acolyte and eucharistic minister, among other roles in her parish. The lack of a similar path for female leadership in the church can be painful for some young women.

Around two thirds of American Catholics (68 percent) believe that the church should ordain women as priests, the Pew Research Center found in 2014. And many Catholics hold views on sexuality fundamentally at odds with official teaching: 77 percent support the use of contraception; 50 percent support same-sex marriage. Although Pope Francis and his predecessors have declared these matters settled, these discrepancies can profoundly affect the cultural divide between lay Catholics and the institutional church, particularly among younger Catholics.

“A lot of women flock in droves away from the Catholic Church and choose another denomination to be a part of that they feel is more inclusive of women,” Ms. Perone explains. She says she knows of 10 women studying religion at Yale who have left the Catholic Church because of their feeling of alienation from church teaching on gender and sexuality.

But for other women, church teachings on gender are less important than broader questions of lay involvement. “We don’t tend to say ‘we need more women’; we say ‘we need more smart, professional people,’” explains Bronwen Catherine McShea, a historian of early modern Europe and Western Christianity at Columbia University.

“There is a sense that there is room for better leadership, but that would include more courageous articulation and dissemination of the church’s official teachings on a range of matters, inclusive of the theology behind the consecrated priesthood, as well as more effective institutional governance and accountability on all levels,” rather than satisfying particular feminist demands, Professor McShea says.

Untangling priestly authority that is inherent in a sacramental understanding of the role from the cultural trappings of power is a challenge that Francis brought forth in “The Joy of the Gospel.” The priesthood, he wrote, “can prove especially divisive if sacramental power is too closely identified with power in general,” calling for an investigation into “the possible role of women in decision-making in different areas of the Church’s life.”

Fortunately for Francis and church reformers, many of the current crop of American female leaders have ideas about where to begin.

What Is at Stake

After Dr. Julie H. Sullivan became the first layperson and the first woman to serve as president of the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn., she was surprised to be approached by so many women thanking her for taking the position. As the female leader of a once all-male institution, Ms. Sullivan says: “You have to understand the special responsibility that you have for helping young women—not only students but faculty, staff, alumni—understand that they belong in these roles. You have to help them see themselves in these roles. They see themselves in these roles by watching you.” It is that type of leadership modeling and mentoring that both secular and church leaders see as essential.

Before she was head of Catholic Relief Services, Carolyn Woo was dean of the Mendoza College of Business at the University of Notre Dame, where she also researched corporate and competitive strategy, entrepreneurship, management of innovation and change, and organizational systems. She thinks the Catholic Church might do well to borrow from the corporate world’s diversity initiatives, which start by recognizing a demographic need, identifying and developing a pool of candidates, mentoring and training them, and, finally, even requiring quotas or mandates. It also means that women should not be discouraged from questioning authority, she says.

In the 1980s, Ms. Woo was the only woman serving on a diocesan committee when initial reports of a case of sexual abuse of children by clergy emerged from another region. When she asked whether the group needed to look at the cause of the abuse and whether it was present in their diocese, she was told to not speak out. “The response that came back to me was, ‘Carolyn, this is a matter for the brother priest, and this would not be the forum for discussion.’”

Ms. Woo also sees the tragic impact of sexism present in her work in the developing world, where women are often subject to the rule of their husbands and face a lack of basic rights to land and inheritance. In Africa, C.R.S. began a program called Faithful House to work with couples, helping them “to communicate with each other, training for them to then understand and respect each other.” This is the kind of constructive, life-giving partnership that Ms. Woo hopes will be present in broader church conversations about the role of women. The church also can help the secular world to recognize the unique role of mothers in their families, by advocating for maternity leave, flexible work and family-centered policies. For the secular and Catholic worlds, building up a new generation of female leaders is a process that takes time, She explains: “It’s a journey that begins with society recognizing what is not right when the feminine genius is not being used.”

Relying on Each Other

Catholic couples discuss the realities of natural family planning.

BY RACHEL ESPINOZA AND TAWNY HORNER

Pope Francis opened the Synod of Bishops on the Family with a call for open and sincere discussion of challenges facing the family, and in many ways, the synod delivered that. Yet transcripts of the testimonies given by the half-dozen married couples chosen to speak at the synod reveal that there was only a cursory discussion of the pastoral challenges involved in couples' openness to life and of the serious struggles faced by couples who are striving to live out church teaching. The beatification of Pope Paul VI, seen by some as a canonization of his encyclical letter "Humanae Vitae" (1968), can lead to the feeling that all that is needed to foster a culture of life among Catholic couples is a thorough catechesis on the marital and spiritual benefits experienced by couples using natural family planning.

Notably missing from the synod interventions were the voices of faithful Catholic couples who embrace the church teaching on this issue but struggle as they continue to live it out. These couples could offer insight into the real challenges of spouses currently in their reproductive years. Many of these men and women struggle with ambiguous fertility signs, the marital strain of extended abstinence, the complications caused by medical conditions and poor finances, and even unplanned pregnancies, while following all the guidelines for their method of natural family planning.

For many, these struggles lead to crises of faith, and when they turn to their church communities for answers in handling unanticipated difficulties, they find little help or even understanding. In the past, these couples might have suffered in isolation. But now many have found a place to conduct these discussions on the Internet through blogs, private Facebook groups and other online forums. The members of these communities are well-formed Catholics. Most have read St. John Paul II's writings on the theology of the body, as well as "Love and Responsibility" and the writings of Christopher West. They embrace the teachings of "Humanae Vitae." These couples want nothing more than to put into practice the beautiful vision of married love described in church teaching, but they also desire a space to discuss the challenges to living it.

RACHEL ESPINOZA has a master of divinity degree from the University of Notre Dame and is a parish pastoral associate in Chicago; **TAWNY HORNER** is a mother of three in Falls Church, Va. They met through online communities for practitioners of Natural Family Planning.



Online Voices Share Real-Life Experience

"A few times I cried myself to sleep over my [natural family planning] chart with my dismayed husband, unsure how to help me. Sex wasn't an integral part of our sacramental love for each other; it was a rare treat that had to be compartmentalized." This observation is characteristic of the struggles shared, mostly by women, in these online forums. While abstinence can be a tool for learning discipline, selflessness and communication, extended abstinence presents a serious challenge for many couples who practice N.F.P. Church documents assume that abstinence required in N.F.P. will be fairly short (seven to 10 days per cycle) and fertile periods clearly identifiable. For many, this is simply not the case.

Newlywed couples looking forward to intimacy in married life may discover that their wedding night or honeymoon falls during the fertile time of the woman's cycle. If they wish to avoid pregnancy, the only option for them is to abstain. Learning marital intimacy takes time, as one woman shared,

“Our first awkward attempts at intercourse failed because of my discomfort. Just when we started to figure things out, my fertile signs would appear and we’d have to abstain.”

Newlyweds are not the only ones who feel the chart limits and dictates their lovemaking. Spouses whose work requires extensive travel may find that their time at home together does not match up with the infertile time in their cycles,



meaning that couples may regularly miss their window of opportunity to be together. Even couples without challenging work schedules will encounter times when anniversaries, birthdays, vacations or other times especially appropriate for intimate time together do not fall within the infertile period. In time, the responsibilities of raising children may also chip away at couples’ time for intimacy. Faced with this frustration, some couples choose to ignore method rules and then become pregnant in times of hardship.

The postpartum period and breastfeeding also require a high degree of abstinence because of hormonal shifts. The transition to parenthood requires new parents to lean on each other and, ideally, is a time for a couple to grow closer as they face the new challenge of raising a family. Couples using N.F.P. to space their children can find that precisely when they often desire sexual intimacy to remain connected to each other, it is frequently off limits. Many express the feeling that they have to choose between feeding their marriage and the

good of their family as a whole.

Additionally, couples share that other factors make it difficult to accurately chart signs of fertility. Stress, irregular sleep schedules (common for new parents or people with variable work hours), certain medications, medical conditions and the transition into menopause make observing patterns in cervical mucus or temperature, both crucial to the N.F.P. process, less clear. Avoiding pregnancy in these situations means accepting extended abstinence, which for many is a damaging burden to their marriage.

Because physical affection is essential to both the partners’ individual physical and psychological well-being and their bonding as a couple, spouses practicing natural family planning in order to avoid a pregnancy are encouraged to maintain high levels of physical affection while abstaining from genital intercourse. But even modest levels of physical affection can lead to arousal, and when that arousal cannot lead to intercourse, many experience frustration. The temptation to seek physical release in illicit ways increases. Husbands and wives may begin to bristle at their spouse’s affection, fearing it to be a near occasion of sin. One woman shared, “As a married couple, we desperately wanted to be together, yet we felt we constantly had to be on guard with each other, just like when we were dating.” Many couples in this situation may consciously or unconsciously scale back on physical affection to avoid temptation. Low levels of physical affection in a marriage, in turn, contribute to increased feelings of disconnection as a couple and to increased levels of stress, anxiety and even depression.

The strain and increasing pressure of prolonged abstinence causes many couples to engage in sexual activities with each other outside of procreative intercourse. This leads some couples to feel guilt and confusion, since these activities are considered immoral, yet may bring much needed closeness in their relationships without the risk of pregnancy. Many couples report that the ban on these activities is the hardest part of church teaching to follow, as well as the hardest to comprehend. One couple shared, “We felt that the teachings which prohibit nonprocreative sexual intimacy also were a burden, as we wanted to be united with one another and bring pleasure to one another; however, we instead had to sacrifice the unitive, as we were not able to take on the procreative.” Another woman shared, “I feel trapped, not free about the rigidity of the rules of marital chastity. I feel that my sexuality, something that I thought was my gift to give to my husband, is limited.”

Physical, Spiritual and Economic Challenges


Health problems also can complicate the use natural family planning. Women with hormone abnormalities often experience complex cycles. While charting can help a woman identify health issues, many women do not have access to health care professionals who are able to provide affordable solutions

consonant with Catholic teaching. Second, N.F.P. is especially stressful for couples who know that pregnancy would bring a grave health risk. For example, women who experience health conditions while pregnant or who find that pregnancy exacerbates an unrelated condition must rely on N.F.P. if they wish to morally avoid pregnancy, even if they have found it to be ineffective. In extreme cases, a Catholic woman might use natural family planning to avoid pregnancy because another pregnancy would probably kill her. The only alternative offered by the church is complete abstinence until menopause.

The financial burdens facing many young families raise the stakes for couples practicing natural family planning. In the statement of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for Labor Day 2014, Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami said that “meaningful and decent work is vital if young adults hope to form healthy and stable families,” and noted that young adults disproportionately bear the burden of high poverty and unemployment, with an unemployment rate more than double the national average. Many young people find themselves strapped with crippling student loan debt and unable to find decent work. “It seems that N.F.P. (when practiced to avoid a pregnancy) is something that has far more serious consequences for those of us who are financially unstable,” one woman wrote. “A couple whose head of household makes \$60,000 and owns a home with several bedrooms faces far fewer challenges with an unplanned

pregnancy than someone such as myself, who has \$60,000 of combined student loan debt with my husband, an income of far less, and a tiny apartment. We make just enough to pay rent and buy groceries.”

Promoters of natural family planning cite method effectiveness rates comparable to other methods. But many users are disappointed when, despite diligent adherence to method rules and regular follow-ups with trained practitioners, they find themselves facing an unintended pregnancy. This is a matter of trust. Couples who need to avoid pregnancy should be able to rely on their chosen method. Many feel deceived by the church about the efficacy of natural family planning, and often experience a crisis of faith over whether to continue with natural family planning or go against church teaching and rely on artificial birth control.

More than anything, the couples in these online forums want to be seen and heard by their pastors and their bishops. Many had hoped that their struggles would be discussed during the first session of the synod. Now, in this year between the two sessions of the synod, their hope remains that the synod fathers will consider that for many people, living out this teaching is more stress-inducing than lifegiving. These issues demand not a mere reaffirmation of current teaching, but frank discussion and new pastoral solutions in keeping with Pope Francis’ vision of a merciful church, which walks with people as they face the challenges involved in being family. 

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Five Minutes With Francis

What would you say to the pope?

Pope Francis' penchant for cold-calling Catholics has become a well-known sign of his warmth, candor and attention to individuals. And although not everyone can expect to receive a personal phone call from the pope it does not hurt to be prepared. So we asked a few members of the faithful: What would you say if you had five minutes with Pope Francis?

Morning Routine

I'd say, what do you do to get that smile on your face in the morning? I remember hearing about Mother Teresa saying: Get up in the morning and smile and say yes.... But the pope seems so happy. I was wondering: What's your regimen in the morning? What are you doing? What's your five minutes getting out of bed in the morning?"

STEPHEN COLBERT was host of "The Colbert Report" on Comedy Central from 2005 to 2014. He has been named the next host of "The Late Show" on CBS, starting in September. This response is excerpted from a video interview by *America* with Mr. Colbert, the full version of which can be found at americamagazine.org.



A Diverse Meeting

Thank you for the generosity with which you have responded to papal ministry—your trust in and openness to the Holy Spirit as well as in the prayers and sense of the faithful; your example of how to live into and with the responsibility with which you have been entrusted; and the joy, compassion and mercy you radiate in our world. Thank you for keeping the poor alive in your heart and for nudging us as a church to attend to our sisters and brothers lovingly and practically. Thank you for your regard for those who may not share our faith, but who share our quest for the living God. You know how to listen to and to meet poor women in their homes and

in their need, so I ask you to meet face-to-face with women of our church—a diverse gathering from various continents and countries, differing socioeconomic situations, cultures, races, sexual orientations, personal opinions and theological questions. Please.

M. SHAWN COPELAND is professor of systematic theology at Boston College in Chestnut Hill, Mass.

Saving Humankind From Itself

Holy Father, I am delighted that you have chosen to address the moral questions raised by environmental degradation in your second encyclical. As you know, climate change is very often seen as a political issue, not a scientific one, here in the United States. Yet we know from science that we are, in fact, changing the chemistry of our atmosphere and leaving a perilous future to our children. At the same time, science tells us how humankind came to be through billions of years of evolution. Is there a way to use this knowledge of our scientific and spiritual origins to advance a more hopeful dialogue about our future? How might the church help our society move beyond the left-right politics of the climate issue to a place that offers a more realistic assessment and a practical program to save humankind from itself? Thank you for your wisdom and witness.

DAN MISLEH is the executive director of the Catholic Climate Covenant, an agency for education and action on Catholic teaching on climate change in the United States.

Just Listen

If I had five minutes with Pope Francis, I would spend four of them listening rather than talking. In my remaining

FROM TWITTER

A LOT of “Thank you.”

SISTER JULIA
@juliafspa

I’d thank him for his open dialogue on church issues and his commitment to social justice.

SANDRA DUFRESNE
@SandraDufresne

Dominicans rule.

ROB NOWICKI
@robnowicki

We would probably talk about soccer.

ROBERT CHRISTIAN
@RGC3

#HolyFather, could you hear my confession? :)

JOHN ZWICKER
@JohnZwicker1

minute, I might thank him for being a witness to the sanctity of life, the dignity of the poor and the importance of gender complementarity within marriage. If I had any time left over, I would suggest that American Catholics could stand to hear more about what a blessing the sacrament of reconciliation is.

RAMESH PONNURU is a columnist for Bloomberg View, based in Washington, D.C., a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and a senior editor for The National Review.

An Example of Merciful Priesthood

I would tell him that these last two years have been the happiest ones of my 33 years as a priest. I am proud to be a Catholic priest today because our pope is for the promotion of mercy, routinely places daily ministry to the poor at the heart of the church, is learning slowly but surely about the ongoing leadership of women in the church, hates clericalism, makes with every appointment an option for the global South and lives the life he calls us to lead. I would add

FROM FACEBOOK

I would ask him to pray for the young people in our communities, that they feel the Holy Spirit in their life and know that they are perfect and loved by God just as they are.

NICOLE BROWNE

Can you stay alive for a couple 100 years please?

KIM ITA

I would probably just cry for four

and a half minutes and then be able to barely blubber out a request for his blessing.

CAROLYN MARTIN BUSCARINO

Don’t let those Curia insiders get you down.

MICHAEL WALKER

Thank you, bless you; and may God inspire you more each and every day with his grace and mercy.

VALERIE ELLEGOOD

Make a place for the outcasts, divorced, LGBTQ, to receive the Eucharist.

WILLA GUADALUPE GRANT

Thank you for your inspiration and encouragement. Parishioners came back to confession after 20, 30, 40-plus years during Lent, and when asked why, they said “Because of Pope Francis.” May God continue to bless you.

DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

that despite the comments of a few influential bishops and well-placed journalists, most Catholics in the United States thank God everyday for your election. Finally, I pray for your health, your consolation and your wisdom; and I hope you are with us longer than you suggest. That you are a Jesuit is, to use your own words, “strawberries on the cake.”

JAMES F. KEENAN, S.J., is *Canisius Professor and director of the Jesuit Institute at Boston College in Chestnut Hill, Mass.*

Searching for God’s Love

Holy Father, I do not believe God loves me. No matter what I do, how much I pray, how much I serve the church, I will never deserve God’s love. I know this is not what Jesus teaches, but this is what the church taught me. When I told my parents I am gay and a leader in pastoral ministries to gay and lesbian people, they told me I would probably go to hell and they would not pray for me. I am in my 30s, but this is also the story of Catholics in their 60s and 70s who spent their lives believing God does not love them. This is the story of kids in their teens and 20s, taught they will never deserve to be loved and are beyond even God’s grace. Words matter. Please tell our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender sisters and brothers that God loves us all. Maybe wounds will heal and we will believe this message.

ARTHUR FITZMAURICE is *senior fellow and managing director for L.G.B.T. engagement at Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good and resource director of the Catholic Association for Lesbian and Gay Ministry.*

Recognizing Women in Theology

First, thank you. Thank you for leading with mercy and focusing on poverty, for reforming the curia, for taking sexual abuse seriously. Thank you for coming to the United States, for unblocking Oscar Romero’s canonization. Thank you for smiling genuinely in your audiences, for drinking *mate* in St. Peter’s Square, for washing the feet of prisoners (even women and Muslims!). You have invigorated the church, breathed new life into the disaffected, the young and the marginalized, and for that I am grateful.

But I have a favor to ask. Stop inquiring after a theology of women. In fact, please drop the phrase “theology of women” from your repertoire. To suggest that a particular theology needs to be done (by whom?) about women implies that

women cannot reflect on theological topics. From the moment Mary of Nazareth sang the Magnificat, women have been doing profound, creative, orthodox theology. We come from all over the world and write on all aspects of Catholicism in many languages. We discern the signs of the times, as men do, from a particular perspective, but not one that is uniform. Let this diversity of voices inform the church. We do not need a new discipline, we need space and an attentive ear.

NATALIA IMPERATORI-LEE is *associate professor of religious studies at Manhattan College, New York.*

A Message of Gratitude

Thank you. Thank you for your faithfulness. Thank you for your trust in the Holy Spirit. Thank you for being the Jesuit spiritual director to the world, modeling a discernment of the spirits for all the world to see. It’s the only way for a Christian to live and is the only evangelical strategy worthy of its name. We’ve had such gifts in our recent popes, and you are no exception. I am praying for you and with you. Thank you for leading the way so that more might follow Jesus Christ truly—willingly, completely, mercifully, confidently, truthfully, counter-culturally. Thank you, Holy Father; you challenge me daily in the way of the Lord. And from the looks of it, you do it because you live in the Trinity and love Mary as your very own mother. Thank you for that. Would that we would all.

KATHRYN JEAN LOPEZ is *senior fellow of the National Review Institute and editor at large of National Review Online. She is a founder of Catholic Voices USA and co-author of the upcoming revised edition of How to Defend the Faith Without Raising Your Voice (Our Sunday Visitor).*


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Address the Root Causes

The drowning of 900 migrants from many countries in the Mediterranean on the night of April 18 jolted consciences worldwide. It was but the latest, though the worst, in a series of similar tragedies in the sea between North Africa and Europe in recent years: 3,200 drowned last year, over 1,700 so far this year. Many more seem destined to follow as between 500,000 and one million migrants descend on Libya, a country on the verge of disintegration. They are ready to pay \$1,000 to \$2,000 to risk the perilous voyage in overcrowded ships managed by unscrupulous human traffickers.

“These are men and women like us, our brothers and sisters who sought a better life. Hungry, persecuted, wounded, exploited, victims of war, they sought a better life. They sought happiness,” Pope Francis told pilgrims in St. Peter’s Square after the latest tragedy. He appealed yet again to the international community to take action to prevent such tragedies by addressing their root causes.

Italy in particular is struggling to cope with this growing exodus of men, women and children from Middle Eastern and African countries. Last year 170,000 people made it to Italy; the number is expected to increase this year. Italy appealed to the European Union to share responsibility. The union promised vessels and funding to assist in rescue operations but little in terms of asylum. Many of the union’s 28 member states, concerned about their fragile economies and

growing anti-immigrant sentiment fueled by right-wing political parties, appear ready to do almost anything to block this human tide, including bombing the ships of the human traffickers to prevent “the wretched of the earth” from boarding them and reaching Europe’s southern shores. The latter proposal is not a solution; it only addresses one extreme consequence of the turmoil in African and Middle Eastern countries. Moreover, the migrants are desperate.

The truth is that this is a growing humanitarian disaster of biblical proportions caused by armed conflicts and extreme poverty. The brunt of the disaster is being shouldered by countries in the region. Lebanon (population 4.4 million) has taken in 1.2 million Syrians fleeing war in their homeland. Jordan (population 6.7 million) has given shelter to 700,000-plus Syrians and Iraqis. Turkey provides refuge to 1.7 million Syrians. But hundreds of thousands more are fleeing conflicts, repression or extreme poverty in Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Eritrea, the Central African Republic and elsewhere.

Europe needs to overcome what Pope Francis, visiting Lampedusa in July 2013, called “the globalization of indifference.” It needs to reform its migration policy and show greater solidarity, and it must continue to address a crisis that, as Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Vatican secretary of state, said on April 24, must also become “a concern for every other nation in the world.”

To end the humanitarian crisis, however, and avoid further tragedies in

the Mediterranean, Cardinal Parolin said, “The problem must be resolved at its roots, by eliminating the causes of extreme poverty and violence...and placing these countries in conditions where people are not forced to leave. We must do more in this respect.”

Cardinal Parolin is right: more must be done to stop the conflicts, bring peace and eliminate extreme poverty. A renewed effort must be made to end the war in Syria (population 18 million) that has already left 220,000 dead, 1 million injured and 12.2 million refugees or displaced persons. Action is urgently needed to prevent Libya from disintegrating and to stop aggression by the Islamic State. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has to be resolved.

**Only
peace and
economic
growth
can halt
the exodus
of migrants.**

The flow of arms to Middle Eastern countries must be stopped. A serious effort must be made to end the conflicts and eliminate extreme poverty in African countries, including Mali, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Only peace and economic growth can halt the exodus from Africa and the Middle East. The UN Security Council’s five permanent members must engage with other key actors, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran and Turkey, and show greater determination to end what Pope Francis calls “the third world war” that is “being fought piecemeal.” The situation is unlikely to have changed much before he addresses the United Nations in September, and one may expect him to bring that point home forcefully then.

GERARD O’CONNELL

GERARD O’CONNELL is *America’s Rome correspondent*. *America’s Vatican coverage is sponsored in part by the Jesuit communities of the United States*. Twitter: @gerryorome.

THEATER | ROB WEINERT-KENDT

IN HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE

'The Audience' takes a closer look at Queen Elizabeth

There's no use denying that a certain vestigial Englishness is a persistent strand in our American DNA. This is not strictly a matter of colonial history—that our nation's so-called founding fathers, to a man, began their lives as subjects of the Crown. It is more like an affectionate familial bond with an old relative from a half-remembered hometown; a fond recognition, from a comfortable distance, that we share with the United Kingdom something more than a language but less than a lineage.

That at least partly explains the on-

going American fascination with the British royal family, whom we enjoy as light tabloid entertainment, as if the Windsors were a quaint celebrity mill, the original famous-for-being-famous people—upmarket Kardashians. American Anglophilia is also to be credited (or blamed) for an entire prestige product line, from television series on PBS and BBC America to a steady stream of stage imports to Broadway, and lately to your local cineplex, thanks to a program by which London's National Theater is now regularly filming and broadcasting its

work in high-definition to movie theaters.

These two tendencies—our deference to royalty and our privileging of English theater—come together neatly in Peter Morgan's well-made play **The Audience**, now in a stately, one could even say queenly production on Broadway with Helen Mirren as Elizabeth II. Though the play's West End production was already broadcast to British and American cinemas in 2013, its fresh presence in the flesh affirms either the durable appeal of theater's liveness amid all our screened distractions or an obeisance to box-office star power in the presence of Dame Helen. Or both. The attraction of seeing a famous actor live, like that of seeing a beloved rock band, seems in little danger of dimming thanks to DVD's or livestreams.

IF WALLS COULD TALK. Dakin Matthews as Winston Churchill and Helen Mirren as Queen Elizabeth II in "The Audience"



Indeed, fame is both a prime subject and an intrinsic element of “The Audience,” directed with assurance by Stephen Daldry. Perhaps the most bewitching thing about Morgan’s play, which might otherwise be a stodgy slog, is the way Mirren’s and the queen’s very different kinds of fame reflect back and forth on each other, as in a hall of mirrors. The effect is both humanizing, since Mirren can’t help but bring shades of life and even mischief to the sovereign, whom she plays in her 20s through her present late 80s, as well as regalizing, if that’s a word. You come away with a sense of the woman’s stature, at least as Morgan conceives it—of the way that Elizabeth bestrides the world stage, albeit from a sidelong posture.

This large-as-life queen makes the politicians who promenade through her palace look small and craven by comparison, and that is also Morgan’s point. In an imaginative but informed effort of historical fiction, the playwright—whose previous credits include “Frost/Nixon” and the film “The Queen,” also with Mirren—has conjured the content of the weekly private audiences the queen has had with every British prime minister from Churchill to Cameron. He has had to imagine them because, anecdotes aside, there is no record of what the P.M.’s have said privately to the queen, or vice versa. Her Majesty’s role has only been advisory, but Morgan posits—persuasively, up to a point—that these briefings have not been a mere formality and that, if nothing else, the institutional memory the sovereign brings to bear is no small resource to the passing parade of elected officials.

Morgan’s sympathies become clear: He admires the queen’s noble-oblige attachment to the “personal union” of the Commonwealth

of Nations, a mostly benign vestige of the British Empire, as a rose-colored counterweight to the stark bipolar geopolitics of the Cold War and its no less polarizing aftermath. He shares her evident distaste for militarism, drawing a broad-stroked but eerie parallel between the cases for war in the



Helen Mirren as Queen Elizabeth II

Middle East made by Anthony Eden during the Suez Crisis of 1956 and by Tony Blair in 2003.

The play’s brief, overly partisan portrait of Margaret Thatcher, played by Judith Ivey as a strained and strident caricature, represents something of a missed opportunity. For while Morgan and Mirren are in many ways quite savvy about the ways the queen’s gender informs her sense of being adjacent to political power without actually possessing it, Morgan doesn’t use this unique meeting of two female national leaders to complicate that picture, but instead as a chance to contrast the queen’s communitarian, keep-calm-and-carry-on Britain with the aggressive neoliberalism of the Thatcher/Blair era.

Purportedly the queen’s favorite

P.M.’s were John Major, the shambolic, over-sharing successor to Thatcher, and Harold Wilson, the Labour stalwart who held sway through the swinging ’60s and a bit of the ’70s (in nonconsecutive terms). Portrayed with relish by Richard McCabe, Wilson first enters as an awkward Yorkshire hick with a Polaroid, alternately irreverent and overawed by Her Majesty, then grows into a mutually teasing royal pal and confidant. A fireside scene in Balmoral seals their comradeship. Social class may be the great British theme; but oddly enough, for all its alleged rigidity, it is also a kind of leveler—a shared in-joke between queen and commoner.

Morgan sketches in a few personal details, with a young girl playing the teenaged, precrowned Elizabeth, uncertain of her future though besotted from a young age with the Greek/Danish nobleman who would later be her Prince Philip. He grazes quickly past the Diana business, let alone the question of succession (the

subject of a sensational new play in London, “King Charles III,” that is rumored to be eying a move to New York). But Morgan’s focus is squarely on the intersection of ceremony and statecraft represented by the seeming oxymoron of “constitutional monarchy,” and it is a marriage to which he appears to give his full blessing. If we Americans often exhibit a strange, selective nostalgia for a country we left behind centuries ago, can we begrudge its own subjects—even its ostensibly liberal ones—a little homegrown sentimentality about their own timeworn traditions?

ROB WEINERT-KENDT, an arts journalist and associate editor of *American Theatre* magazine, has written for *The New York Times* and *Time Out New York*. He writes a blog called *The Wicked Stage*.

IN OUR SONS' NAMES

Christ answers Peter's question, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?" Scripture does not record Peter's reaction, but we can guess it was surprise and, perhaps, consternation. Forgiveness does not come easily to human beings.

Christ practices what he preaches. He forgives endlessly in the Gospels—the woman taken in adultery, his own disciple who denies him three times, even his executioners. Regarding this last instance, I have often wondered whether his mother felt the same way.

This question, "How does one practice forgiveness when her child has been murdered," has haunted me these past few months. We have witnessed the very public deaths of several black men in the media: Michael Brown, Eric Garner and Walter Scott, among others. In interviews with journalists, grieving parents are often asked whether they forgive their son's killers, and some actually say yes. As the mother of three sons, this evokes in me equal parts amazement and admiration. I don't think I could be so generous in their circumstances—and I pray I never have to find out.

This troubling question is addressed with exquisite attention in a recent film made by Gayla Jamison, "In Our Son's Name." The film offers an intimate glimpse into the lives of Phyllis and Orlando Rodriguez, whose son, Gregory, was killed in the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers on Sept. 11, 2001. It is a poignant account of the journey they make as they come to terms not only with the loss of their son but also with the world-altering

events that take place in response to his death. Orlando, a professor of sociology at Fordham University, wrote a letter to *The New York Times* in the early days after Greg's death. "Our son Greg is among the many missing from the World Trade Center attack. We cannot pay attention to the daily flow of news about this disaster. But we read enough of it to sense that our government is heading in the direction of violent revenge, with the prospect of sons, daughters, parents and friends in distant lands dying, suffering, and nursing further grievances against us. It is not the way to go. It will not avenge our son's death. Not in our son's name."

Galvanized by the horror of a war that will lead to more deaths of more sons and daughters, to more grieving parents, Orlando and Phyllis devote themselves to the challenge of forgiveness and reconciliation, choosing peacemaking over rage and revenge. Jamison's film faithfully follows them along this difficult path, illuminating it as both a terrible struggle and a source of freedom and empowerment. Among the most remarkable of their actions is Phyllis's befriending of Aicha el-Wafi, the mother of the 9/11 conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui. The sight of another mother's suffering as her son is arrested, tried and threatened with the death penalty—and remembering her own lost son's youthful rebelliousness and episodes of poor judgment—Phyllis seeks out the mother of her supposed enemy and stands in solidarity with her. Both Phyllis and Orlando

eventually testify at Moussaoui's trial, playing a definitive role in the court's decision to spare his life.

Among the many powerful moments in the film is a scene in which the Rodriguezes visit a prison and participate in a conversation with the chaplain and several young men incarcerated for committing violent crimes. As these inmates tell their stories, it

The one thing they all desire is forgiveness from the families of those they have harmed.



becomes evident that the one thing they all desire is forgiveness from the families of those they have harmed—something that few of them, if any, have received. They are as much imprisoned by the pain of being unforgiven as by the concrete block walls and iron bars that surround them.

As Orlando and Phyllis listen to them with great compassion, I was struck by the power of forgiveness to set the soul free. To

practice forgiveness frees the giver, and to receive forgiveness frees the sinner. Neither the Rodriguez family nor the convicts can undo the past. But forgiveness could make the present bearable and make life livable again.

Perhaps this is what the parents of those young men killed by police know and what all parents who lose a child instinctively seek. Perhaps forgiveness is given—and received—in the name of the daughter, in the name of the son.

"Seventy times seven," Christ said, along with other inconceivable blessings. "Love your enemies." "Do good to those who hate you." "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they will be called children of God."

ANGELA ALAIMO O'DONNELL is a writer, professor and associate director of the Curran Center for American Catholic Studies at Fordham University. Twitter: @AODonnellAngela.

PAINFUL BLESSINGS

LILA

By Marilynne Robinson
Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 261p \$26

With *Lila*, Marilynne Robinson completes her astonishing trilogy of books focused on the Midwestern minister John Ames and his community in the small town of Gilead, Iowa. Robinson earned a triple crown of critical recognition for these novels, having won the Pulitzer Prize for *Gilead* (2004) and National Book Award finalist nominations for *Home* (2008) and *Lila*. Recently *Lila* also won the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction.

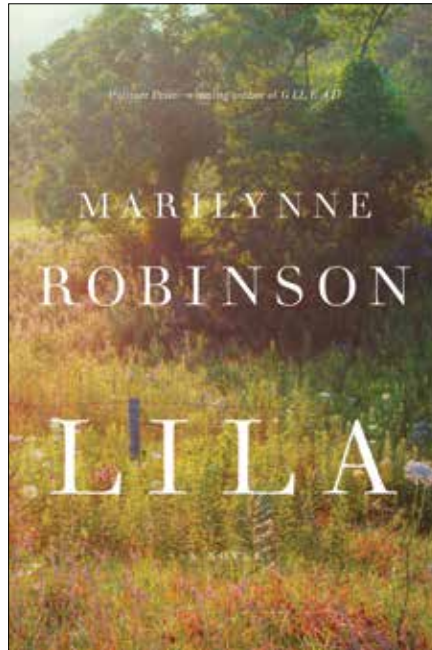
Lila takes its inspiration from the book of the prophet Ezekiel, and the novel will leave readers breathless with appreciation for what Robinson does with the message of that bold prophet. Although Ezekiel lived centuries before the Christian era, his prophetic visions provide Robinson with a fascinating lens through which to view 1930s rural American religious faith and, by implication, our own times and tribulations.

The novel's opening would be worthy of William Faulkner or Toni Morrison. An unnamed young girl is rescued (or is she kidnapped?) by an enigmatic woman named Doll. Doll wraps her in a shawl, and, although the child is not an infant, there is an echo of Jesus' infancy narratives with various threats to the child's welfare. Within its first three pages the novel presents a kind of exodus journey out of that uniquely American captivity, the dysfunctional family.

Lila and Doll fall in with a motley crew traveling from town to town doing odd jobs under the leadership of a stolid man named Doane. Lila and Doll spend several years with Doane and his people before Dust Bowl winds devastate the land and the labor

prospects of the itinerant group. The old woman and the young girl set off on their own.

Because Doll makes sure Lila receives formal schooling, the girl's intelligence and native sense of curios-



ity blossom. Doll protects Lila even to the point of engaging in a knife fight; her subsequent arrest precipitates one of the most unusual jail breaks in American literature. It will leave readers both consoled and questioning what really happened. Doll resembles one of Faulkner's best characters, Dilsey from *The Sound and the Fury*. Faulkner's admiring appraisal of Dilsey applies equally to Doll: "They endured."

Left alone and without Doll's guidance, Lila gradually spirals downward, reaching her low point in a St. Louis brothel. When Ezekiel denounced Jerusalem as a prostitute he also affirmed that God could and would forgive all. Lila finds her way to reconciliation in Gilead, where she ducks

into a church one rainy day, attracted by its warmth and candlelight. She meets the minister John Ames, a man in his 60s who welcomes her. In Ames' plainspoken, deeply reflective Christian perspective Lila finds healing and hope.

Ames' pastoral kindness toward Lila deepens slowly, and appropriately, into a mutual affection and love. Lila's quirky but authentic spontaneity is quite delightful, as when she blurts out a marriage proposal to the stunned Ames. Ames offers Lila the opportunity for a new, saving interpretation of a past that seemed irredeemable. Ames phrases it this way: "Misfortunes have opened the way to blessings you would never have thought to hope for, that you would not have been ready to understand as blessings if they had come to you in your youth when you were uninjured, innocent."

Robinson's prodigious storytelling skills allow rescue, redemption and interior reflection to flow together as translucently as the river water Ames uses to baptize Lila, or the melted snow water he uses to baptize their newborn son who arrives late in the novel. This birth provides Ames his *nunc dimittis* moment. Like an aged Simeon holding the infant Jesus in the temple, Ames can hold his own son and feel that his life has reached a gospel fullness.

Robinson populates her novel with eccentric, memorable characters such as Ames' closest friend and fellow minister Robert Boughton, a person of few words, all of them filled with gospel grit. The latter portion of the novel offers an inspired portrait of Ames and Boughton as models for facing advanced age. It involves both a letting go and an embrace of God's promised land, even if a person might need a cane to walk through its heavenly gates.

GERALD T. COBB, S.J., is special assistant to the president of Seattle University.

EDWARD GLYNN

AN EXAMINED LIFE

FALLEN LEAVES

Last Words on Life, Love, War, and God

By Will Durant
Simon & Schuster. 192p \$25

In *Fallen Leaves* Will Durant, best known for the best-selling *History of Philosophy* and popular 14-volume *History of Civilization*, seeks to express “how I feel, now that I have one foot in the grave, about those ultimate riddles I dealt with so recklessly years ago...” including life, love, war, religion and God. He began these reflections in March 1967 and continued working on them until his death on November 7, 1981.

Over 30 years after his death, Durant’s granddaughter Monica Mihell discovered drafts of the manuscript in a box when, after selling her house, she was preparing to move.

Since the book is very short the reflections on these topics are tantalizingly brief. But they remarkably reveal

how intellectually alive and alert for a man in his 80s and 90s Durant remained.

I personally experienced this mental alertness. In May 1979 as president of Saint Peter’s College, I flew to Los Angeles to confer honorary degrees upon Will and his wife Ariel. (He was a graduate of Saint Peter’s Prep and had earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Saint Peter’s College.) In expressing his gratitude for the bestowal of these degrees Will stood up and at the age of 93 succinctly and eloquently gave a five minute response without using any notes.

Will’s sister Ethel Halliwell, who lived in Westfield, N.J., and with whom I often had dinner, used to visit the Durants in Los Angeles. She told

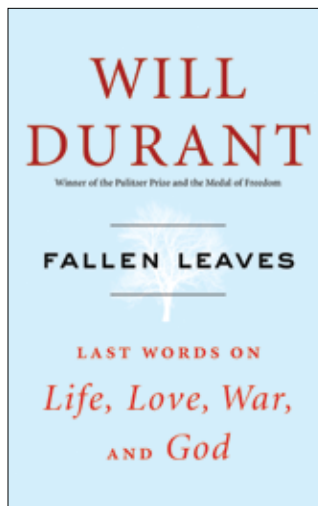
me that she would bring for reading during her visit books by prominent theologians like Hans Küng and Edward Schillebeeckx. Will would grab the books immediately upon her arrival, read them and then tell Ethel

that the authors were saying what he used to say.

Durant’s love for Christ is manifest throughout these reflections. This love did not come as a surprise to me, since Will signed his letters to me with this phrase above his name: “Another Lover of Christ.”

Readers will have an interest in knowing the reasoning behind some of his observations. For

example, he comments: “Through all the adventures of the mind among philosophies and creeds the figure of Christ remains the most appealing in history.” He later states: “There are in America and Europe thousands of clergymen who are ready and eager for



Letter Written After Leaving Fresno

I'll return for one night, carrying you
papaya. Thickly cut. Resembling

driftwood scattered below the parking lot
I can see from Sacramento's river bridges.

I'm taking I-5 south to 99. Cut tomato
skins roll in foil. My chest

drops like ocean swells I could only
see once a year. Don't watch

me as I'm dying. Say Mt. Shasta's sudden
rain fills the sky. A soul of mine

lost itself deep in Valley dirt. Maybe
it'll escape tonight. Let me call it.

MICHAEL GRAY

Michael Gray, winner of a 2012 AWP Intro Journals Project Award and the 2013 Hot Street Emerging Writers Contest, was nominated for Best New Poets 2014, among other honors. His work has appeared in *Poetry East West*, *Puerto del Sol*, *theNewYork* and other journals.

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Diocese of Great Falls-Billings

the Christianity of Christ. It is we, the laity, who hold them back, who insist upon our inherited orthodoxies, and who hesitate to sit in the same pew with one whose beliefs differ in any article from our own."

Durant clearly states his own religious belief: "I am prepared to have you put me down as an atheist, since I have reluctantly abandoned belief in a personal and loving God. But I am loathe to leave the word God out of my life and creed." He considered himself "a Christian in the literal and difficult sense of sincerely admiring the personality of Christ and making a persistent effort to behave like a Christian." He goes on to confess: "If I could live another life, endowed with my present mind and mood, I would not write history or philosophy, but would devote myself to establishing an association of men and women free to have any tolerant theology or no theology at all, but pledged to follow as far as possible the ethics of Christ..." He concludes the paragraph with this preference: "I would rather contribute a microscopic mite to improving the conduct of men and statesmen than write the one hundred best books."

Throughout these reflections the reader comes across profound insights and surprising statements. An example is: "It is one distinction of the twentieth century that while protests against war have mounted, war has become more frequent and extensive, more destructive of life and property than ever before." An example of the surprising statements is: "I would give academic credit for swimming, baseball, football, basketball and those other lusty games that require and develop more intelligence and character than all the conjugations of Greece and Rome."

Durant throughout this book does not hesitate to express his convictions directly. Some are blunt. "Since 1921 I have inveighed against the absurdities of psychoanalysis. I laughed at Freud's dream theories as soon as I read

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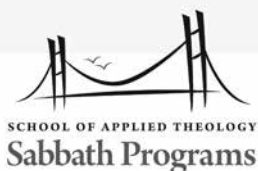
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them.... Freud's resort to symbolism in interpreting dreams seemed to me merely the bizarre and unconvincing feat of a diseased imagination."

I highly recommend this book. It is

JAMES T. KEANE

MIRROR, MIRROR

THE AMERICANIZATION OF NARCISSISM

By Elizabeth Lunbeck
Harvard University Press. 384p \$35

I am a narcissist. So are you. That's a good thing, according to Elizabeth Lunbeck, the author of *The Americanization of Narcissism*. Why? Because narcissism helps us develop creativity and empathy and is most certainly where we develop ambition. Lunbeck takes her claim further: our cultural finger-wagging over the supposed rise of narcissism in American society involves a misplaced emphasis on a misused term. Leave narcissism for the psychoanalysts, in other words, and don't be too worried if you think you're the bee's knees now and then.

Lunbeck, a history professor at Vanderbilt University, told *The New Republic* last year that she was on a "mission to rescue the concept of narcissism." Her book-long effort won the 2015 Courage to Dream Book Prize of the American Psychoanalytic Association and also garnered a surprising amount of attention in mainstream cultural journals. Most of these focused less on the history of psychoanalysis, of which there is much in the book, and more on the ways in which Lunbeck deals with narcissism as a favorite social sin of the jeremiads of the culture wars. In fact, Lunbeck suggests, narcissism shouldn't even be a term of social critique—but a term used by psychoanalysts. And we shouldn't be so harsh on narcissists. They're what make America work.

One of Lunbeck's bêtes noires is

a quick and rewarding read.

EDWARD GLYNN, S.J., is a former president of Saint Peter's College, Gonzaga University and John Carroll University and a former associate editor of *America*.

Christopher Lasch (d. 1994), the author of the best-selling 1978 *The Culture of Narcissism*. Lasch's is a name less often heard these days, though he was once one of the nation's most prolific and idiosyncratic cultural critics, combining an intellectual Marxist approach with a strong cultural conservatism. In *The Culture of Narcissism*, Lasch blasted American culture for its obsession with external validation of the individual person through wealth, consumerism, sexual libertinism and an instant gratification. Lasch was no psychologist—he used narcissism to describe behaviors he saw as a departure from the American ideal of a self-possessed adult (well, a man), leading ironically not to a more fulfilled person but to a radically diminished one, the "minimal self."

Lunbeck's takedown of Lasch and others centers on the insidious way that narcissism departed from its proper locus, psychoanalysis, and became a term of cultural critique. She also criticizes other misuses of the term, including the Narcissistic Personality Inventory. Given to college students yearly to predict narcissistic behavior, it has shown a shocking rise in such tendencies in the past three decades. Lunbeck argues, however, that the test shows higher self-esteem and assertiveness as much as it shows pathological levels of narcissism, because the questions are poorly

phrased. Is it really so awful, she asks, for a young person to prefer "I think I am a special person" to "I am no better or worse than most people"?

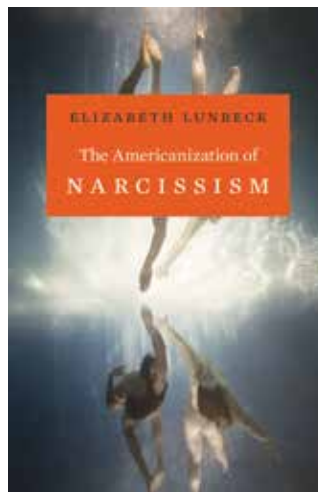
Newcomers to this subject will find intriguing historical and cultural insights throughout. For example, Lunbeck notes that the golden age of psychoanalysis is not our current era, but the late 1940s and the 1950s. Further, she identifies as a trope of psychoanalysts of that era the notion that Americans were rudderless and confused. So much for the myth of contented suburbia and "Leave It To Beaver." She also shows deftly that much of our

talk about female narcissism—from Freud onward—is actually a fairly flimsy screen for bigoted dismissals of women.

Lunbeck is right—to a degree. Narcissism is not always pathological, and the world works in many ways because of it. As an editor at a publishing house I can attest that there is no greater frustration than the humble writer who wants no accolades, appearances or reviews. "In

this industry," I tell authors, "self-promoter' is a compliment." I am myself no different—after all, let us not pretend that within hours of publication of this review I will not post a link to Facebook, Twitter and possibly Tinder as well.

Enough about me; so narcissistic! A better example is Thomas Merton. A psychoanalyst told Merton in 1956 that "you like to be famous, you want to be a big shot... Megalomania and narcissism are your big trends." Not the personality needed to be an anonymous monk in a cloister, as more than one exasperated abbot discovered; but was it actually his narcissism that spurred him to transcend his identity as Brother Louis and become Thomas Merton? To quote from the aforementioned Facebook, it's complicated.



The problem with Lunbeck's central thesis is that people like Merton are the exception, not the rule. It might be true that Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg and others all benefited from their narcissistic qualities, but that doesn't portend good news for the culture at large. Most of us don't use our "good kind of narcissism" to become great spiritual writers, or to found Facebook, or to promote a best-selling book. Most of us simply think we're entitled to a lot of things we're not. Ask any teacher about his or her inbox after posting grades and you'll find out how many American students suffer from the perception that they're not getting what they deserve.

The facile way out is to complain about selfie sticks and social media without putting much skin in the game. But narcissism also rears its ugly head in unexpected ways. For those readers who work in Catholic education, let me

ask you this: how often do the terms of Ignatian spirituality—discernment of spirits, consolation, desolation—become facile covers for "God is calling me to be more assertive about my needs" or "I Am A Very Important Person And My Feelings Can't Be Wrong"? The latter sounds a lot like "I think I am a special person," except with theological justification—which, history tells us, ends very, very badly.

During a former life as a professor, I used to ask my students to write a spiritual memoir. It was always an edifying exercise for me, as it was always the best thing a student ever wrote. Every now and then, though, a phrase would stick in my craw: "I then realized why God had put that person in my life: to teach me X."

So many questions. To ask two: "What if teaching you X had caused that person pain?" Or, "What if that

person learned nothing?" In 1992, Patrick Keifert expressed this point very clearly in his book *Welcoming the Stranger*: "I must approach the world of another's meaning with a willingness to learn, to be taught, to recognize the other precisely as other, not to reduce that one to an experience, a moment in my education or maturation." No one, it should go without saying, is put into any of our lives to teach us a lesson. And yet—how many times has each of us said that, heard that, thought that?

In the end, Lunbeck may be correct that narcissism as a term should be restricted to psychoanalysis. But that doesn't mean we've banished a cultural sickness we used to call by exactly that name. That sickness seems alive and well, and possibly burgeoning. Perhaps we just need another name for it.

JAMES T. KEANE, an *America* columnist, is an editor at Orbis Books.

CLASSIFIED

Positions

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The Spirit of Truth Comes

PENTECOST (B), MAY 24, 2015

Readings: Acts 2:1–11; Ps 104: 1–34; 2 Cor 12:3–17; Jn 15:26–27, 16:12–15

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (Jn 16:13)

The Greek word *pneuma* can be translated “wind, breath or spirit.” So when the sound at the door is “like the rush of a violent wind,” you should answer, and you had better be prepared to have your world turned upside down. Or right-side up. Because according to the Acts of the Apostles, that would be the Holy Spirit announcing its coming; and as Jesus promised in the Gospel of John, the Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of truth,” who “will guide you into all the truth.” The truth is not necessarily staid, polite, reticent and reserved. It tends to rock the world and shake up expectations.

On Pentecost, the disciples of Jesus were all together in a house when the Holy Spirit blew in with a charismatic plan of action that I suspect was not previously on their minds. The ensuing commotion was so loud and raucous that a crowd gathered outside, and some of the crowd suggested that perhaps the disciples of Jesus had been drinking that morning (Acts 2:13). It was not alcohol that fueled them, though, but the Holy Spirit showing them in deed some of the truths about what it meant to be the church.

First, the disciples “were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.” These languages, heard by others in their own native tongues, were a clear sign that the church was not simply a phenomenon meant for a

small corner of the world, but for all people. The church’s mission was to be universal.

Second, the Holy Spirit drew an “amazed and astonished” crowd. Some of them sneered at the disciples, but the majority were attracted to this strange witness of God. The crowds were open to the truth because they had witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit in their midst and the joy of the disciples.

But while the truth always shakes up the world, the Holy Spirit does not always come like a violent wind. The charism of tongues and the presence of large crowds clamoring to find out what is going on are not essential to the work of the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit can come quietly, gently, like a light breeze.

Some gifts are so subtle that they go unnoticed by the crowd. The Holy Spirit has so infused the lives of some Christians that their kind words, their loving service, their moral support and their listening ear change lives in the quietest of ways. Apart from the din of crowds, their gifts emanate gently to all who encounter them. A kind word can be “the utterance of knowledge,” a shoulder to cry on “the utterance of wisdom,” and “all these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.”

The apostle Paul speaks of the variety of gifts given to the body of Christ through its individual members. While some of these charisms

might seem like “greater” spiritual gifts, like the working of miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues and the interpretation of tongues, Paul stresses that though there are varieties of gifts, services and activities, there is “the same Spirit,” “the same Lord,” “the same God who activates all of them in everyone” and it is God’s love that is the foundation for all of them.

The Holy Spirit might shake you up, like a rush of the



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Imagine yourself at the first Pentecost. How is the Spirit guiding you, your parish and the universal church today?

ART: TAD A. DUNNE

wind knocking at the door, or calm you down, by the comforting movement of grace; we experience today the same Spirit Jesus gave to the apostles and that brought them together in unity at Pentecost. That same Spirit of truth is here now, manifested in the lives of your brothers and sisters and in you.

Each of us has gifts, and we never know when they are needed or how they affect the common good of the church and the world. We need to be ready to experience the Holy Spirit at all times, both by receiving the gifts of others and by offering our gifts to others. Listen, for the Holy Spirit always comes, and you should always be ready to respond to the call. Even if it does turn your world upside down. Or right-side up. **JOHN W. MARTENS**

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

**“If the Church is alive,
she must always surprise.”**

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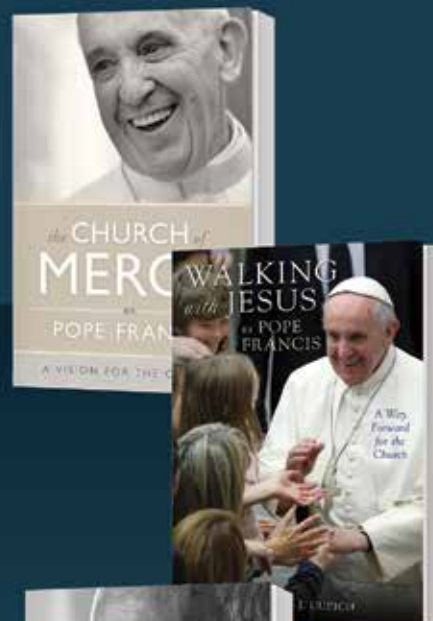
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