

# America



THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY

MARCH 31, 2014 \$3.50

## A Strategic Link

THE COMPLEX DIVERSITY OF  
SOUTHEAST ASIA  
JOHN FRANKENSTEIN

Japan's Nuclear  
Problem

KAREN SUE SMITH

I had ventured west of Manhattan's 10th Avenue in order to attend the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress, a kind of annual lalapalooza of our coreligionists. Over three days, literally thousands of laypeople, media folks, religious, priests and prelates come together to pray, attend talks, visit booths and enjoy the spectacle—if you'll excuse the pun—of the masses. As the deadline for this then-unfinished column drew dangerously nigh, I was darting down the Pacific Coast Highway en route to Solana Beach, one of a dozen ever-sunny hamlets just north of San Diego. I was on my way to visit a husband and wife who've been reading *America* for—get this—more than 60 years.

Since the job of editor in chief is so demanding, I have precious little time for parish ministry. So I have come to think of *America's* readers as my parishioners. Whenever I am traveling, *America's* business staff prints out a list of our longtime subscribers and donors in that area, and I try to stop in on some of them as time permits, mainly to thank them for their support and to ask them how we're doing. I won't embarrass this particular couple by revealing their names. Suffice it to say, they are typical *America* readers: intelligent, well-read, faithful and generous. A very enjoyable hour quickly flew by and I was then headed north again, grateful for the hospitality of two new friends.

About 10 minutes north of Solana Beach, I passed Camp Pendleton on my right and then an exit sign marked "Basilone Road." I recognized the name at once. A native of Raritan, N.J., where he graduated from St. Bernard's Parochial School, Sgt. John Basilone earned the Congressional Medal of Honor at the Battle of Guadalcanal "for extraordinary heroism and conspicuous gallantry in action against enemy Japanese forces." He returned home a hero and traveled the country as the national poster boy for the war bonds campaign.

"Manila John" was then assigned the task of training new marines at Camp Pendleton, where he met Sgt. Lena Mae Riggi. Basilone and Riggi quickly fell in love, somehow managing to wrest beauty from the brutality around them. Basilone knew that he would soon return to the fighting; but, he said, "at least I wanted a few days, or weeks if I could get it, to know what it was like to be married. I wanted to be able to say 'I love you' a few times and mean it." John and Lena Mae were married at St. Mary's Star of the Sea Church near Camp Pendleton in July 1944. Following a quick honeymoon, Sgt. Basilone left for the Pacific theater. During the Battle of Iwo Jima, "in the forefront of the assault at all times," he was killed by a bursting mortar shell. His actions earned Sgt. Basilone a posthumous Navy Cross. His widow, Lena Mae, who had been Mrs. John Basilone for fewer than seven months, died in 1999. She never remarried and she was still wearing her wedding ring when they buried her.

There are, of course, millions of similarly tragic stories, not just from the global cataclysm that claimed John's life and Lena Mae's love, but from the hundreds of other agonizing human catastrophes that filled the most violent century in human history.

Yet a light still shines in the darkness. As John Frankenstein writes in this issue: "Despite, or perhaps because of, this bloody and tumultuous history, the nations of Southeast Asia were compelled to find a way to manage their issues. The aim was...to establish a much-needed zone of peace and neutrality." Let us pray that such a zone of peace may one day encompass the globe, from the ashen wasteland of Iwo Jima to the freshly-cut grass of Arlington National Cemetery, where an alabaster headstone—one among thousands too many—marks the grave of a kid from Raritan, N.J.

**MATT MALONE, S.J.**

106 West 56th Street  
New York, NY 10019-3803  
Ph: 212-581-4640; Fax: 212-399-3596  
Subscriptions: 1-800-627-9533  
[www.americamagazine.org](http://www.americamagazine.org)  
[facebook.com/americanmag](https://facebook.com/americanmag)  
[twitter.com/americanmag](https://twitter.com/americanmag)

**PRESIDENT AND EDITOR IN CHIEF**  
Matt Malone, S.J.

**EXECUTIVE EDITORS**  
Robert C. Collins, S.J., Maurice Timothy Reidy

**MANAGING EDITOR** Kerry Weber

**LITERARY EDITOR** Raymond A. Schroth, S.J.

**SENIOR EDITOR & CHIEF CORRESPONDENT**  
Kevin Clarke

**EDITOR AT LARGE** James Martin, S.J.

**POETRY EDITOR** Joseph Hoover, S.J.

**ASSOCIATE EDITORS**  
Luke Hansen, S.J.

**ASSISTANT EDITORS** Francis W. Turnbull, S.J., Olga Segura, Joseph McAuley, Ashley McKinless

**ART DIRECTOR** Stephanie Ratcliffe

**COLUMNISTS** John J. Conley, S.J., Daniel P. Horan, O.F.M., James T. Keane, John W. Martens, Bill McGarvey, Angela Alaimo O'Donnell, Margot Patterson, Michael Rossmann, S.J.

**CORRESPONDENTS**  
John Carr – Washington, D.C.

**MODERATOR, CATHOLIC BOOK CLUB**  
Kevin Spinale, S.J.

**EDITORIAL E-MAIL**  
[america@americamagazine.org](mailto:america@americamagazine.org)

**VICE PRESIDENT/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**  
Edward Spallone

**VICE PRESIDENT/ADVANCEMENT**  
Daniel Pawluc

**OPERATIONS STAFF**  
Rosa Del Saz, Chris Keller, Kerry Goleski, Steven Keller, Glenda Castro, Judith Felix

**ADVERTISING CONTACT**  
[ads@americamagazine.org](mailto:ads@americamagazine.org); 212-515-0102

**SUBSCRIPTION CONTACT/ADDITIONAL COPIES**  
[subscriptions@americamagazine.org](mailto:subscriptions@americamagazine.org);  
1-800-627-9533

© 2014 America Press, Inc.



# CONTENTS

www.americamagazine.org

VOL. 210 NO. 11, WHOLE NO. 5045

MARCH 31, 2014



## ARTICLES

### 15 A STRATEGIC LINK

*The complex diversity of Southeast Asia*  
John Frankenstein

### 21 RISING IN THE EAST

*Can Japan balance economic growth against the hazards of nuclear power?*  
Karen Sue Smith

### 25 FORD'S FOUNDATION

*The consistency and compassion of a pastoral theologian*  
Aaron Pidel

## COLUMNS & DEPARTMENTS

### 4 Current Comment

### 5 Editorial Assault on Dignity

### 6 Reply All

### 10 Signs of the Times

### 13 Column Thank You, Professor James Martin

### 29 Philosopher's Notebook And Then the Children John J. Conley

### 34 Poem Insomnia and the Seven Steps to Grace Joy Harjo

### 39 The Word Away With Death John W. Martens



## BOOKS & CULTURE

### 30 TELEVISION "House of Cards" BOOKS *The Pope and Mussolini; American Mirror; The Hired Man*



## ON THE WEB

Ellen K. Boegel writes on religious freedom and the **Hobby Lobby** case. Plus, an archive of articles by **John C. Ford, S.J.**, and a video reflection on Pope Francis' **Jesuit identity**. All at [americamagazine.org](http://americamagazine.org).



### Pardon for a Price

Given the chance, how much money might you contribute to help spare the life of a juvenile convict on death row? For Iranians, this question is not hypothetical: an interpretation of Islamic law allows victims of crimes to seek retribution—or grant a pardon, usually in exchange for money. In the case of Safar Anghouti, who was convicted of murder at age 17, most of the victim's friends and neighbors pushed for an execution—an eye for an eye. But an anti-death penalty group reached out to the family and “appealed to their kindness,” said the group's director, “stressing that those who forgive are rewarded in heaven.” The family agreed to pardon Mr. Anghouti in exchange for \$50,000. Within days, thanks in part to a social media campaign, the group raised \$63,000 on behalf of Mr. Anghouti, now 24, and he will be set free.

Last year, Iran executed more than 500 convicts, including two juvenile offenders. The success of the recent campaign, however, reveals increasing popular opposition to the death penalty in Iran, especially for juvenile offenders. In 2012 Iranian lawmakers decided that capital punishment can no longer be applied to juveniles who commit drug-related offenses and other “discretionary crimes.”

The religious and cultural context that allows an individual or family to grant a pardon is no doubt a foreign concept to Americans. But the value that prompted so many people to reach out to save the life of this stranger is easy to recognize. In a country that has been somewhat ruthless in its application of the death penalty, it is heartening to know that a growing number of Iranians are opening their hearts—and pocketbooks—to mercy.

### Over the Line

Calls to “secure the border” are a nearly constant refrain in the immigration debate in the United States. Less discussed, but more consequential for the roughly 11.7 million undocumented immigrants already living in this country, is how the disappearing border between immigration and law enforcement agencies has contributed to an unprecedented number of deportations on President Obama's watch—almost two million so far, about 1,000 per day. Immigrant advocates have called on the president to slow these deportations, arguing that many people being expelled would be allowed to remain in the country under the bipartisan reform bill that passed the Senate last June but remains stalled in the House.

After Sept. 11, 2001, rules governing interagency information sharing were relaxed to allow Immigration and

Customs Enforcement to learn quickly if a person charged by federal and local police was in the country illegally. Since 2008 the Secure Communities program has in effect turned local police into immigration officials and brought “the border” to every county in America. While the Obama administration has pledged “to focus enforcement efforts on serious offenders,” each year thousands of undocumented immigrants, including parents with no criminal record or only minor offenses, are deported.

Most disturbing is the way in which some of these deportations occur. Migrants are frequently separated from loved ones and dropped off in dangerous border towns at night, where, stranded without money, documents or personal belongings, they make easy prey for drug and human traffickers. Thomas H. Smolich, S.J., president of the Jesuit Conference of the United States, recently called on the administration “to immediately enact simple deportation safeguards to protect migrant lives.” We join that call. The protection of human dignity knows no borders.

### A Poet's Life

In the years right before the Second Vatican Council, a variety of Catholic intellectual movements created a mini-renaissance in the church in the United States. Novelists, poets and journalists collaborated with social groups committed to peace and justice, including the Catholic Worker. From 1953 to 1967, a trio of Columbia University graduates—Edward Rice, Robert Lax and Thomas Merton—introduced *Jubilee*, a literary magazine, to address controversial church issues. It was distinctive for its beautiful black-and-white photography, layout, poetry and artwork.

In the mid-1960s its literary editor was Ned O'Gorman, who died on March 7 at 84. He was a graduate of St. Michael's College in Vermont and Columbia University, where Mark Van Doren helped him develop the passionate poetic voice that won him a Lamont Poetry Prize and a pair of Guggenheim Fellowships. A big man who lived well, Mr. O'Gorman traveled widely in Europe and Latin America and twice attempted to become a priest but was refused. As the war in Vietnam surfaced as a moral issue, *Jubilee* opposed it.

In 1966 Mr. O'Gorman founded a free storefront preschool in Harlem, where every student received personal attention. By the 1990s this had grown into an elementary school with a curriculum in Chinese, classical music and Shakespeare, and its graduates went on to prestigious colleges. Ever playful, on a summer day Ned would roll down a grassy hill turning over and laughing like a wonder-filled child. His students knew he loved them.

# Assault on Dignity

Lauren was raped during her sophomore year of college. The attack came from someone she knew. Though they both had been drinking, she had said no, yet the advances continued. Lauren struggled to share her story with others. She felt unsafe and guilty, angry and ashamed. With the help of friends and a mental health professional, she was able to share her struggles, which were described by Valerie Jarrett, a senior adviser to the president, on the White House blog. Lauren's story is tragic, heartbreaking and not as rare as one might hope. A recent report from the White House Council on Women and Girls found that sexual assault is alarmingly common: nearly one in five women of all ages have been victims of rape or attempted rape.

Sexual assault can cause immediate and long-term emotional and psychological harm. Many who experience such attacks live in shame or in fear of retaliation by the perpetrator. All too often, however, the pain of the experience is compounded when victims brave enough to speak out against their attackers face doubt, blame or apathy from the individuals or institutions to whom they report these crimes.

In response to this crisis, in January the White House established the Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, calling the prevalence of sexual assault "both deeply troubling and a call to action." President Obama has urged institutions of higher learning to educate students about protocols for preventing and responding to sexual assault, where to go to report an attack and how to find support after an assault. Colleges must move swiftly, deliberately and fairly to resolve reports of assault.

Victims of sexual assault on campus should not become victims also of an ill-equipped or misguided system of response. To avoid future contact with the perpetrator, often it is the person who is assaulted who is forced to make the more significant changes in housing, class schedule or daily routines. Many women find it difficult to obtain information on the type of sanctions, if any, that are applied to the perpetrator. In a recent article in *The Guardian*, one college student wrote that her attacker was placed on disciplinary probation but seemed to face no meaningful consequences for his alleged actions, despite the fact that several women at her college had made accusations against this person.

Sadly, the prevalence of sexual assault extends beyond college walls. Many members of the U.S. military have long struggled with sexual harassment from their fellow troops.

In 2012 an estimated 26,000 military members may have been sexually assaulted, according to the Pentagon. The problem is so pervasive that the Senate recently united in a unanimous vote in favor of legislation that will produce significant improvements in how sexual assault cases in the military are handled. Among other measures, the bill offers greater confidentiality for victims and better checks and balances between military and civilian courts. The legislation also forbids the use of the "good soldier defense" during court-martial proceedings, which allowed as evidence a soldier's prior record of being dependable and trustworthy.



Senator Carl Levin, Democrat of Michigan, has said that "military culture has been slow to grasp the painful truth that even a successful professional can also be a sexual predator." Unfortunately, this slowness is not limited to the military. Too often accusations of sexual assault against a star football player or popular student leader are dismissed as unlikely or overblown. In other cases women are blamed for the attacks by those who claim the victims were dressing too provocatively or drinking too much, as if these were evidence of consent.

Society should stop blaming the victims and start looking for more effective ways to prevent and prosecute sexual assault. Since many assault cases are fueled by alcohol, initiatives in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere have trained bar staff to identify and respond to patrons who may be victims or perpetrators of sexual harassment.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that "God gives man and woman an equal personal dignity." The church can play an active role in promoting that dignity by working to prevent attitudes that can lead to sexual assault. Every diocese in the nation has established channels to educate parishioners about how to identify and prevent sexual abuse of minors. The church could similarly develop resources to help educate people about how to identify and prevent sexual assault among adults. Since the healing process for many victims might involve prayer and a faith community, parishes could offer opportunities for victims to speak about their experience. Ritualizing the healing process through special Masses and discussion groups can help survivors of sexual assault know that they have the support they need to move forward with hope and faith.

## REPLY ALL

### Not Bound to It

Please, dear editors of *America*, rummage around in the newsroom and find your style guide. Insert a blank sheet of paper and write on it, with a big black Sharpie, “Do not use the expression *wheelchair-bound* to describe individuals who use wheelchairs.”

I had a hard time finishing your encouraging editorial “Dignity of the Disabled” (1/20) after encountering this phrase in the second paragraph. Then, in the lovely article “Take Up Your Cross” (3/3), James Martin, S.J., twice uses the expression “confined to a wheelchair.”

For people who cannot walk, wheelchairs are instruments of freedom and accessibility. They enable people like two of our sons and a daughter-in-law to go to work, to Georgetown basketball games and Nationals’ baseball games and even to march in President Obama’s second inaugural parade. “Bound” does not describe these people and the many others who, as Andre Dubus II said, “sit in a wheelchair on the frighteningly invisible palm of God.”

JEANNE TROTT  
*Falls Church, Va.*

*Editor’s Note: You are entirely correct, Ms. Trott. In fact, these errors violated our own style guide. We apologize.*

### Our Royal Throne

In “Take Up Your Cross,” the story of Doris was truly insightful. She first viewed her wheelchair as a cross but later as her resurrection. That is pre-

cisely how the Gospel of John sees the cross of Jesus: not as a gibbet of torture but as the glorious throne by which in the resurrection Jesus becomes king of the world. This is why so many crosses of the Eastern Church depict Christ on the cross as a royal king.

Doris realized fully what this cross meant. Our suffering becomes our royal throne in and through the resurrection.

PETER J. RIGA  
*Houston, Tex.*

### A State For All

Re “Tear Down This Wall” (Current Comment, 2/24): When will the U.S. government and the international community make clear to the government of Israel that it has no right to try to turn Israel into an exclusive Jewish state? While it certainly was a goal of the United Nations to create a homeland for the Jews after World War II, the Holy Land was also to be a homeland for Christian and Muslim Arabs.

At one time, Galilee was mostly non-Jewish. The government of Israel did not like that situation and moved a sufficient number of Jewish people there to make them predominant. Is this a government policy that shows respect for its non-Jewish citizens?

Israel certainly needs security, but two wrongs do not make a right. It’s time to speak out against Israeli policies like the wall and the settlements in the occupied area. Peace without justice, charity and reconciliation is no peace at all. Might will never make right.

MICHAEL PETRELLI  
*Haddon Township, N.J.*

### Conscience, Too

Re “Our Secular Future,” by R. R. Reno (2/24): As a committed Catholic, I am troubled by the article’s presumed unanimity in moral beliefs among Catholics and an “us versus them” defensiveness of believers against secularists. As a historian of early America, I am even more concerned by the author’s reading of the history of religious liberty.

Professor Reno argues that the right to religious freedom in the First Amendment is only now being “reinterpreted” as freedom of conscience to serve the goals of secularists. Although a diversity of views on religious liberty existed at the time of the founding, it is important to understand that Thomas Jefferson and James Madison believed that religious liberty was identical with freedom of conscience.

Madison’s original proposal to Congress on June 8, 1789, stated: “The Civil Rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, nor on any pretext infringed.” Some would say that we are only now realizing the true, full meaning of the First Amendment.

ROSEMARIE ZAGARRI  
*Online comment*

### Which Religion?

The question most on my mind is: Which religion or religious doctrine does Professor Reno identify as having as its core the moral authority to demand—as its legitimate “religious freedom”—the right to exclude, isolate or overtly marginalize and shun those others whose lives it deems are too sinful?

Jesus knew that the Samaritan who served the hated victim of highway robbery was more righteous than the ones who walked by him, exercising their “religious freedom” to not violate their “sincerely held religious beliefs.”

RITA HESSLEY  
*Cincinnati, Ohio*

#### WHAT YOU’RE READING at [americamagazine.org](http://americamagazine.org)

- 1 **See the Person**, by John P. Langan, S.J. (3/10)
- 2 **The Restoration of St. Patrick’s**, by Ashley McKinless (Slideshows, 2/28)
- 3 **Words That Heal**, by Kathleen Norris (3/10)
- 4 **When the Law Is a Crime**, by the Editors (3/10)
- 5 **Open to All**, by Katarina Schuth, O.S.F. (3/17)



## Crowded Church

I am very glad that I do not share Professor Reno's bleak views. I am a progressive and have friends with similar views, and yet I am not acquainted with anyone who favors embryonic stem cell research, euthanasia or the mercy-killing of genetically defective babies.

I well recall that episode in Alabama shown in the illustration that accompanied the article (*Am.* 2/24, p. 13). I remember thinking at the time that if the Ten Commandments were enforced, we would just have to make the whole enormous advertising industry illegal. After all, what does advertising do but make us covet our neighbor's goods?

My Catholic parish is much too crowded and vibrant for me to share the views of Professor Reno.

CONCHITA RYAN COLLINS  
*Teaneck, N.J.*

## Sensible and Balanced

Thank you for "Our Secular Future." I really never expected to see such a sensible and balanced article in *America*. How did it get past your liberal editors?

ANTHONY RUSSO  
*Albuquerque, N.M.*

*Editor's Note: Please see the editorial statement in "Pursuing the Truth in Love," by Matt Malone, S.J. (6/3): "There is no faithful Catholic voice...that is not welcome in the pages of America. There is no quarter of the church, moreover, in which America is not at home."*

## Welcome Moderns

"A View From Abroad," by Massimo Faggioli (2/24), on the divide among Catholics in the United States, deals with the paramount issue. Professor Faggioli made some good points, but somehow I think he missed a major reason that "the second largest religious group in United States is former Catholics."

To me, Catholics and perhaps others in the United States are not so

much driven by politics as by their need for the church to recognize modifications to its interpretation of revelation in light of modern culture and scientific findings. By holding on to age-old interpretations of Christ's teaching and not adequately developing newer, more accurate interpretations in light of huge changes in how we live, the church is telling modern people to go away.

Most people leave the church not because of their politics, but because they no longer feel wanted.

CHARLES F. KELLER  
*Los Alamos, N.M.*

## The Other Students

Re "Principals, Not Police" (Current Comment, 2/17): While the problem of a "school-to-prison pipeline" does exist, it is wrong to simply insist that those misbehaving students remain in school. If one child is incorrigible, 25 other children cannot learn. It is important to help the "difficult" child. It is even more important to make sure that the other 25 students are in an atmosphere that is safe and conducive to learning.

Parents in our area can use vouchers to send their children to Catholic schools, but difficult children find themselves back in the public schools very quickly once their errant behavior becomes obvious. It seems that Catholics believe in keeping difficult children in school, as long as it isn't their school.

And as states cut funding to education in poor, inner-city districts, it is ridiculous to think that schools will provide "mental health interventions." If Catholics want to help those children, perhaps we should give up our schools as they now exist and make a mission of reaching out to those children on the "school to prison" track.

MARY CANNON  
*Sylvania, Ohio*

## Not a 'Belieber'

Re Of Many Things, by Matt Malone,

S.J. (2/17): Justin Bieber is celebrated proportionately by about as many *America* readers as there are women who watch EWTN and are involved in the promotion of abortion and the use of contraception. The all-inclusive "we" is both incorrect and infelicitous.

We cannot avoid hearing about the Justin Biebers of society if we watch TV or read newspapers or periodicals—*America*, for example. That doesn't make us fans or followers of such people. *Fifty Shades of Grey* has sold over 100 million copies, but about seven billion people have not read it.

The media publishes what it considers good copy, which both reflects the taste and sets the taste of the public. Bottom line: We are immersed in a culture from which we can hardly escape, but we do not have to participate in the idolatry of the icons, legends and celebrities. We can turn the page or click the remote.

ERNEST C. RASKAUSKAS SR.  
*Potomac, Md.*

## Prayer and Practice

Re "God's Playbook," by Luke Hansen, S.J. (2/17): As a Boston Red Sox fan, I certainly believe in supernatural forces at work in sports. But anyone who credits the Virgin Mary for Doug Flutie's famous Hail Mary pass should know the truth.

At Boston College, my alma mater, it was well known that Doug ended every practice with a Hail Mary pass to his roommate, Gerard Phelan. The great theater that was the 1984 Boston College-Miami game simply ended the way it did in rehearsal.

Perhaps the Gospel parable of the talents (Mt 25:14-30) might be a more appropriate spiritual frame. God gave Doug a gift for football; he nurtured it, and then did many good works with the fame that well-rehearsed pass brought him. "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

JEFFREY ODELL KORGEN  
*Montclair, N.J.*

# LIBERTY OF RELIGION AND OF CONSCIENCE

*Drew Christiansen responds to "Our Secular Future," by R. R. Reno (2/24)*

For the past quarter-century there has been a partisan strain in campaigns for religious liberty, first abroad and now at home. In part, at least, the critical issues involved have been misused by leading proponents in efforts to get the upper hand on whichever administration happens to occupy the White House.

The desire to occupy the unassailable moral high ground seems to be especially the case when the moral issues have become entangled in partisan culture wars. "Our Secular Future," by R. R. Reno, pits "traditional religious people" against "a progressive consensus," and it sets religious liberty at odds with a universalistic "libertarian" view of the rights of conscience for everyone.

Mr. Reno's analysis and even his negative conjectures about problems ahead merit serious consideration. There is a long set of issues on which libertarian jurisprudence challenges religious defenders of traditional values. His assessment that the U.S. legal establishment, save the current Supreme Court with its Catholic majority, is libertarian in its views of conscience is accurate.

As Mr. Reno argues, the Protestant consensus is over; and secularists today show less tolerance for religiously held views than they did in the pluralist age of "Protestant, Catholic, Jew," a half-century ago.

From the perspective of Catholic social theology, Mr. Reno's easy opposition between individual conscience and religious liberty entails worrisome dangers of its own. For centuries, the primacy of conscience has been at the

center of the Catholic moral tradition, and the Second Vatican Council regarded it as foundational to the dignity of the human person. The "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" (1965) declared, "For man has in his heart a law written by God. To obey it is the very dignity of man."

As if to close a loophole for those who would return to the days of religious coercion, the council added, "Conscience frequently errs from invincible ignorance without losing its dignity" (No. 16). As much as correction of an erroneous conscience may be in order and opposition to its claims and proposals in the public order are warranted, not to respect individual conscience is to reject the dignity of the person.

In that spirit, in a series of concordats and other documents, like the apostolic exhortation "Hope for Lebanon," the Holy See in the 1990s under the leadership of Blessed John Paul II sought to protect the rights of the church by securing the rights of conscience of Catholics as citizens. There was no sense that the rights of conscience and religious liberty were at odds with one another.

Thus, universal respect for individual conscience in liberal jurisprudence finds a parallel in the church's diplomatic practice as well as in its social teaching. While there have been some voices in the Catholic community for overriding traditional respect for the primacy of conscience out of zeal for the protection of human life, that position is a minority opinion out of line with centuries of tradition.

In addition, after the great miscalculation of the "Syllabus of Errors" the church learned from its opponents in the secular (liberal) political tradition in a new way to esteem the rights of conscience and value human rights.

Vatican II acknowledged the help the church has received from various forms of human culture. These forms of culture included liberal Western political and legal theory. The council went further, admitting it gained even from its adversaries in the public sphere. "Indeed," it confessed, "the church admits that she has greatly profited and still profits from the antagonism of those who oppose or persecute her." Can we do less?

In the midst of our current public policy struggles and continuing culture wars, Catholics in the United States should not forget Blessed John Paul II's confession of "sins committed in the service of the truth" during the Day of Pardon service of the Great Jubilee, and his commitment "to seek and promote truth in the gentleness of charity, in the firm knowledge that truth can prevail only in virtue of truth itself."

Respect for the consciences of others, including nonbelievers, on something like the universal lines advanced by the liberal political tradition, is integral to the contemporary Catholic understanding of religious liberty. Responding to the host of questions that face the country on sexual, marital, reproductive and end-of-life issues, our endeavor should be to find solutions that show equal respect for the consciences of others, even when we believe they are in error.

DREW CHRISTIANSEN, S.J.

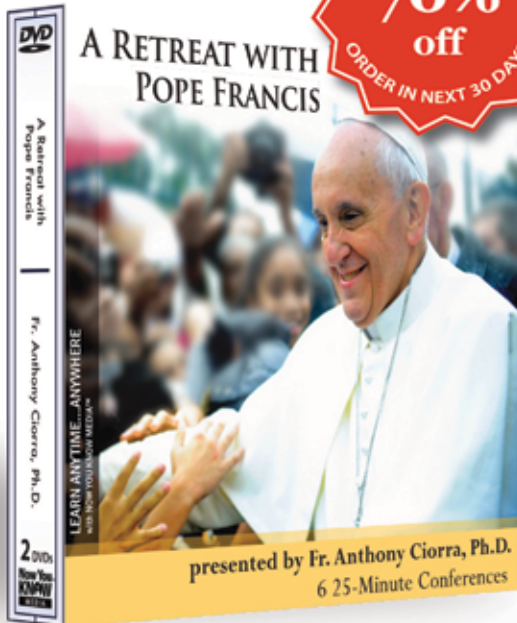
*The author is Distinguished Professor of Ethics and Human Development at Georgetown University and a former editor in chief of America.*

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





**Now You  
KNOW**  
MEDIA



## Join Pope Francis in Experiencing a Joyful Renewal of Your Faith

Pope Francis has captured the hearts of the faithful throughout the world. Now, you can take a retreat with his words and example, opening the door to a deeper relationship with God.

Pope Francis is a pope of firsts: the first Jesuit, the first to take the name Francis, and the first pope from the Americas. His papacy has been marked by a style of simplicity, warmth, and an emphasis on the heart of the Gospel.

In his opening conference in a retreat to the bishops of Latin America, Francis said, "What moves us most is the desire to thank God and to praise him." Like Pope Francis, we are all called to conversion, impelled towards the renewal of our faith. By walking with Pope Francis, you will discover the importance of dialogue with yourself, the world, and God.

In this retreat, you will enjoy six conferences that delve into the heart of Pope Francis's message. Each conference begins with Scripture, and you will then interpret the passages through the lens of the pope's writings, life stories, and personal example. This retreat will inspire your faith and spirituality.

**Must order within 30 days of issue date**

**1-800-955-3904**

[www.NowYouKnowMedia.com/PopeFrancis](http://www.NowYouKnowMedia.com/PopeFrancis)

Now You Know Media, Inc.  
12115 Parklawn Dr., Unit B • Rockville, MD 20852

# A Retreat with Pope Francis

**2-DVD or 3-CD Program**

**Presented by Fr. Anthony Ciorra (Ph.D., Fordham University)**

**Sacred Heart University**

## Lecture Titles

1. Let Us Journey Together
2. "I Am a Sinner"
3. The Church Is a Field Hospital
4. The Vision of St. Ignatius of Loyola with the Heart of St. Francis of Assisi
5. A Listening Pope
6. The Joy of the Gospel

### *A Retreat with Pope Francis*

6 Conferences (25 minutes/conference)  
+ electronic retreat guide

**SAVE \$70!**

2 DVD Set ~~\$99.95~~ **SALE \$29.95**

3 CD Set ~~\$65.95~~ **SALE \$19.95**

+ \$3.99 Shipping & Handling  
100% Satisfaction Guarantee

**Code: A1754**

Now You Know Media's mission is to bring you the best Catholic professors and retreat leaders in America. Carefully selected for their scholarship, faithful insight and teaching excellence, our speakers will touch your heart and engage your intellect.

Visit our website, [NowYouKnowMedia.com](http://NowYouKnowMedia.com), to browse our growing catalog of over 200 courses and retreats available in CD, DVD, and MP3 formats.

SYRIA

## As Conflict Enters Fourth Year, Bishops Urge Fast for Peace

**A**s the devastating conflict in Syria began its fourth year on March 15, the Catholic bishops of Syria called for a cease-fire and for combatants to return to negotiations in Geneva to end the suffering in the war-torn country. The bishops encouraged the faithful during Lent, to “fast and show solidarity, charity and collaboration in alleviating the sufferings of internally and externally displaced persons.”

In a statement following its spring session, the Assembly of the Catholic Hierarchy of Syria said: “We declare our rejection of all forms of extremism...murder and extortion and all attacks on people and buildings. We condemn attacks on places of worship, whether churches or mosques.

“We support all efforts toward a peaceful, just and rapid solution to the crisis, especially through a continuance of the Geneva talks,” the bishops said. “We want a united, free, democratic and pluralistic Syria, with the same citizenship criteria for everyone, and we want a worthy life for all constituents of Syrian society, irrespective of party.” Because of difficult travel conditions inside Syria, the meeting on March 12 was held at the Melkite Catholic patriarchal residence in Rabweh, Lebanon.

The Jesuit Refugee Services said the human fallout from the Syrian conflict represents the biggest humanitarian crisis of our times. It warned that in recent months the situation for noncombatants had badly deteriorated as violence intensified and fighting continued throughout the country. According to the United Nations, the number of Syrians in need of humanitarian assistance has risen dramatically to 9.3 million people, up from 6.8 million in June 2013. Similarly, the number of people displaced within the country has increased to more than 6.5 million from 4.25 million.

Every day of violence adds to this number and leaves increasing numbers of civilians under siege. Three million people are now trapped in hard-to-reach or besieged areas, with an estimated 250,000 people cut off from assistance for more than a year. More than 140,000 people have been killed in three years of fighting. Lack of protection marks the conflict, J.R.S. says, with troubling reports of abuse against women and children, including rape.

“I find the most stressful thing is that when you leave the house in the morn-

ing, you don't know if you'll ever see the others again. We can't go out at night; we are always trapped inside. It's suffocating,” said a Jesuit Refugee Service volunteer in Syria.

“After so much continuing violence, Syrians are really tired—frustrated and tired. We need those fighting each other to recall the existence of a minimum of human ethics and respect for basic humanity,” said Nawras Sammour, S.J., the J.R.S. Middle East director, during a recent trip to the United States. “We feel abandoned.”

“We appeal to all citizens, asking them to work for peace by all means, both local and international, and emphasize the need for a cease-fire, dialogue, reconciliation and reconstruction,” Syria's bishops said at the conclusion of their conference. “We all have the responsibility of working hard for peace,” they said. “We appeal to the conscience of all nations, and especially



those countries capable of playing a decisive role in the Syrian crisis, to find a way to end the crisis.

“We beseech the Lord to lead our tragic, bloody way of the cross toward the dawn and joy of the holy Resurrection,” the bishops add. “Let Syria return to its former state of peace, security, love, kindness, communication, fellowship, mutual respect, living together and a worthy life for all citizens.”

‘FRANCIS EFFECT’

## Jesuits Report Surge of Inquiries

**A**s the first anniversary of the election of Pope Francis approached in mid-March, the Pew Research Religion and Public Life Project noted the pope's overwhelming



**WAR CRIME.** A boy of Aleppo weeps amid the rubble of a building bombed by Syrian government forces on March 6.

popularity but reported it could not tease out a discernible “Francis effect” in the behavior of American Catholics. Pew researchers may want to consider interviewing Jesuit vocation directors who are reporting a surge in vocation inquiries since Pope Francis’ election.

Many of the U.S. Jesuit regional vocation offices on the East Coast are reporting a significant uptick in vocation inquiries—anywhere from a low of 67 percent to a high of 116 percent. Chuck Frederico, S.J., vocations director for the Jesuits of the Maryland, New England and New York Provinces, said Pew is definitely missing what has been happening in his office.

He has been “flooded with inquiries” in the last year about vocations with the Jesuits. “From the day that [Pope Francis] was elected through the present, our website has been constant with people filling out the form,” Father Frederico said. “I’m psyched,”

he adds with a laugh. “This is good. I’m busy.” Father Frederico believes other provinces around the country are experiencing the same phenomenon.

“We’ve been hearing from a tremendous number of young men who have no experience with the Society of Jesus—which isn’t typical, because so many of our vocations come from men who have attended Jesuit high schools or colleges,” said Father Frederico. “But these men are new to the Jesuits, and they are inspired by the Holy Father. They’re excited about the Catholic Church and, because of the example of Pope Francis, they want to learn more about the Jesuits. It’s been a tremendous gift.

“We get five to ten [inquiries] a week now,” he said. “Prior [to Pope Francis] we were getting two a week.” It can take years for those expressions of interest to translate into strong candidates for ordination, but Father Frederico remains excited about the higher numbers. “At least a quarter of the serious candidates that I work with have been added as a result of the pope’s election,” he said.

Father Frederico believes Francis has been a liberating model for young people who may have felt a call but were discouraged by social attitudes against the church. Even among those whom Father Frederico does not consider strong candidates, he can find some evidence of the pope’s impact. Many of them, according to Father Frederico, told him they have been away from the church for years but have felt a renewed interest because of Francis.

But it is not just the

Jesuits who have been experiencing the Pope Francis “vocation effect.”

Patrice Tuohy is the executive editor of the Vision Vocation guide, a print and online vocations resource published by the National Religious Vocation Conference. “We’re definitely experiencing a Francis effect,” she said. Tuohy cites increased inquiries and web and social media traffic as evidence.

Tuohy first began noticing increasing interest in July as the pope began gathering world headlines during the World Youth Day celebrations in Brazil.

“We’re still not talking about huge numbers here,” she cautions. “In a world that is selling sex, power and money, we’re still selling chastity, poverty and obedience. It’s a tough sell.” All the same, Tuohy believes Pope Francis has been “planting seeds” that may eventually translate into more vocations. Tuohy reports that 74 percent of those who responded to a survey at Vision said Pope Francis had spurred their interest in a religious life. “That is what Francis is doing,” she said. “He is putting religious life and a church vocation on the radar for young people, when it has not been on their radar for a number of years.” **KEVIN CLARKE**



**FRANCIS EFFECTIVE.** Has the pope helped make a vocation promoter’s job easier?



## Ukrainian Catholics Fear 'New Oppression'

A Ukrainian Catholic priest in Crimea said church members are alarmed and frightened by the Russian military occupation and fear their communities might be outlawed again if Russian rule becomes permanent. The Rev. Mykhailo Milchakovskiy, a pastor in Kerch, Ukraine, described the atmosphere as tense because many residents of the town located in the eastern part of Crimea were unsure of their future. "No one knows what will happen. Many people are trying to sell their homes and move to other parts of Ukraine," Father Milchakovskiy said on March 12. "Our church has no legal status in the Russian Federation, so it's uncertain which laws will be applied if Crimea is annexed. We fear our churches will be confiscated and our clergy arrested," the priest said, amid growing tensions over a referendum on March 16 that will decide whether the autonomous territory should join Russia. He feared Russian rule would inflict a "new oppression" on Ukrainian Catholics, whose five communities traditionally make up about 10 percent of the Crimean Peninsula's two million inhabitants. "Many have already stopped coming to church after being branded nationalists and fascists by local provocateurs," Father Milchakovskiy said.

## Lent: It's Not Just for Catholics Anymore

A growing interest in the tradition of Lent is giving Protestants something more in common with Catholics. Though slightly different in practice, some call this a step toward convergence in the global church. Christopher Ruddy, an associate professor at The Catholic University of America who is an expert on ecumenism and eccle-

## NEWS BRIEFS

After 16 homicides in San Mateo County, Calif., last year, grieving mothers and the members of St. Francis of Assisi in East Palo Alto, walked their neighborhood on March 8, praying the Stations of the Cross for an **end to gang violence**.

• More than 35,000 people have signed an Internet petition urging the American Pharmacists Association to **stop making drugs for use in executions** by lethal injection. • The Holy See on March 10 confirmed that Pope Francis will visit the **Republic of Korea** from Aug. 14 to Aug. 18 on the occasion of the Sixth Asian Youth Day. • Former rebel commander **Salvador Sánchez Céren** of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front was declared the winner on March 13 of El Salvador's hotly contested presidential election. • In **Pakistan's capital of Islamabad**, more than 5,000 Christian families who have lived for years in overcrowded slum conditions now face homelessness, as a High Court judge on Feb. 9 gave municipal authorities 30 days to clear out 10 settlements where they reside.



Praying to end gang violence

siology, said of the Protestant churches rediscovering Lent, "There's certainly a sense of a spiritual desire to prepare for Lent...a desire of conversion." Washington's multisite National Community Church is one among several Protestant churches to have adopted Lenten practices of fasting and giving up material things and habits. "Lent is about repentance; it's about confession," Joel Schmidgall, the church's executive pastor, said in a sermon on March 2. "It's about pruning and cutting things back so that you can grow closer to Christ."

## Genocide Threat Grows In Central Africa

Muslims are being "cleansed" from the western part of the Central African Republic, and thousands of civilians risk being killed "right before our eyes," the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, António Guterres, told

the U.N. Security Council on March 6. U.N. Emergency Coordinator Valerie Amos on March 10 described an "extremely grave" situation after months of interreligious violence that has wrecked state institutions, left millions on the brink of starvation and now threatens to draw in the wider region. About half the population, 2.2 million people, are now in need of humanitarian aid as a result of the conflict, which erupted when Muslim Seleka rebels launched attacks in December 2012. The fighting has taken on increasingly sectarian tones as mainly Christian militias known as anti-Balaka ("anti-machete") have taken up arms against Seleka rebels and now against anyone thought to be a Seleka sympathizer. A U.N. official in Geneva warned that the spread of propaganda and the collapse of law and order could be a precursor to serious human rights violations, including genocide.

From CNS and other sources.



# Thank You, Professor

One of the most unexpected blessings of being a Jesuit has been coming to know so many wonderful scholars—men and women deeply learned in a wide variety of fields. Before entering the Jesuits, the only contact I had with academics was listening to them lecture behind a podium.

Recently I wrote about my admiration for Daniel J. Harrington, S.J., the New Testament scholar who died in February (“Speaking the Word of God,” 3/10). But Dan is just one of many Jesuit scholars I’ve come to know. When I began studying at Weston Jesuit School of Theology, I met Richard Clifford, S.J., one of the world’s leading Old Testament scholars, at a Jesuit gathering. By way of conversation, I asked what he was teaching this semester. “Well,” he said, “Introduction to the Old Testament, Psalms and a tutorial on Akkadian.” Laughing, I told him how inadequate I felt. Not only had I never taught Akkadian, I had never studied it, nor had I any idea what it was!

Sometimes I forget how knowledgeable my brothers are. A few years ago I was in a church sacristy before Palm Sunday, preparing for the reading of the Passion. I wondered about the correct pronunciation of “Eli, eli, lema sabachthani,” one of Jesus’ utterances from the cross. Then it dawned on me: standing a few feet away was Anthony SooHoo, S.J., who is pursuing a Ph.D. in ancient languages. When I asked, Anthony gave me a classic Jesuit answer, “Well, actually there are two ways....”

**JAMES MARTIN, S.J.**, is editor at large of *America* and author of the new book *Jesus: A Pilgrimage* (HarperOne). Follow @JamesMartinSJ.

Working at *America* has also introduced me to some of the world’s top Catholic scholars, Jesuit and otherwise: priests, religious and lay men and women. Some I’ve edited. Some I’ve corresponded with. Some I’ve met in person. Some have become friends.

Consequently, it’s always a treat when journalists call with what seems to them like a hopelessly abstruse Catholic question. “Father,” someone will ask, “I’m doing a story on the pallium. Do you know anyone who can talk to me about that?” Better than that, I will say, I know a Jesuit who did his doctoral dissertation on the pallium. (That’s Steven Schoenig, S.J., at Saint Louis University, for any pallium-ophiles.) While preparing to serve as a television commentator for Pope Francis’ installation Mass, it occurred to me that someone might ask about the pallium. I turned to Steve, who sent me a flawless two-paragraph précis. So I was able to dazzle the TV anchors with my newly found—and now sadly forgotten—knowledge about that item of liturgical vesture.

All this turned out to be immensely helpful when I was writing my new book on Jesus. Knowing a host of New Testament experts meant that I could not only consult their books and articles; I could send them an email or call them with questions. It was a huge blessing for a non-academic like me to be able to communicate with so many scholar-friends. In time, I sent copies of the manuscript to a dozen New Testament scholars for their corrections and comments.

What I received back was exegetical gold. Elizabeth Johnson, C.S.J., for example, reminded me of the significance of the question of whether Mary of Bethany anointed Jesus’ head or feet. John W. Martens (author of *America’s Word* column) pointed out how important filial loyalty would have been for Zebedee’s sons, lest we think leaving “everything” behind was easy for James and John. John R. Donahue, S.J., sent me an email full of insights about whether Jesus expected everyone to “get” his parables.

I am grateful to have read, studied with and known many talented scholars.

And Thomas D. Stegman, S.J., noted that when Jesus says he will “make” the disciples fishers of men, the Greek word used is *poieo*, from which we get the words *poem* and *poetry*, which conveys a sense of creating something new.

In his note, Tom did something that I associate with the best scholars: he shared his wisdom in a way that doesn’t make one feel ignorant. His moving commentary about *poieo* was prefaced with the comment, “As you know, Jim, the word *poieo*...”

Well, I didn’t know. Just as I didn’t know what Akkadian was. Or where the pallium came from.

But I’m glad to know now. And I’m grateful to have been able to read, study with and now know so many talented scholars, who labored for many years in graduate school, cranked out dozens of papers and sweated over their Ph.D.’s—all serious and committed academics—who have helped so many of us understand the riches of our faith, both pallium and *poieo*.



**LAOS**

Pop.: 6,695,155  
 GDP: \$19.5B  
 GDP/Capita: \$3,100  
 Main Religion: Buddhist

**MYANMAR**

(Formerly Burma)  
 Pop.: 55,167,330  
 GDP: \$90.9B  
 GDP/Capita: \$1,400  
 Main Religion: Buddhist

**VIETNAM**

Pop.: 92,477,857  
 GDP: \$325.9B  
 GDP/Capita: \$3,600  
 Main Religion: Buddhist

**THAILAND**

Pop.: 67,448,120  
 GDP: \$662.6B  
 GDP/Capita: \$10,300  
 Main Religion: Buddhist

**PHILIPPINES**

Pop.: 105,720,644  
 GDP: \$431.3B  
 GDP/Capita: \$4,500  
 Main Religion: Christian

**CAMBODIA**

Pop.: 15,205,539  
 GDP: \$37.6B  
 GDP/Capita: \$2,400  
 Main Religion: Buddhist

**BRUNEI**

Pop.: 415,717  
 GDP: \$22B  
 GDP/Capita: \$55,300  
 Main Religion: Muslim

**MALAYSIA**

Pop.: 29,628,392  
 GDP: \$506.7B  
 GDP/Capita: \$17,200  
 Main Religion: Muslim

**INDONESIA**

Pop.: 251,160,124  
 GDP: \$1.24T  
 GDP/Capita: \$5,100  
 Main Religion: Muslim

**SINGAPORE**

Pop.: 5,460,302  
 GDP: \$331.9B  
 GDP/Capita: \$61,400  
 Main Religion: Buddhist

SOURCE: CIA WORLD FACTBOOK JULY 2013  
 Populations are 2013 estimates  
 GDP & GDP/Capita are 2012 estimates, and are  
 normalized against US\$ purchasing power  
 T=trillion; B=billion



**U.S.A.**  
Pop.: 316,668,567  
GDP:\$ 15.7T  
GDP/Capita: \$50,700



## THE COMPLEX DIVERSITY OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

# A Strategic Link

BY JOHN FRANKENSTEIN

**S**outheast Asia is a geographer's term of convenience (like "Europe") that conceals a fascinating mix of cultures and history. To an American the region may seem far away: Singapore lies more than 8,400 watery miles from San Francisco; it is over 10,000 miles and 12 time zones from New York to Jakarta. It takes a sensational mystery like the disappearance of Malaysian airliner MH370 or stories of massive destruction, like the Sumatran earthquake and tsunami in 2004, which killed thousands of people from Indonesia to India, to make the U.S. front pages or the evening news. But other major stories, like the smog from Indonesian fires choking Singapore and Malaysia, or China's gun-boat diplomacy in the South China Sea, tend to barely reach the inside pages or PBS. The media need to do better.

And we would do well to pay attention. The region is a strategic link between Middle Eastern oil and the Pacific. While it is hardly the cockpit of major power contention, it is where the political and economic interests of India, China, the United States and Japan rub up against each other. The region itself, an ethnic and cultural shatterbelt, where the Cold War was hot and where revolutionary struggles ended decades of colonialism, should excite our interest. The location, bounded on the north by China, on the south and west by the Indian Ocean and on the east by the South China Sea and the Pacific, can only suggest the range of the region's enormous diversity. Yet as diverse as it is, there are certain commonalities as well. Understanding the mix is essential for an appreciation of the 10 countries of Southeast Asia.

Demographic statistics reveal the diversity. Populations range from Brunei's 415,700 to Indonesia's 251 million. Singapore is a Chinese city-state about the size of greater Washington D.C. Indonesia's 17,000 islands stretch across more than 3,000 miles, from Sumatra to New Guinea. (See map, left.)

The region weathered the global financial crisis of 2008 well, and has seen

---

**JOHN FRANKENSTEIN** teaches courses on Asia and international business at Brooklyn College/City University of New York. A former U.S. diplomat, he lived and worked in Asia for many years.

MAP: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/VOLINA AND AMERICA



faster economic growth than the world average of between 5 percent and 7 percent in recent years. (The finance ministers of the region had learned their lesson from the Asian financial crisis of 1996, which saw currencies and exports collapse.) The aggregate economic power of the region is more than US \$2.2 trillion (roughly equivalent to that of France, tenth in the world). Average yearly personal incomes (calculated as U.S. dollar equivalents G.D.P./capita) range from Myanmar's \$1,400 to Singapore's \$61,400. But averages conceal unequal distributions. While there is an emerging urban middle class, topped by a small group of extremely wealthy families, poverty remains an issue throughout the region; between one-fifth and one-third of the populations of Myanmar and Cambodia are deemed to live below the official poverty line.

### Peoples and Beliefs

Ethnicities and religions add further complexity to the region. The populations of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines are mainly of Malay origin. The Vietnamese, Thais, Laotians, Cambodians and Burmese are all quite distinct peoples with their own languages and alphabets. The Vietnamese, who formerly wrote in Chinese, today employ a modified Latin orthography. The other writing systems are based on Indian scripts. In each country there is a significant Chinese minority (almost one-quarter of the Malaysian population) that traces its origins to Southern China. It dominates the regional economy through a so-called "bamboo network" of fellow provincial and clan members. Their minority status and economic power have made them targets for discrimination or, in some cases, race riots, even though in the Philippines and Thailand they have integrated with local elites.

Local, often animistic, beliefs infuse the various flavors of the majority religions practiced in the region. Catholicism, brought by the Spanish to the Philippines in the 16th century, retains its Iberian fervor (remember that the islands are named after Philip II, a zealous protector of the faith and the most powerful king in Europe at the time). Islam, brought to Southeast Asia by Arab traders, dominates in Indonesia (the world's largest Muslim nation) and in Malaysia, a self-styled Islamic state. It remains in enclaves in Myanmar, Thailand and, most significantly, on the island province of Mindanao in the Philippines, where it fuels a separatist movement. Thailand is predominately Buddhist, as are Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos. In Vietnam, officially an atheist Communist state, Buddhism and Daoist faiths are widely practiced.

### Political Diversity

The diversity deepens when we look at the political systems of the region. Brunei is an oil sheikdom. Myanmar is slowly emerging from decades of stifling, isolating military rule. Leninist parties rule Vietnam and Laos. Cambodia is still struggling with the disaster of the genocidal Pol Pot regime. Thailand is a constitutional monarchy, but its government is under great pressure from popular demonstrations that have paralyzed Bangkok, and the potential for a military takeover, which has happened in the past, cannot be ruled out. Malaysia's parliamentary system has been long dominated by ethnic politics—the United Malays National Organization, representing the majority Malay population, has retained electoral power since the 1960s. The People's Action Party monopolizes Singapore's "Confucian democracy."

Indonesia survived Sukarno's idiosyncratic rule by personality and Suharto's military-dominated regime and now has a lively parliamentary system with more than nine political parties contending. Americans should find the Philippines' often abused presidential system familiar; it was bequeathed by the United States following the end of American colonial rule in 1946. Despite the different systems in these nations, national pride and a strong attachment to the principle of sovereignty marks them all.

Despite all the social diversity outlined above, the one historical fact of colonialism links the nations of Southeast Asia. With the single exception of Thailand, all of the countries in the region were colonies of a Western power at the turn of the 20th century. The Dutch East India Company arrived in the vast archipelago of

**Despite their bloody and tumultuous history, the nations of Southeast Asia were compelled to find a way to manage their issues.**

Indonesia, then romantically called the Spice Islands, in the early 17th century. Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos) fell to France in the late 19th century. The British in the 19th century extended their rule of the Indian Raj to Myanmar and later occupied the Malay Peninsula from the Thai border in the north down to Singapore and parts of Borneo at the tip of the Malacca Strait. The United States ruled the Philippines, a brutally seized prize of the Spanish American War in 1898.

World War II changed all that. Japan occupied much of Southeast Asia during the war, but ironically, promoted national liberation by showing that the ostensibly all-powerful West was not invincible. The colonial powers slowly ceded independence to their subjects after the defeat of the Japanese. The Philippines, a self-governing U.S. commonwealth since the 1930s, gained full independence in a peace-

ful transition in 1946. But changes were not always calm.

Malaysia was plagued by a Communist insurgency in the 1950s and '60s (a conflict known as the Emergency) and endured conflicts with Indonesia and the Philippines after gaining independence from Britain in 1957. In 1965, Singapore, originally part of the Malaysian Federation, split off following racial disturbances and irreconcilable differences between Lee Kwan Yew in Singapore and Tunku Abdul Rahman in Kuala Lumpur.

Independence came to Indonesia in 1949 only after a bitter struggle with the Dutch. And in the case of Indochina, the reunification of Vietnam in 1975 took 30 years of war, first with France and then, tragically, with a disastrously misguided United States, culminating in the reunification of Vietnam. And in the wreckage of that conflict, the Maoist revolutionary Pol Pot, zealously attempting to create a perfect agricultural society, tortured and murdered some 3 million of his fellow Cambodians, only to be deposed himself by an invasion from Vietnam.

### The Asean Solution

But despite, or perhaps because of, this bloody and tumultuous history, the nations of Southeast Asia were compelled to find a way to manage their issues. In 1967, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand came together to form the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The aim was to create a forum to discuss regional issues and to establish a much-needed zone of peace and neutrality. Internationally, they were surrounded by the Vietnam War and the insane chaos of the Cultural Revolution in China.

While Indonesia had ended its territorial confrontation with Malaysia and Singapore, the bloody anti-Communist and anti-Chinese pogrom that followed the fall of Sukarno, with perhaps a million victims, had shocked the world. Indeed, they all mistrusted China. The People's Republic had been involved in the earlier Malayan Emergency and was seen to have had a major role in the Indonesian Communist Party's attempted coup and assassination of Indonesian military leaders as Sukarno fell. Surely the time was ripe for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. As a Southeast Asian proverb states: when the water buffalo fight, the grass suffers.

Today, Asean has expanded to include Brunei, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and, most recently, Myanmar. Asean, headquartered in Jakarta, sponsors major international summits that attract leaders not only from Asia but the United States and Europe as well. Economic and social development, trade and security cooperation are its main foci. It is an important regional grouping, attracting the northeast Asian economic powerhouses of China, Japan and South Korea to affiliate as "Asean+3." It serves as a kernel for other international

ANNUAL SPRING MCGINLEY LECTURE

# Usury: A Moral Problem for Jews, Christians and Muslims

The Reverend Patrick J. Ryan, S.J.  
Laurence J. McGinley Professor  
of Religion and Society

#### RESPONDENTS

Rabbi Daniel Polish, Ph.D.  
Congregation Shir Chadash, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Professor Hussein Rashid, Ph.D.  
Hofstra University, Hempstead, N.Y.

---

*This lecture will be delivered first on*

**Tuesday, April 8, 2014, 6 p.m.**

12th-floor Lounge | E. Gerald Corrigan Conference Center  
Lowenstein Center | 113 W. 60th St.  
Lincoln Center Campus | New York City

*and repeated on*

**Wednesday, April 9, 2014, 6 p.m.**

Flom Auditorium | Walsh Library  
Rose Hill Campus | Bronx, N.Y.

---

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

For more information, please call 718-817-4745  
or e-mail [mcgchair@fordham.edu](mailto:mcgchair@fordham.edu).

[fordham.edu/mcginleychair](http://fordham.edu/mcginleychair)



**FORDHAM**  
THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



groupings like the 27-member Asian Regional Forum (a security forum) and the Asia-Pacific Cooperation, a 21-member grouping of states from around the Pacific, including the United States.

The “Asean way” is to talk through difficulties. Reaching consensus and understanding is more important than hard-boiled confrontation. One Asian saying has it that “a bad compromise is better than a good lawsuit.” As such, some deride Asean as a “mere” talking shop. But, as an official once confided to me, the real value of Asean meetings is that they allow working officials to get to know one another, so when an issue arises, problems can be dealt with by personal phone calls rather than official *démarches*.

Asean is working towards becoming a grouping that will greatly liberalize trade and investment. The target date for the establishment of an Asean Economic Community and the elimination of regional tariffs is 2015. Increasing intra-regional trade and consumption will be crucial. The final destination for most of Asean’s production still lies outside the region. The region has promoted free trade agreements with China, Korea, Japan, India, Australia and New Zealand. Other international agreements cover investment, aviation, services and education. The United States, for its part, has promoted plans to promote increased trade and investment with the region.

## **Social Problems, Security Dilemmas**

But trade and development make up only one part of the story. Social issues are never far away. Alleviation of poverty remains an Asean goal. Countries must prepare against the severe natural disasters—typhoons, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions—that periodically rack the region. Drugs still flow from the notorious Thai-Myanmar-Laos Golden Triangle poppy fields. Human trafficking remains a stain. AIDS has compromised public health and life expectancy in the poorer countries. Labor issues need to be addressed. Religious conflicts throughout the region and laws against conversion in Malaysia put religious freedom at risk. Freedom of expression is not always honored. Criticize a Singaporean official and you may be hit with a libel suit.

And, of course, strategic and security issues are significant. For starters, perhaps as much as 40 percent of all ocean-borne commerce, including oil from the Middle East destined for China, Taiwan, Japan and Korea, transits the long but narrow Malacca Straits on its way north and east, a passage between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea and the Pacific. Maintaining freedom of navigation in those waters, then, is in the interest of all nations, particularly the Asean states and the United States.

There is no dispute that Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia must cooperate when it comes to the straits. But China has claimed that the South China Sea is, in fact, its

territorial waters, and is in conflict over potential energy and fishing resources with every country on the sea’s littoral—the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Brunei and Malaysia. No matter that most maritime experts find that China’s claims are based on dubious historical and legal reasoning and probably contravene the United Nations’ Law of the Sea.

Here is a case in point: the Scarborough Reef dispute. These fishing waters lie about 120 miles off Luzon, the largest of the Philippine Islands chain. They also lie about 500 miles from the nearest Chinese coast. It would seem clear that they lie within the Philippine’s exclusive economic zone as defined by the Law of the Sea. But Chinese maps put it within the arbitrary “Nine Dotted Line” that defines China’s claim to the area. China has stationed modern coast guard vessels in the area, closing it off to Philippine fishermen. The Philippine Navy is not capable of mounting a challenge.

Vietnam and other Asean members claim other reefs and shoals in the South China Sea. There may be oil and gas beneath the waves. China’s reaction to those claims has been to deny them aggressively, claiming “indisputable sovereignty” over the waters, a “core interest” of the Chinese state. As such, China would prefer to deal with these disputes on a one-to-one basis, but Asean as a group is trying to form a collective response and move to international arbitration. China rejects these moves.

Even more worrying to China are U.S. interests and commitments to the Philippines (like a defense treaty) and other Asean members, as well as the international perception that the sea is, in fact, not a territorial possession but a freely navigable international waterway. Chinese behavior in these cases is somewhat paradoxical. China’s “good neighbor” policies—trade and cultural deals—seemed designed to diminish Asean’s ties to outside powers, but in fact its territorial claims seem to reinforce the perception in South East Asia that a strong U.S. presence in the region is necessary. Indeed, Chinese claims and actions are driving Asian nations together. Japan, also involved in serious maritime disputes with China, has offered its support to the Philippines. There is a strong suspicion that China, flexing its muscles, would like to re-establish the old hierarchical tribute system of imperial times.

The many islands that lie between the Philippines and Indonesia in the Sulu Sea are virtually impossible to police, and they have been known to shelter pirates and some terrorist gangs. The insurgency fomented by Muslim separatists in Mindanao, the Moros, has festered for decades, and putting them down has involved U.S. special forces cooperating with the Philippine Army. The southern area of Thailand bordering Malaysia has seen a long-running, if low level, insurgency pitting Muslims and Buddhists against each other. In Myanmar, ethnic conflicts between Burmese

and a Muslim minority in an area bordering Bangladesh and between Burmese and Karin tribespeople in the northern part of the country have been brutal. The Philippines and Malaysia have a long-running armed dispute over Sabah, a territory in Borneo. And in Indonesia, Islamist terrorists have carried out brazen attacks on Indonesians and foreigners alike. The nightclub bombings in Bali in 2002 that killed 200 people and attacks on luxury hotels in Jakarta were the most notorious of these. The group Jemaah Islamiyah, which aims to establish a Southeast Asian caliphate and has links to Al Qaeda, remains at large, with cells throughout the region. Police action against terrorism has diminished their activities, but they still remain.

### A Positive U.S. Role

Today, even as old struggles still echo and economic and social problems persist, the region's hopeful political evolution, growing prosperity and increasing importance to the global economy have raised its profile. International investments are increasing to take advantage of Asean's favorable environment. Asean punches above its weight in the world economy.

Surveys carried out by the American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore show that U.S. businesses are welcome in the region. Yes, there are problems:

corruption, bureaucracy and, in some cases, poor transportation infrastructure. But international firms have an upbeat view of the future of Southeast Asia. Asian and Western multinational corporations have extensive operations throughout the region. The hard drive in your laptop was probably fashioned out of parts from all over the world in a factory not far from Bangkok. According to the office of the U.S. Trade Representative, U.S.-Asean two-way trade totaled \$220 billion in 2011, with U.S. investment in the region reaching \$159 billion the same year. The potential for reaching 600 million customers in a vibrant region cannot be overlooked. Indeed, according to the U.S.-Asean Business Council, in 2012 Asean was the United State's fourth largest export market at \$75.5 billion (after Canada, Mexico and China but ahead of Japan).

The "Asean way" has paid dividends in the relative peace, growing prosperity and political progress of the region. The Asean states and the United States share many interests, with freedom of navigation, free trade and security among them. Surely it is in the interest of the United States that Asean's development should continue, free of great power interference. Awareness in the United States of the issues in the complex arena of Southeast Asia will help ensure that our involvement there will be positive. ▲

**ON THE WEB**  
 Reporting from  
 Catholic News Service.  
[americamagazine.org/news](http://americamagazine.org/news)

**Practical tools for priests, deacons, and today's parish leaders**

**A Pastor's Toolbox**  
 Management Skills for Parish Leadership  
 Paul A. Holmes, Editor

*A Pastor's Toolbox* provides valuable information, insights, and practical tools that pastors need in order to begin handling the complexities of parish management in the twenty-first century.

978-0-8146-3808-8 Paperback, 192 pp., \$19.95  
 978-0-8146-3833-0 eBook, \$17.99

-----

"This splendid work—edited by a savvy priest known for his sensitive work with brother priests—is as timely and as helpful as can be."  
 Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan  
 Archbishop of New York

**LITURGICAL PRESS • 1-800-858-5450 • [www.litpress.org](http://www.litpress.org)**

# A GIFT *for the* CHURCH *and* WORLD

*Please include America  
in your estate plan today.*

Your generosity will allow America to lead the conversation  
about faith and culture for years to come.

To learn how you can add America to your estate plan,  
contact DAN PAWLUS at  
(212) 515 - 0118 or [pawlus@americamagazine.org](mailto:pawlus@americamagazine.org)

- I have made America a beneficiary of my estate in the following manner:

---

---

I would like to know more about making a lasting gift through my estate plan.  
I'm interested in:

- gifts by will or living trust  
 gifts that provide me and/or my family with lifetime income

Please cut along dotted line and mail to:  
AMERICA MAGAZINE | 106 WEST 56<sup>TH</sup> STREET | NEW YORK, NY 10019



# Rising in the East

Can Japan balance economic growth against the hazards of nuclear power?

BY KAREN SUE SMITH

**T**he grim public mood among the Japanese appears to have lifted. And why not? With four contiguous quarters of higher-than-expected economic growth, Japan's economy finally seems to be recovering. To put this achievement in context, in the first half of 2013 Japan ranked first in growth among the world's seven most developed nations. And the selection of Tokyo as the site of the 2020 Summer Olympics has further ratcheted up the public mood.

These changes are stunning when you consider that in March 2011 a huge earthquake followed by a tsunami killed nearly 20,000 people, displaced more than 300,000 people and wreaked havoc nationwide. The historic disaster included a partial meltdown of several reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant that released radiation and other

toxins into the water and atmosphere. Initial finger-pointing by the Tokyo Electric Power Company and the government bewildered and depressed the public. Then Tepco, as the energy company is known, embarked on a costly ongoing effort to stop the leaks and clean up the mess. For its part, the government relocated residents from the danger zone, set out to rebuild what the earthquake and tsunami had destroyed and tried to calm and reassure a stricken nation. But the public remained wary and distrustful—with good reason.

Now, three years later, despite the cleanup effort so far, radiation levels in the towns worst hit are still more than twice the level considered safe for human health. According to a report released last September, some leaks continue to contaminate groundwater systems, and there is no long-term resolution to the problem in sight. This continuing contamination is taking place some 155 miles from Tokyo, one of the world's largest cities. Many of those displaced from their

---

KAREN SUE SMITH is the former editorial director of *America*.



Yokohama, Japan, February 2014.

homes in the contamination zone, including some 83,000 people still unable to return, have lost faith in their government's ability to protect them. For Japanese society at large, the question is whether the negatives of atomic energy, made vivid during this nuclear disaster, are outweighed by the positives. How can people in nations prone to earthquakes and tsunamis (or other frequent natural disasters) believe that nuclear power provides "safe and affordable" energy, given the cost of cleanup and the industry's long-term hazards? Yet such doubts have still not fueled sustained antinuclear political power even in Japan. Rather, the movement proceeds in fits and starts.

## Power to the People

Initially, the Fukushima meltdown tapped into a deep strain of antinuclear sentiment among the Japanese. Antinuclear organizations persuaded the public to pressure the government to shutter the nation's existing power plants and shelve plans for new plant construction. The public sought government assurance that other nuclear reactors were equipped, or could be built, to withstand a natural disaster, or even a series of disasters, and that their managers could handle such an emergency if it happened. Antinuclear sentiment also played a role in the public's growing desire for a change of political leadership. These are two real achievements of the movement.

As rebuilding commenced, the cleanup progressed and the memory of the disaster dimmed, however, the antinuclear movement lost some momentum. At the same time other issues, particularly the global recession and its effects on Japan, overtook the public's concern. Meanwhile, unemployment, consumer prices and interest on public debt rose without any corresponding increase in wages or tax revenues. Several of these factors are interrelated. The cost of Middle East oil, for example, has sorely pinched a nation that imports nearly all of its energy and was trying to become more self-reliant through atomic energy. Japanese business leaders urging the reopening of at least a few of Japan's nuclear power plants are finding increasing support as oil prices press the economy and threaten Japan's recovery.

Unexpectedly, the antinuclear movement has found a surprising new ally in former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who has reversed his former support for nuclear power. In a speech to a business group in October, Mr. Koizumi said that Japan "should achieve zero nuclear plants and aim for a more sustainable society." But the future strength of the movement is not at all clear.

Japan also faces regional issues, like the increasing military strength and aggressiveness of both China and North Korea. Given such complexity it is small wonder that the

Japanese find their country's recent economic rebound cause for celebration.

## 'Abenomics' and Japan's Recovery

The upswing actually began in December 2012 with the landslide election of a new government, the Liberal Democratic Party, led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. In terms of the economy, which was the definitive issue at the time, the electorate seems to have chosen well. After nearly a year of Mr. Abe's monetary easing and stimulus policies, called "Abenomics," productivity is up and so is the Japanese stock market. (Yes, the Japanese yen has fallen in value, which hurts savers and some small businesses. But the currency slide will likely produce a more positive balance of trade as a weaker yen increases the affordability of Japanese exports.)

At this point, though, the recovery could easily be derailed, which has some economists quaking. More than one economist, for example, warned Mr. Abe against raising the national sales tax rate, fearing a contraction of the economy. But the prime minister has another idea. When he announced in October 2013 his intention to increase the sales tax from 5 percent to 8 percent in April 2014, Mr. Abe explained that he would offset adverse effects by plowing most of the revenue collected by the tax back into the economy through stimulus programs. Mr. Abe plans to tax consumers to pay for further stimulus—mostly public works and corporate tax cuts. He has even talked about raising the sales tax again in 2015, to 10 percent. By that time, experts and the electorate will have a better idea of how well and in what ways Mr. Abe's offset plan has worked, and they can factor it into their decisions at the next general election in 2016. (Japan's monetary easing and stimulus, it should be noted, are the opposite of the austerity approach favored by the European Union, which so far has had much less success turning the European economy around.)

Mr. Abe's next step may be to try to convince the world's biggest savers—Japanese consumers—to spend more of their earnings and savings at Japan's shopping malls. That would help keep the economy growing throughout the decade, one of Mr. Abe's goals. Achieving a decade of growth could make paying down the nation's staggering debt (currently 245 percent of the gross domestic product) both providentially timed and politically feasible.

## Olympic Mettle

Finally, the 2020 Summer Olympics could also help keep Japanese spirits up. Not only will the games give Japan's government a rationale for public spending on infrastructure (another economic stimulant) but they are expected to be

### ON THE WEB

Subscribe to America's  
free podcast.

[americamagazine.podbean.com](http://americamagazine.podbean.com)



profitable, adding around \$14 billion to Japan's economy, according to one estimate. There are additional benefits. By focusing public attention on an event the whole society can look forward to, the games rally and unify the public. They also place Japan in the world's spotlight for a summer, display the achievements of Japan's individual citizens and entire culture, solidify Japan's place among nations and show off Japan's economic recovery.

And there is also a link back to Fukushima. Before the International Olympic Committee selected Tokyo, it asked Japan's leaders for assurance that the lingering radiation from the meltdown would not harm athletes and spectators. The games, in other words, give the government and Tepco further impetus to clean up and resolve residual issues. Preventing nuclear contamination of water and air so close to a city of 13 million people is a daunting task for any government and power company. But that is also the reality of the challenges facing atomic power.

Mr. Abe's landslide victory, pundits say, is based primarily on his proposals to revive Japan's economy. Even so, the people have elected a leader with a reputation as a military hawk and a booster of nuclear energy. Short of a conversion along the lines of Mr. Koizumi, both of Mr. Abe's past enthusiasms—military and atomic power—give cause for concern. The Japanese, their regional neighbors and others who worry about nuclear energy production, which always carries with it the potential for the development of nuclear weapons, will have to stay alert. If Japan's nuclear plants reopen, the public should demand proof of their stability, a schedule of regular safety inspections and the release of company strategies to deal with emergencies. The anti-nuclear movement should also join with environmentalists, enlisting the help of the converted Mr. Koizumi, to educate the public and press the government to develop alternative sources of energy, like solar and wind energy, that pose no known dangers.

# Bucket List 2014

- climb Mount Everest
- win Pulitzer
- bike from coast to coast
- meet Pope Francis
- attend Summer Institute at CTU!



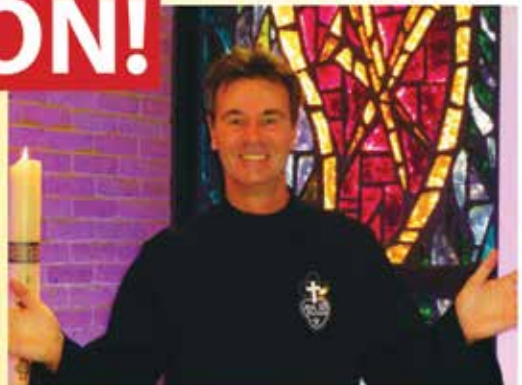
Deepen your theological knowledge, sharpen your ministerial skills, and broaden your perspective while studying with CTU's renowned faculty. Summer courses are designed to fit busy schedules and varying academic interests.

CTU in Chicago is a great place to spend part of your summer!

For details, visit [ctu.edu/summer-institute](http://ctu.edu/summer-institute)

## PASSION!

Fr. Cedric Pisegna, C.P. is a Passionist priest who preaches parish missions all over the United States.



Fr. Cedric's television program **Live with Passion!** airs nationally on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) Sunday mornings at 8 am ET/ 5am PT (Cable; ATT 560; Dish: 260; Direct: 372, some antenna.)

**His programs will inspire and encourage you to know God more deeply and to live with Passion!**

**For more information visit [www.frcedric.org](http://www.frcedric.org)**





**How are you being called to serve?**



**JESUITS®**

Jesuit Conference  
1016 16th Street, NW, #400  
Washington, DC 20036

202.462.0400  
[www.Jesuits.org](http://www.Jesuits.org)

# Ford's Foundation

The consistency and compassion of a pastoral theologian

BY AARON PIDEL

John C. Ford, S.J., (1902-89) has the rather dubious distinction of being one of the most eminent theologians of the 20th century and one of the least remembered in the 21st. Writing in the year of Father Ford's death, Richard McCormick, S.J., could still vividly recall a time when Father Ford enjoyed such a "towering" reputation that his verdict on a disputed case almost automatically qualified as "solidly probable opinion"—that is, as counsel well-founded enough to resolve a doubtful conscience.

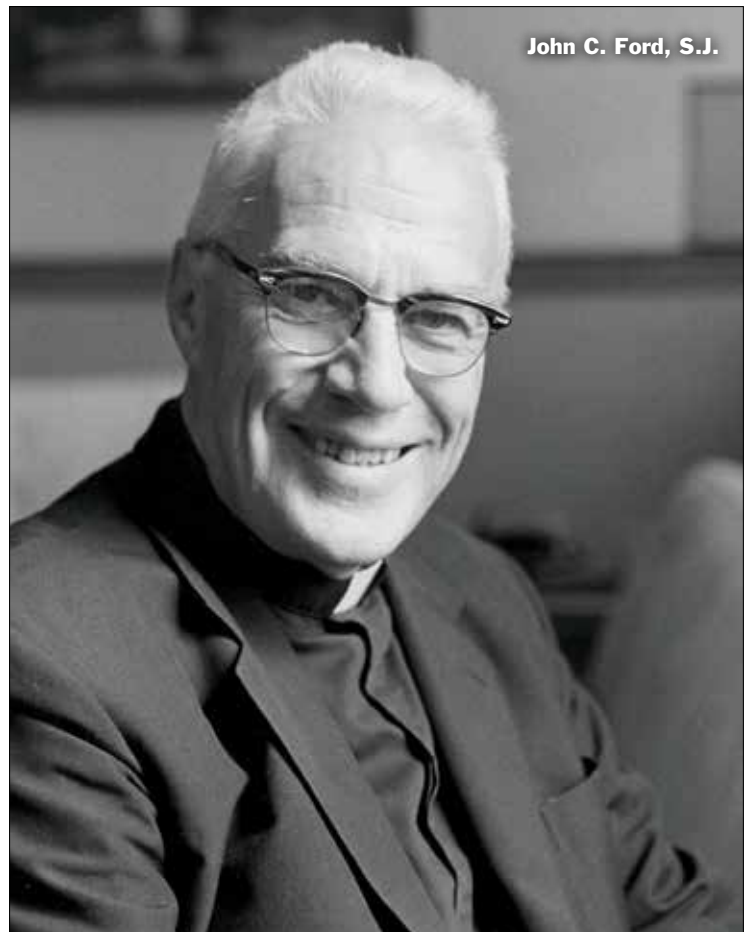
Twenty-five years later, not only has Father Ford's heyday faded, but so has the recollection of that heyday. His name is remembered now—if it is remembered at all—almost exclusively in connection with the controversies surrounding Pope Paul VI's encyclical "Humanae Vitae," published in 1968. The final report of the papal commission on birth control, of which Father Ford was a member and which preceded publication of the encyclical, had called for a change in the church's prohibition against artificial birth control. Father Ford, however, strongly argued in favor of church teaching, helped write the paper that became known as the "minority position" and later argued for the infallibility of the encyclical. To the dismay of many of his fellow Jesuits, he also collaborated with Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle of Washington in the censure of priests who, in one way or another, resisted the implementation of "Humanae Vitae." As a result, and despite his lasting and varied contributions to Catholic moral theology in the United States during his career, Father Ford is now best remembered for his position on the encyclical.

It is regrettable that the recollection of Father Ford's career is so narrow. This is true not because his positions in the field of reproductive morality are unrepresentative of his broader work. They are. Nor is it too bad merely because he came down on the "wrong side of history," at least according to Gallup polls. It is a shame because there are probably some who, knowing little else about him, may imagine he was a hidebound rigorist or, at best, a loyal but unimaginative civil servant of a bygone era. In my view, however, nearer acquaintance with

his thought brings to light a far more complex figure: one of the more farsighted moral theologians in the United States and a consistent advocate for the invisible victims of fashionable ideas.

## Protecting the Vulnerable

Father Ford's concern for these hidden casualties was particularly evident during the years of the Second World War. His popular article "Totalitarian Justice Holmes," published in Catholic World magazine in May 1944, may serve as one



John C. Ford, S.J.

PHOTO FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS OF NEW ENGLAND

example among many. Father Ford, who had a law degree from Boston College and a doctorate in moral theology from the Gregorian University in Rome, sought to alert readers to the shadow side of the legal positivism of the late Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. Justice Holmes's strict exclusion of con-

AARON PIDEL, S.J., is a doctoral student in theology at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind.

science and natural morality from legal consideration, argued Father Ford, tended to undermine legal protections for vulnerable parties like conscientious objectors, the unborn and persons with disabilities.

Given his later engagement with reproductive ethics, Father Ford's misgivings about the ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Buck v. Bell* (1927) are of particular interest. The case turned on the decision of the State of Virginia to sterilize Carrie Buck, who had a mental age of about 9, had one child (the result of rape) and was institutionalized. Ms. Buck's mother also had severe mental limitations. In the majority opinion, Justice Holmes praised Virginia's decision, opining, "It is better for all the world, if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime or to let them starve

for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind." He famously added, "Three generations of imbeciles are enough." I will return to this point later. For now, it is enough to observe that for Justice Holmes the value of physical integrity can yield to state interests, but for Father Ford it was an inalienable right.

Such vigilance in the legal sphere notwithstanding, Father Ford's most famous intervention on behalf of the forgotten remains his article on "The Morality of Obliteration Bombing," published in *Theological Studies* in September 1944. The burden of this essay was to demonstrate that targeting whole cities for annihilation was a crime against humanity, because the tactic could not respect the distinction between combatants and noncombatants. Father Ford deftly took aim against those who, citing the broader participation of the civilian population in modern warfare, denied the validity of the distinction. Eric M. Genilo, S.J., author of the book *John Cuthbert Ford, S.J.* (2007), remarks that Father Ford not only deployed rigorous logic in the article but also rhetorical skill in offering a list of over 100 categories of people—like tradesmen, housewives, children—who by this flawed logic would qualify as targetable "combatants."

Neither Father Ford's logic nor his rhetoric proved sufficient to forestall the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. His article, however, did make an important contribution to the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" of the Second Vatican Council, which stated, "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation." In 1989 John P. Langan, S.J., a Christian ethicist at Georgetown University, called

it the "most widely influential article ever to appear in *Theological Studies*." The U.S. Army still uses the article in its leadership training.

## Ethics of Alcoholism

During the transition to the peacetime of the 1950s, Father Ford balanced his insistence on moral objectivity with a nuanced exploration of the limitations on human freedom.

The remote preparation for this investigation doubtlessly began in the young John Ford's experiences of physical and moral frailty. Twice during his Jesuit formation, he was confined to bed with tuberculosis: once in the novitiate, which almost led to him being dismissed from the Jesuits, and again a few years later, which ended his brief career as a high

school Latin teacher. Happily, the Boston native eventually recovered enough to oversee the formation of young Jesuits, and in 1937 he began teaching moral theology to Jesuit students in Weston, Mass. In the early 1940s Father Ford experienced not only physical frailty but moral helplessness. Remembered by his friends as gregarious and a talented musician, he began to lose control over his "social" drinking. Realizing his problem, he sought treatment from Dr. William Duncan Silkworth, an early pioneer in the treatment of alcoholism, and regained sobriety. Though Father Ford nowhere elaborates upon the spiritual drama of these years, his subsequent writings suggest that the experience afforded him the occasion to ponder deeply the realities of human limitation.

Perhaps the most obvious example of Father Ford's sensitivity to human frailty is his pioneering work on the moral questions related to alcoholism. As both a recovering alcoholic and a leading moral theologian, Father Ford was uniquely situated to begin applying the categories of Catholic moral theology to the phenomenon of addiction. In 1951 Father Ford published the fruits of his reflection as *Depth Psychology, Morality and Alcoholism*. Mary C. Darrah, a historian of Alcoholics Anonymous, referred to Father Ford as "the first prominent Catholic theologian to speak out on the morality of alcohol use" and a "pioneer" in helping to prevent alcoholism through education.

Father Ford argued that alcoholism can rightly be characterized as a disease, but not only as that. Alcoholism typically diminishes human freedom and responsibility without erasing it altogether. In view of the complexity of the pathology, Father Ford encouraged new pastoral approaches. Confessional manuals of the day focused largely on helping

## John C. Ford, S.J., witnessed to the power of the Catholic moral tradition to unmask ideology and shield the vulnerable.



priests to identify “theological drunkenness,” the level of intoxication that suspended the exercise of reason and will and was thus considered mortally sinful. Father Ford found this doubly inadequate. The confessor, relying on his manuals, may fail to confront the alcoholic who, though in the grip of addiction, stops short of “theological drunkenness.” On the other hand, the confessor may judge too harshly the alcoholic who becomes “theologically drunk” as the manuals define it but, subjectively speaking, lacks the freedom required to commit mortal sin. Such a penitent would be eligible for the sacraments even before confession. Father Ford’s take-home message for the confessor was to proceed on a case-by-case basis, urge cooperation with Alcoholics Anonymous and try not to exacerbate anxiety through too much talk of mortal sin.

By that time Father Ford was already familiar with Alcoholics Anonymous through the Yale Center of Alcohol Studies, where, starting in late 1940s, he served as a summer instructor. There he came to know Bill W. (Wilson), Dr. Bob (Smith) and other charter members of A.A. Though these friendships soon convinced him that the “12 suggested steps” represented the best hope for alcoholics, he also foresaw that the Protestant tone of A.A. and its vague appeals to a “higher power” might present obstacles to Catholic participation. He therefore accepted Bill Wilson’s invitation to help edit two books, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (1952) and *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* (1957), with

a view to rendering them inoffensive to Catholic sensibilities. Mr. Wilson, who accepted the proposed edits almost without exception, has described Father Ford as “one of our very best undercover agents” in Alcoholics Anonymous.

### Finding a Balance

Father Ford soon took the more nuanced model of subjective responsibility he had developed to account for alcoholism and applied it to other areas, especially sexual morality. He numbers among the mitigating factors of alcohol addiction, for instance, the darkening of the evaluative judgment, a “monoideistic narrowing of consciousness” that prevents contrary motives from becoming effective. In the first volume of *Contemporary Moral Theology* (1958), which he co-authored with Gerald Kelly, S.J., he applies the same principle to the knotty problem of adolescent masturbation, noting that the “fascinated narrowing of consciousness to one all-absorbing object of desire can exclude any realistic appraisal of the alternatives to that desire, and thus reduce psychological liberty beyond the point where mortal guilt is possible.” Here again, however, his summary judgment counsels a middle course between rigorism and laxism. He writes: “Subjective disabilities and impediments excuse the average man and woman from mortal guilt much more frequently than a reading of moral theology manuals might lead one to suppose,” but “each case has to be decided on its



## Foley Poetry Contest

Poems are being accepted  
for the 2014 Foley Poetry Award.

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

Please do not submit poems by e-mail or fax.

Submissions must be postmarked between Jan. 1 and March 31, 2014.

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

The winning poem will be published in the June 9-16 issue of *America*. The three runner-up poems will be published in later issues.

Cash prize: \$1,000

Send poems to:  
Foley Poetry Contest  
America  
106 West 56 Street  
New York, NY 10019

own merits.” The upshot of his analysis: a good confessor might still encourage a penitent to receive Communion—even without prior confession—who had masturbated in a moment of diminished freedom.

Father Ford’s evaluation of homosexual acts likewise attempts to strike a balance. Against some of his contemporaries who wanted to pronounce the homosexual personality so damaged as to make the person constitutionally incapable of mortal sin, Father Ford, in a typewritten manuscript recovered by Father Genilo, insists that “there is no more presumption of compulsive sex behavior in the case of homosexual than there is in the case of heterosexuals.” It is notable that his harder line on the culpability of those experiencing same-sex attraction follows upon a higher estimation of their psychological health. He observes in his concluding remarks: “So often clerical advisers feel a natural aversion or repugnance toward homosexuals. As pastors we have to overcome it. All sinners deserve our understanding and sympathy; not just the ones who commit the same sins that we are inclined to.” Compassion without indulgence typified Father Ford’s theological style.

Viewed through the admittedly superficial categories of the culture wars, John Ford comes across as an erratic moral theologian. One after another, he championed causes dear to Catholics of different theological orientations. His compassion toward human frailty suggests the temperament of a “bleeding heart,” yet he stands firmly in the tradition of unchanging natural law and exceptionless norms. In my view, such equal-opportunity provocation is a sign that, beneath the surface, Father Ford was a highly consistent thinker.

Father Ford’s consistency, in fact, poses a quandary

to those who would like to cherry-pick among his judgments. The moral theologians writing around the time of “*Humanae Vitae*,” for example, tended to criticize his view of sexual morality as naively “physicalist”—that is, too quick to derive a moral obligation from a biological function. Worth pondering, however, is the fact that the same “physicalism” grounds his condemnation of the sterilization of the mentally “unfit.” Those advocating a more permissive stance toward contraception tended to appeal, as “*Humanae Vitae*” itself notes, to some version of the “principle of totality.” Classically illustrated by the act of amputation, the principle acknowledged that a part could sometimes be legitimately sacrificed for the good of the whole. Applying the principle to the case of contraception, moral theologians reasoned that one could suppress the partial good of reproduction to promote the flourishing of the whole person or of the marriage in its totality. This solution was, for obvious reasons, attractive. It is nonetheless clear how the abandonment of “physicalism” would play into the eugenicist logic of Justice Holmes: If appeal to a more comprehensive personal or social benefit can justify a temporary sterilization, can it not also justify the permanent sterilization of an “imbecile” like Carrie Buck? The historical path from totality to totalitarianism may be long but, as Father Ford saw clearly, the logical path is fairly short.

Twenty-five years after his death, then, John Ford may continue to serve as a stimulus for the Catholic imagination. Besides witnessing to the power of the Catholic moral tradition to unmask ideology and shield the vulnerable, his life suggests how the task of the theologian may be a service of humility. The person of ordinary empathy, bracketing his or her personal feelings on “*Humanae Vitae*,” can see Father Ford’s dogged support for the encyclical in the twilight of his career as a thankless task, one that cost him dearly in terms of time and reputation. When he returned to the classroom, he found the antipathy of his students so palpable that he retired the year after the publication of the encyclical. For a personable man who formerly enjoyed a “towering” reputation, this must have galled him. That Father Ford accepted this situation without rancor, dedicating his later years to the pastoral care of alcoholics, intimates something of his spiritual depth. It reveals a conviction—forged in the experience of his own frailty—that he owed absolutely everything to a “higher power.”

### ON THE WEB

An archive of articles  
by John C. Ford, S.J.

[americamagazine.org/vantagepoint](http://americamagazine.org/vantagepoint)





# And Then the Children

**B**elgium has recently set a new record. It has become the first country in the world to permit euthanasia for children. The new law removes the age restrictions on an earlier Belgian law that permitted euthanasia for adults in 2002.

The original law has had its own problematic history. It allowed adults with “unbearable suffering” to request a doctor to administer a lethal injection after several written requests, a waiting period and a medical evaluation of the patient’s mental competence. The law was originally defended as a way for patients with terminal illness and intractable physical pain to seek a merciful exit from their situation.

The application of the law has proved otherwise. “Unbearable suffering” was soon interpreted to include psychological, not only physical pain. A debilitating condition, not only terminal disease, could justify the request for death. Legally euthanized patients have included people suffering from depression, anorexia nervosa and impending blindness. In one case, a transgender citizen unhappy with the results of the sex-change surgery requested and received the lethal treatment. Recent studies indicate that one quarter of the patients euthanized could not have requested the procedure in anything resembling conditions of informed consent.

The move to extend euthanasia to children rests on an argument from equality: If adults have the legal right to seek a lethal medical exit from

their unbearable pain, why shouldn’t children enjoy the same freedom? Supporters of the new law insist that it contains safeguards against abuse. The law stipulates that the only medical condition that could constitute grounds for the euthanasia of a minor is the presence of terminal illness, imminent death and untreatable physical pain. The child must be “capable of discernment” concerning the gravity of the request for a lethal injection. A psychologist must verify this mental competence. Both parents and the attending physician must consent to the requested act of euthanasia.

Critics are not convinced. Belgium is renowned for its advanced system of medical care. A committee of pediatricians protested that the palliative care available in the nation could successfully treat even the most painful conditions.

The law’s opponents roundly contested the claim that children had the capacity to decide whether a physician could kill them. Christian Democratic opponents of the law underscored the absurdity of granting life-and-death powers to minors who are not civilly capable of voting, contracting marriage or ordering a beer in the local café. Loose phrases in the new law—“capacity for discernment” reads like something from the desert fathers—seem to guarantee abuses similar to those that have plagued the drifting interpretations of its 2002 ancestor.

An eloquent witness against the law was the nurse Sonja Develter. A spe-

cialist in pediatric medicine, Develter has cared for more than 200 children in the final stages of terminal illness. She testified that she had not met a single child in such a condition who had asked to be killed. She had, however, met several parents who expressed a desire to have their child euthanized. The emotional exhaustion of caring for a dying child had overwhelmed them.

The new law is not the last frontier in the euthanasia campaign.

It is difficult to imagine minors who could make a decision concerning euthanasia free from the influence of their families’ attitudes. If they sense they have become a burden, the scale will inevitably be tipped toward the lethal option.

The extension of euthanasia to children is not the last frontier in

the euthanasia campaign. Some supporters of the recent law have argued for extension of euthanasia to patients with dementia. The consent of a “loved one” to killing such a patient could be sufficient.

As Belgium’s legal experiment broadens the class of beneficiaries of euthanasia, the original arguments in support of mercy killing have faded. The practice of medicalized death is no longer limited to those with intractable physical pain, a terminal illness with death imminent and an adult’s rational capacity to offer informed consent free from emotional duress. It is increasingly offered to—in fact, urged upon—the seriously ill and disabled because we have concluded that certain lives are simply not worth living.

JOHN J. CONLEY

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



TELEVISION | JIM McDERMOTT

## BELTWAY SHAKESPEARE

*Treachery and vanity in 'House of Cards'*

I can't tell whether I was actually sick the week season two of Netflix's **House of Cards** dropped, or if I was glued to the couch because I just couldn't stop watching. Based on a series of novels by Michael Dobbs, later turned into a three-season show on the BBC in the 1990s, the American version of "House of Cards" charts the Richard III-like course of Frank Underwood (Kevin Spacey), the Democratic majority whip in the House of Representatives, and his wife Claire (Robin Wright).

The first season drew tremendous critical attention. Not only was it

Netflix's first foray into original scripted programming; it was shepherded by the Academy Award-nominated director David Fincher ("The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," "The Social Network," "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo") and created by the Academy Award-nominated writer Beau Willimon ("The Ides of March").

And it was tremendously bold in its chutzpah, offering a sort of anti-"West Wing" fairy tale about two sociopaths climbing over their own victims to seize power for themselves. In films like "Se7en" or "The Usual Suspects," Kevin Spacey has demonstrated his

capacity to play such a character. And as in those films, in the first season of "House of Cards" almost no one realizes just how dangerous he is, except for the viewer, whom he takes into his confidence regularly.

The real revelation, though, has been Robin Wright as Claire Underwood, an ice-cold yet searing Lady Macbeth who not only supports her husband's Machiavellian moves but at times propels them, disapproving of any sign of weakness. "My husband doesn't apologize...even to me," she tells him early in the first season. For as terrifying as Spacey can be at moments, it is Wright who again and again provides the stuff of nightmares, sliding without blinking from seduction to total annihilation of those who are in her way.

The show, which ended its first season with Frank murdering a congressman in order to ascend to the role of vice president (come on, who hasn't done that?), has apparently been quite popular in Washington, D.C. Indeed, in December President Obama told a meeting of technology company chief executive officers: "I wish things were that ruthlessly efficient...this guy's getting a lot of stuff done." (Ironically, the meeting was about surveillance by the National Security Administration. I wish I were kidding.)

Kevin Spacey, a guest on "This Week With George Stephanopoulos" on Feb. 16, likewise said that some in Congress have told him the show is "99 percent accurate, and the 1 percent that isn't is that you could never get an education bill passed that fast." (In the first season Frank accomplishes this feat in 100 days. The third episode of the second season—written by Bill Cain, S.J.—boasts a similarly dazzling effort. Frank forced the Senate to pass a bill raising the retirement age through



**POWER COUPLE.** Robin Wright and Kevin Spacey in Season 2 of "House of Cards"

PHOTOS: NATHANIEL BELL FOR NETFLIX

FROZEN. Robin Wright in "House of Cards"



the most exciting use of parliamentary procedure you are likely ever to see.

But while it can be compelling to watch a congressman and his wife slowly shredding not only the Constitution but the lives of everyone they touch, the show struggles in general with the burden of its own emptiness. It's strange, but as focused as the series is on treachery, villainy and other words that sound like they should be uttered by characters from Shakespeare, there is never much heat here. The icy cynicism of the Underwoods numbs everything, including the viewer's feelings.

In season two Willimon and company have increased the risks to Frank, putting him in situations that are harder for him to control. But even as Frank admits he is not sure how things will turn out, he's still pulling all the levers. He lacks a worthy adversary. Those touted as possibilities—the president, the president's secret advisor, the new

whip—are shown rather quickly to be, if not patsies, still not very smart.

Claire gets more interesting colors to play, including one moment of catharsis at the end of the season that is brilliantly played, and a sequence with Spacey and another toward the end of the season that will undoubtedly be one of the show's most talked about moments. (To summarize that moment in Internet-speak: Squee!)

But Claire is also far more vicious than in season one, so cold at some moments she belongs in "Frozen." It seems as if every time someone touches her she withers a little more inside.

And at some point, amid all the brutality and calculation, the show really does become like a house of cards, collapsing emotionally in on itself.

Undoubtedly, that empty, sick feeling is intended. In a way, "House of

Cards" is a dramatic version of HBO's comedy "Veep," a precise encapsulation of present-day frustrations with U.S. politics (even if the issues we face are far more partisan gridlock than palace coup).

But at the end of the day, as brilliantly as it is conceived and written and acted, it somehow has yet to satisfy. Maybe I'm just a sucker for the idealism of "The West Wing," the way it called not only its characters but also all of us to a better version of ourselves.

Or perhaps, given both our own political realities and the nightmarish, almost satanic cast of the family Underwood, I'm just longing for an even more primal sort of scream.

#### ON THE WEB

Jim McDermott, S.J., takes questions on "House of Cards." [twitter.com/PopCulturPriest](https://twitter.com/PopCulturPriest)

---

JIM McDERMOTT, S.J., is a television screenwriter in Los Angeles.

## A FATAL EMBRACE

### THE POPE AND MUSSOLINI The Secret History of Pius XI and the Rise of Fascism in Europe

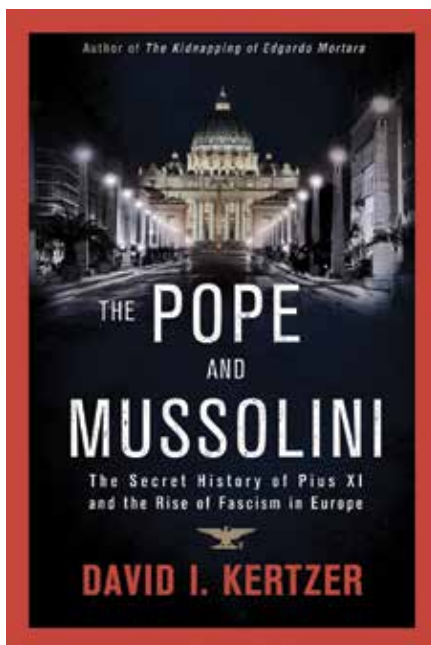
By David I. Kertzer  
Random House. 512p \$32

In May 1941 Karl Adam, a priest of the Diocese of Regensburg and a noted professor of theology in Tübingen, wrote to a colleague, "I am convinced that the new political movement [National Socialism] would long ago have thoroughly enriched even church circles with its 'You will renew the face of the earth,' if the latter would not constantly encounter a profound anti-Christian instinct in certain proponents of the national movement."

The history of the Catholic Church in Europe during the first half of the 20th century can certainly support this conclusion. The church and its leaders found themselves much more at home under dictatorial regimes than in pluralistic democracies. Yet this harmony was quickly shattered when the former reared its monolithic face and implemented laws that directly contradicted church doctrine and practice.

David Kertzer's *The Pope and Mussolini* offers compelling evidence of this. Kertzer, the Paul Dupee university professor of social science and a professor of anthropology and Italian studies at Brown University, is well equipped to recount this particular history. He has written several significant works on the Catholic Church and the papacy, including *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (1997) and *The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism* (2001).

In *The Pope and Mussolini*, Kertzer examines the interplay between the reigns of Achille Ratti, Pope Pius XI



(1922–39) and Benito Mussolini, Italian prime minister (1922–43). Building upon the work of others, including John Pollard, Emma Fattorini and Hubert Wolf, Kertzer charts his own course not only by virtue of the depth of his archival research and analysis, but also by virtue of his engaging prose.

Pius XI and Mussolini sought to shape kingdoms that reflected their respective world views. As Kertzer writes, "The Rattis' heroes were saints and popes; the Mussolinis' were rabble-rousers and revolutionaries." Aloof, ill-tempered and unpredictable, Pius XI yearned for Italy's medieval past, in which the papacy held firm sway over the Italian city and Papal States in a steadfast effort to bring about a kingdom of God on earth. Mussolini too, dreamed of a greater Italian empire, forged by blood

and bullets. Both men pursued their aspirations with ruthless conviction.

Initially, Pius and Mussolini might appear to be blatant enemies. In 1904, the future Italian dictator published *God Does Not Exist* and publicly called priests "black microbes, as disastrous to humanity as tuberculosis microbes." Years later in 1921, realizing the formidable political challenges that lay ahead, Mussolini knavishly changed his tune and proclaimed that Fascism could bring about a restoration of Christian society.

These promises were enticingly seductive to Pius XI and ultimately resulted in a "Fatal Embrace," with the church withdrawing its cards from the Popular Party, its own political faction, and placing them in the hands of Fascism in exchange for the state's protection and promotion of Roman Catholicism. This alliance continued in the face of significant physical violence against Popular Party supporters, often, for example, involving almost comically forced dosages of castor oil. Even the Fascist murder of the socialist leader Giacomo Matteotti did not alter this alliance. Rather, it was Pius XI who remained by the Italian dictator's side even when the world's press condemned the murder of Matteotti and called for Mussolini's deposition.

In 1929, the fatal embrace turned into a formal alliance with the signing of the Lateran Accords, which declared Roman Catholicism the only religion of the Italian State and made Vatican City a sovereign territory under papal rule. The sanctioning of this treaty

did not mean that all was well in relations between the Vatican and Italy. At regular intervals tensions sprang up, often resulting from

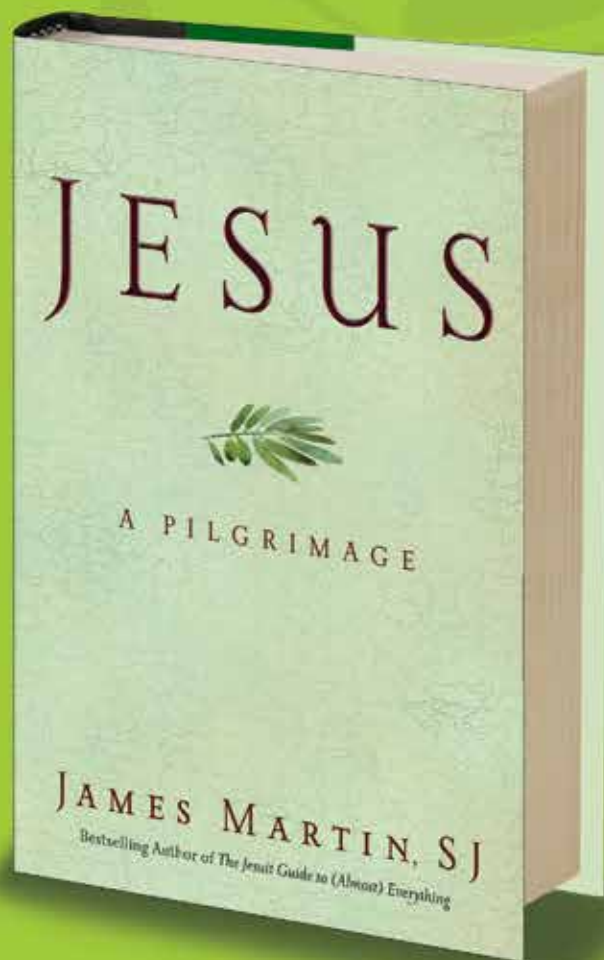
the incessant demands of the Vatican on the Italian government: to squelch Protestant proselytizing, to ban anti-Catholic publications and to take

#### ON THE WEB

Search our book review archive.  
[americamagazine.org/books](http://americamagazine.org/books)



# JOURNEY INTO THE HEART AND TIMES OF JESUS



“One of the best books I’ve read  
in years—on any subject.”

—Mary Karr, author of *Lit*

“Remarkable.”

—Daniel J. Harrington, SJ


“Refreshingly innovative....  
A superb gift.”

—Archbishop Desmond Tutu

“Complex, compelling spiritual  
testimony.”

—*Publishers Weekly*  
starred review

Available Wherever Books and Ebooks Are Sold

 HarperOne

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers

[www.harperone.com](http://www.harperone.com)

## Insomnia and the Seven Steps to Grace

At dawn the panther of the heavens peers over the edge of the world. She hears the stars gossip with the sun, sees the moon washing her lean darkness with water electrified by prayers. All over the world there are those who can't sleep, those who never awaken.

My granddaughter sleeps on the breast of her mother with milk on her mouth. A fly contemplates the sweetness of lactose.

Her father is wrapped in the blanket of nightmares. For safety he approaches the red hills near Thoreau. They recognize him and sing for him.

Her mother has business in the house of chaos. She is a prophet disguised as a young mother who is looking for a job. She appears at the door of my dreams and we put the house back together.

Panther watches as human and animal souls are lifted to the heavens by rain clouds to partake of songs of beautiful thunder.

Others are led by deer and antelope in the wistful hours to the villages of their ancestors. There they eat cornmeal cooked with berries that stain their lips with purple while the tree of life flickers in the sun.

It's October, though the season before dawn is always winter. On the city streets of this desert town lit by chemical yellow travelers search for home.

Some have been drinking and intimate with strangers. Others are escapees from the night shift, sip lukewarm coffee, shift gears to the other side of darkness.

One woman stops at a red light, turns over a worn tape to the last chorus of a whispey blues. She has decided to live another day.

The stars take notice, as do the half-asleep flowers, prickly pear and chinaberry tree who drink exhaust into their roots, into the earth.

She guns the light to home where her children are asleep and may never know she ever left. That their fate took a turn in the land of nightmares toward the sun may be untouchable knowledge.

It is a sweet sound.

The panther relative yawns and puts her head between her paws. She dreams of the house of panthers and the seven steps to grace.

JOY HARJO

*Joy Harjo has published seven books of poetry. Her most recent publication is a memoir, Crazy Brave (W. W. Norton, 2012), winner of the PEN USA Literary Award for Creative Non-Fiction.*

action against problematic ex-priests. The central concern, though, was over Catholic Action—a movement focused on restoring Catholic influence in society—and the ability of its members to operate freely. Too often, Mussolini and those around him perceived Catholic Action as too politically involved in Italian society and forbade the movement from operating altogether. In June 1931, Pius XI countered this move with the encyclical “Non Abbiamo Bisogno” in support of Catholic Action. Unlike many other historians, Kertzer argues this was not an attack on Fascism but only a momentary pause between “indispensable” allies who worked together to Christianize Italian society. Mussolini did eventually relent and permitted Catholic Action to resume its work.

According to Kertzer, the individual who worked hardest to ensure good relations between Mussolini and the Vatican was Pietro Tacchi Venturi, a Jesuit academic, likened by German newspapers to Rasputin. Venturi was convinced there was a Jewish-Masonic plot working to dominate and de-Christianize European society. Venturi was joined by his superior general, Włodzimierz Ledóchowski, an ardent anti-Semite. While Ledóchowski's anti-Semitism veered toward the extreme, the majority of Vatican churchmen rejected racial anti-Semitism, especially that espoused by Germany's National Socialists. But this in no way made them overtly supportive of Jews. Rather, most were ready to embrace legislation that limited Jews' civil rights and participation in public life. Thus when the Italian Manifesto of Racial Scientists was issued in July 1938, there was little opposition from church leaders. The major concern voiced publicly was that the Italian anti-Jewish laws should avoid excessive emphasis on blood as the basis of Jewish identity; that would diminish the efficacy of the sacrament of baptism for Jews who had been baptized. This latter

point soon moved to the fore, especially as Italian Fascism appeared to be appropriating attributes of National Socialism, which were extremely hostile to the church.

Even though these concerns over racial anti-Semitism remained, protection of the church and its interests took top priority. Again, at the fore was Catholic Action. Kertzer purports that in August 1938 Venturi and Mussolini worked out a deal whereby Catholic Action would be allowed to function in exchange for the Vatican's agreement not to oppose the Italian racial laws. Though Pius XI dreamed of an Italian-Catholic kingdom, toward the end of his pontificate he became less willing to negotiate for it as Italy grew ever closer to Germany. The persecution of the church in Germany was too blatant and harsh for the pope to ignore. In turn, Pius XI became ever more critical in his public statements of German-Italian rapprochement and racial anti-Semitism. Yet, his words still betrayed a clear anti-Jewish bias.

In all this, however, Kertzer still places the brunt of questionable behavior upon Eugenio Pacelli, the Vatican secretary of state from 1930 to 1939, along with Venturi and Ledóchowski, who together worked expeditiously against the wishes of an ailing Pius XI. And although the book does not focus primarily on Pacelli, but on Pius XI and Mussolini, Pacelli is nevertheless present as an ominous secondary figure, though not completely fleshed out in the book's narrative.

Like other recent works, Kertzer's study of Italy confirms that the Catholic Church worked too readily to adjust itself to Europe's authoritarian dictatorships in exchange for protection of its salvific mission. Pius XI desperately yearned for a Christianized Europe—one free of the influence of non-Catholics, especially Jews. He was not unlike many Catholics of his time, who aggressively fought against what they perceived as the ills of modernity

and pluralism. Though Pius XI recognized the evils of racial anti-Semitism, unfortunately he did not live long enough to offer a significant challenge to it. Nor was his final address, composed but undelivered, an unconditional condemnation of antisemitism

and of the authoritarian regimes that promoted it. Instead, the church must now live with a legacy of appeasement, accommodation and silence.

---

KEVIN P. SPICER, C.S.C., is the James J. Kennelly distinguished professor of history at Stonehill College in Massachusetts.

JAMES P. MCCARTIN

## BEHIND THE PORTRAITS

### AMERICAN MIRROR The Life and Art of Norman Rockwell

By Deborah Solomon  
Farrar, Strauss and Giroux. 512p \$28

I once was loath to admit it, but I have always loved Norman Rockwell. Is it his smart sense of irony and playfulness, his loving attention to detail? Or is it just that I have poor taste?

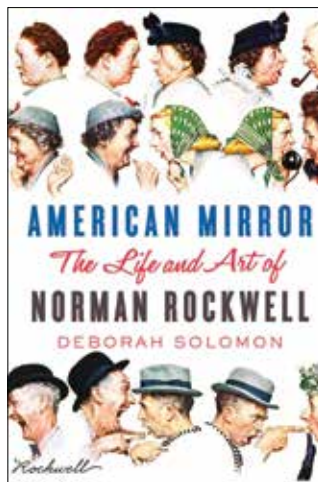
As a ponderous college sophomore newly "appreciating" the modern visual arts, I professed my loyalty to the likes of Kandinsky and Miró, and though I never publicly renounced Rockwell, I'm almost certain I'd have done so if pressed, citing his indifference to the social and cultural revolutions taking place around him. Deborah Solomon's thoughtful—if a touch heavy-handed—biography of Rockwell made me glad it never came to that.

Beginning in the 1910s, generations revered Rockwell's hundreds of covers for the popular Saturday Evening Post, works that bestowed on him celebrity status and made his work—along with that of Pollock and Warhol—among some of the most identifiable cultural products of 20th-century America. Though his range was significantly broader, Rockwell, a native New Yorker

who retained his native accent until his death in 1978, became known as a chronicler of small town life. It was a reputation with which he was evidently uneasy, and he made a few earnest, though fretful and ill-fated, attempts to channel the spirit of artistic modernism. No, Rockwell finally concluded in his typically humorous and self-deprecating way, he was merely an illustrator, not an *artiste*.

It was just this identity as a mere illustrator that, beginning in the mid-1950s, induced influential critics to offer withering interventions, deriding Rockwell as a middlebrow entertainer and sentimental hack who lacked the "emotional appeal" of rising stars like Willem de Kooning and Robert Motherwell.

To what extent were these critics successful at changing how the public viewed Rockwell? They were successful enough that nearly four decades later, a naïf like me, anxious to project a sense of cultured refinement, felt it wise to keep his sympathies for Rockwell *in pectore*. And yet, as Solomon highlights, well-attended New York retrospectives in 1968 and 1971, along with the related sale of books and prints, proved his enduring appeal. Indeed, Rockwell's "Saying Grace," a 1951 work depicting





a grandmother and grandson praying in a restaurant under the leering gaze of perplexed patrons, went for \$46 million as recently as December 2013. Perhaps the critics missed the mark when it came to quantifying Rockwell's "emotional appeal."


Among the many attractive aspects

of this book is Solomon's searching exploration of the complex private life of her subject. Thrice married, Rockwell was a distant husband and an aloof father, a persnickety man unwilling to alter his routine and reluctant to abandon his studio, even as his second wife, Mary, descended into the cycle of de-

pression and alcoholism that brought her untimely death. After having three children, he and Mary sailed to England to procure a quiet abortion in 1938, lest they add a fourth to their complicated lives. Later, we see Rockwell, an early adopter of antidepressants, become heavily reliant upon a string of therapists—including the eminent Erik Erikson, with whom he also developed a close friendship. Solomon covers all this and more without a hint of that brand of condescension that shakes its head at the hypocrisy of it all—a man whose work so often celebrated family connection and good cheer, yet whose private life often enough gave sparse evidence of these things.

Then there is the matter of Rockwell's sexuality—a subject on which Solomon falters. From early on in his career, we learn, Rockwell developed a series of conspicuously intense friendships with younger men and prepubescent boys, artists and models with whom he appears to have spent an enormous amount of time over the years, often to the neglect of his wives. Though she believes Rockwell would have recoiled from any physical sexual encounter with males, she detects his sexual attraction both to men and boys and reads elements of suppressed/repressed desire into his work. It is not so much her interest in exploring Rockwell's sexuality—maybe she is right, maybe not—that causes this aspect of the book to fall flat, but her overwrought attempts to expose in his paintings the evidence of this desire. Regardless, she does succeed in underscoring how Rockwell's work ought to be examined through the lens of gender, given that it frequently affirms a robust and rascally ideal of boyhood and, at times, depicts women and girls as masculinized.

Solomon's most useful insight is that Rockwell's work is largely about the act—perhaps even the duty—of looking. He was notorious for requiring models to sit for torturously long stints



**SAT Summer Sabbatical**  
May 26th - June 20th, 2014

COME FOR A MONTH OR FOR A WEEK  
TO THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

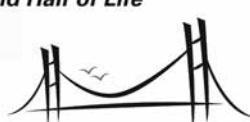
**WEEK 1**  
*Mercy in the World as the Foundation for Christian Spirituality*  
with Kevin Burke, SJ and Julia Prinz, VDMF

**WEEK 2**  
*Radical Gratitude in the Face of Cultural and Economic Challenges*  
with Mary Jo Leddy

**WEEK 3**  
*Living Contemplatively in a Busy World*  
with Michael Fish, OSB Cam.

**WEEK 4**  
*Spirituality for the Second Half of Life*  
with Pamela Prime

For more information:  
(510) 652-1651  
satgtu.org/summer2014



SCHOOL OF APPLIED THEOLOGY  
**Sabbath Programs**

A partner of The Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley CA

**America**  
Digital. Print. Web. **You.**

Explore our web site at: [WWW.AMERICAMAGAZINE.ORG](http://WWW.AMERICAMAGAZINE.ORG)  
Enjoy special digital content including:

**Blogs** on Scripture, politics & education  
**Videos** from Catholic News Service  
**Podcasts** with America contributors  
**Slideshows** of events & exhibits

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



as he meticulously documented every wrinkle around the eye, every vein of the hand, every crease in the garment. Time and again, he asked viewers of his work to study people who are themselves studying other people, framed by an intricate environment that itself cries out for careful scrutiny.

Pick a Rockwell at random: You will likely find in it an invitation to slowly drink in a world of details. Couldn't we do worse amid our brisk and harried lives?

**JAMES P. McCARTIN** is director of the Fordham Center on Religion and Culture in New York City.

PATRICK J. GILGER

## SCABS AND SECRETS

### THE HIRED MAN By Aminatta Forna

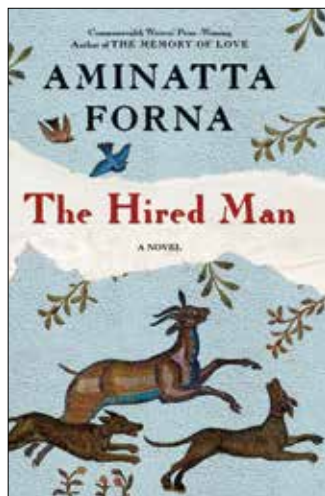
Atlantic Monthly Press. 304p \$24

Duro Kolak, the narrator and fulcrum of Aminatta Forna's excellent fourth book *The Hired Man*, is a patient man, loyal and solitary. He is a man of routine: Each morning 25 pull-ups, 25 squats, 25 crunches. "I am a builder," he says of himself, "I work with my hands and I find work where I can and not always easily."

Work is not easy to find because it is September 2007 and Duro lives in the small Croatian town of Gost—pronounced "ghost," meaning "visitor" in Croatian—in the aftermath of the wars fought throughout the 1990s that destroyed businesses and families and tourism in that part of the world. He is also the writer of the letter-cum-journal that forms the novel. And the first thing he tells us in his brusque, beautifully descriptive prose, is of the arrival a few months before of Laura, a bright-eyed, blond Englishwoman, and her two teenage children, Matt and Grace, in Gost.

It was summertime then, and the three visitors arrived not as tourists, but in hopes of remodeling a house

they have purchased so that it can be sold to tourists as they begin to trickle back—as the memory of war begins to fade. Like the rest of Gost, Duro knows this house, the blue house, well. He remembers who its former residents were, why they are no longer there. He remembers how the betrayals and jealousies that created their absence fester within the town and in himself. The restoration of the blue house is Laura's project; and it is Duro's memory, and his ability to mold that project to his own ends, that pulls back the thin scab



of habit that hides the wounds in the memories of the residents of Gost. "Laura arrived in Gost and opened a trapdoor," he says. "Beneath the trapdoor was an infinite tunnel and that tunnel led to the past."

It is with just this sparseness of style, a cleanness of sentence that at times feels almost Hemingway-ish, that Duro tells of being hired by Laura to help with

the work of the blue house's restoration. He works at her project: fixing the roof, pulling down a dead tree, cleaning the gutters; and at his: chipping away at the plaster to reveal a beautiful mosaic that he knows lies hidden on its outer wall. The mosaic depicts a bird rising into a white sky, with two hands below "trying

## Scripture & Spirituality Workshop



\$175 each;  
\$300 for  
both

June 16-20, 2014

*Mornings:* **Journeying with Mark**

Fr. Seán Charles Martin

Prepare to preach the Gospel of Mark  
in the coming liturgical year

*Afternoons:* **Praying with the Psalms**

Sr. Maribeth Howell, O.P.

Pray with a deeper appreciation  
for these ancient songs

**Aquinas**  
INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY

**Online-hybrid courses  
Summer 2014**

*Introduction to Theology*

*Near Eastern Literature and  
the Hebrew Scriptures*

*Ministry with the Aging*

*Christian Scriptures*

*Foundations of Catholic Morality  
for Health Care Ministry*

To enroll or for more information  
contact 800-977-3869  
or admissions@ai.edu

**Educating men and women  
to preach  
to teach  
to minister  
to lead**

vainly to touch the beautiful bird, or equally they could belong to the person who just released it.”

He cleans the gutters of the blue house, each handful of half rotten mulch pulled from the house pulled from him as well, and from Gost. It is this analogy between house and town and heart—a familiar one, which is not to say a tired or shallow one—that allows the two timelines of the novel to emerge and the buried past to mix ever more explosively with the present. “My mind had been running along all sorts of lines it hadn’t run on for years,” he writes after some weeks of work. “Most of these memories I’d put safely away, as we all had, then something or someone comes along, like a plough through a fallow field in which all kinds of things lie buried under the crust of the earth.”

Yes, the arrival of Laura is that plow, but so is Duro. He lets us know that he chipped away at the plaster that covered the mural intentionally, so that the beautiful thing that lay beneath would be seen again, remembered. This is his project: memory, in its hardness and its pain, in the work it takes and the hope for healing it holds. Duro’s project is to chip away at the customs that cover memories of mutual betrayal in Gost as well.

Ms. Forna, through Duro, will not allow us to observe this project from the outside. While she allows us to come to the story the way Laura and family do to Gost, as visitors, she is unwilling to allow us to remain so. We are not permitted to remain ignorant of the subtext that underlies each interaction among the town’s life-long residents. Instead, as Duro alternates between telling us of the summer of 2007 and of his own memories, layers are peeled back, casual interactions are given depth, and we begin to see and feel as one who belongs to the brokenness of Gost. We learn to feel the old rage that lies behind Duro’s choice to sit at a certain table in the local bar, the bitterness in his offer to buy a glass of wine for his former friend Kresimir.

Ms. Forna guides our progression with exceeding skill, each chapter chipping away just enough of the plaster that initially obscures our understanding until each interaction resonates hauntingly. The effect of such patience in her writing is something like the opposite of an explosion, in which the strongest force is felt nearest the blast. In Ms. Forna’s writing the detonations instead begin small, the scenes seem innocuous; and then a turn of phrase causes a half-remembered scene to

erupt in our minds as we read—a red sunhat bought as a gift, one word for “bread” crossed out and another written in its place. As the novel progresses, what we at first appreciated in Duro’s sparse sentences begins to feel like grenades with unpulled pins. The end result is that like Duro and the residents of Gost, we come to know something of how thin the scab is that covers the wound of betrayal.

If we are honest, betrayals of self and one another are familiar to us. And this familiarity makes *The Hired Man* resonate all the more, because we all know something of old wounds, whether given or received. And we know that they can lie buried for a long time. We know what it is to grow familiar—in a family, a marriage or a small town after a war—with stepping around wounds, or directly on them. We know, to our sadness, how to keep them from healing, and that we are all guilty, one time or another, of having done so. But we also know what it is to be Duro, the one who “stands guard over the past,” refusing to let it be forgotten—regardless of whether what is remembered is welcome or not-so. And Ms. Forna knows this about us; and her ability to evoke these wounds, and to leave open the hope for their healing, is what makes *The Hired Man* a success.

So out with it: This is a story about sin. It is a story about how it is that the members of a small town are brought face to face with a guilt they have conquered over. But even more, this lovely, haunting novel is a story that asks not only whether Duro will remember, or Gost, or even whether we will remember, but whether we will allow our remembering to bring healing or will let it calcify us in our customs of mutual betrayal.

---

**PATRICK J. GILGER, S.J.**, founding editor of *The Jesuit Post* website and author of the newly published book *The Jesuit Post (Orbis)*, is associate pastor of St. John’s Parish at Creighton University, Omaha, Neb.

## CLASSIFIED

### Books

*Religion & Civility (faith & reason) Together*; www.wordunlimited.com.

### Lay Missionaries

**LAY MISSIONARIES.** Teachers, nurses, computer techs, etc., needed to serve three years as lay missionaries in overseas mission sites. Lay Mission-Helpers Association provides training and support. Check out our website at [www.lay-missionhelpers.org](http://www.lay-missionhelpers.org).

### Rosaries

**ROSARIES.** Beautiful handcrafted and Italian ro-

saries are available at The Rosary Beads Company. Visit: <http://rosary-beads.co>.

*America classified. Want your ad here? America accepts classified advertisements for publication in either the print version of America or on our web site, www.AmericaMagazine.org. Ten-word minimum. Rates are per word per issue. 1-5 times: \$1.50; 6-11 times: \$1.28; 12-23 times: \$1.23; 24-41 times: \$1.17; 42 times or more: \$1.12. For an additional \$30, your print ad will be posted on America’s website for one week. The flat rate for a web-only classified ad is \$150 for 30 days. Ads may be submitted by email to: [ads@americamagazine.org](mailto:ads@americamagazine.org). For more information call: (212) 515-0102.*

America (ISSN 0002-7049) is published weekly (except for 13 combined issues: Jan. 6-13, 20-27, April 28-May 5, May 26-June 2, June 9-16, 23-30, July 7-14, 21-28, Aug. 4-11, 18-25, Sept. 1-8, Dec. 8-15, 22-29) by America Press Inc., 106 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019. Periodical postage is paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. Circulation: (800) 627-9533. Subscription: United States, \$56 per year; add U.S. \$30 postage and GST (#131870719) for Canada; or add U.S. \$56 per year for international priority airmail. Postmaster: Send address changes to: America, P.O. Box 293159, Kettering, OH 45429.



# Away With Death

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (A), APRIL 6, 2014

Readings: Ez 37:12–14; Ps 130:1–8; Rom 8:8–11; Jn 11:1–45

*“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live” (Jn 11:25)*

**W**hy did Jesus cry when he saw the tears of Lazarus’s sisters and his friends? After all, Jesus already knew Lazarus was dead. In fact, his purposeful actions allowed that death to occur. So why, when faced with the mourning of Lazarus’s loved ones, did Jesus cry? The account of the raising of Lazarus brings to the fore Jesus’ humanity and the reasons why Jesus came to conquer death.

Lazarus had two sisters, Mary and Martha, who “sent a message to Jesus” that their brother was ill. Jesus decides not to attend to his sick friend immediately, but to wait for two extra days, until Lazarus has died, and then go to “awaken” him from his “sleep.” Physical death, Jesus will demonstrate, is not the end of our lives, but a “sleep” from which we awaken through God’s power. In fact, Jesus has allowed this death to occur—he is “glad” he was not there—in order that the disciples “may believe.”

Jesus and his disciples travel to Lazarus’s home, where he has already been in the tomb for four days, but Martha intercepts them along the way. Martha says to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus responds, “Your brother will rise again,” she comprehends that Lazarus will rise up in the resurrection on the last day. Jesus affirms this as the bedrock of faith in him: “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes

in me will never die. Do you believe this?” And Martha declares her belief in Jesus.

She is soon joined by her sister, Mary, who comes out to meet them. A number of friends, who thought Mary was going to Lazarus’s tomb to cry, join her to console her. It is here that the story is grounded not just in the divine power of resurrection, but in the human heartache of death. Mary says to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” This sentence Mary speaks in verse 32 is identical to the words of Martha in verse 21. But Mary begins to cry at Jesus’ feet when she speaks these words, unlike Martha, who consoled herself with the hope of resurrection.

When Jesus sees the weeping of Mary and her friends, he does not respond, “Your brother will rise again,” as he did with Martha. Instead, he becomes “greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.” But why? He has caused this very scene, and was “glad” that Lazarus had died so that he could evoke faith in his disciples and perhaps others who knew Lazarus. Yet confronted by the searing loss that physical death brings, Jesus himself begins to cry. Again we ask why. He knows he can raise Lazarus from the dead; he knows that death will not have the final say over his life, or any other human life.

Yet at this time, in this moment, the human reality of death affects Jesus in a way it had never done before. In this en-

counter he does not simply know death in an abstract way but in the fabric of his human life, in his bones. He sees his friends mourn, even those who believe that death will one day be conquered; he feels the cold sting of a loved one laid in a tomb.

Ray Jasper, an inmate of death row in Texas who may be dead by the time this column appears, described empathy this way: “Empathy gives you an inside view. It doesn’t say, ‘If that was me’; empathy says,



## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Place yourself at Lazarus’s tomb with his family and friends. How does Jesus’ experience of Lazarus’s death comfort you?

“That is me.” Jesus cried because he felt our pain, shared our pain; he could say, “That is me.”

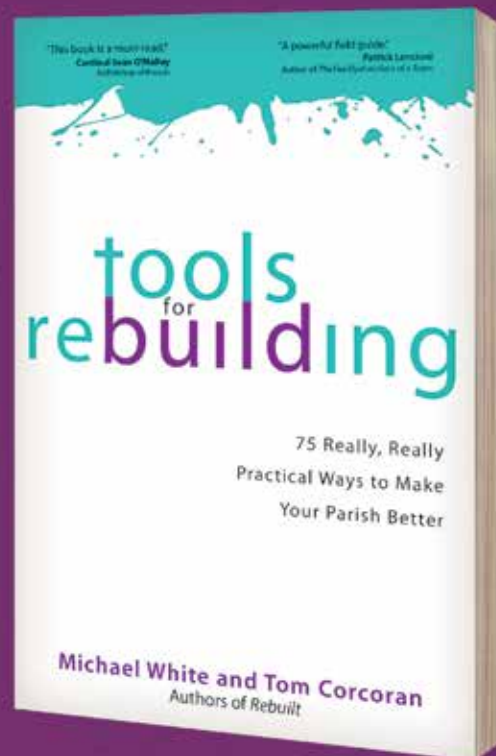
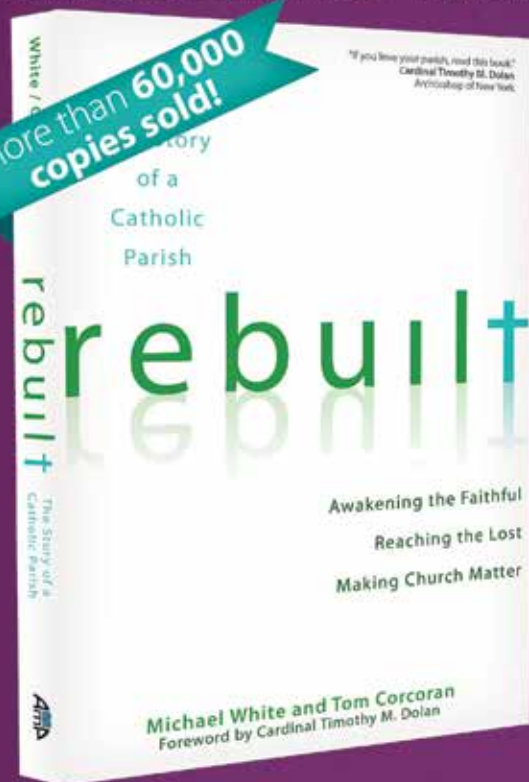
Jesus experiences the suffering of death as a human being, feels the loss shuddering through his friends. He knows the ravages death has wrought, returning us to the dust from which we have come. We remember during Lent that for our sake he would take on this same death in order to save us from death, for he saw the tears of others and cried tears of mourning. He did not have to die with us and die for us, but he wanted to wipe away our tears forever. He said: Away with death, for we were made for eternity.

**JOHN W. MARTENS**

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

# JOIN the **REBUILT** MOVEMENT

AWAKEN THE FAITHFUL • REACH THE LOST • MAKE CHURCH MATTER



How **THEY** **REBUILT** their Parish

How **YOU CAN** **REBUILD** YOURS

"If you love your parish, read this book."

**Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan**  
Archbishop of New York

"Wow! This is a powerful and immensely readable field guide."

**Patrick Lencioni**  
Author of *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*

#### Check out these themes and more:

- You Can Do This
- Lost People in *Churchworld*
- Pretty Churches and Other Lies
- "It's the Weekend, Stupid"
- Mobilize the Next Generation
- Get the Parish Out of the Pews

#### Really, Really Practical Tactics Include:

- Christmas Is Over, So Throw Out the Dead Poinsettia
- Stop Advertising (Other People's Stuff) in Your Bulletin
- Don't Let the Insiders Take All the Good Seats
- Funerals Are Scud Missiles
- Preach the Announcements
- Pastor, It's Not All About You



ave maria press® | (800) 282-1865 | [www.avemariapress.com](http://www.avemariapress.com)  
A Ministry of the United States Province of Holy Cross