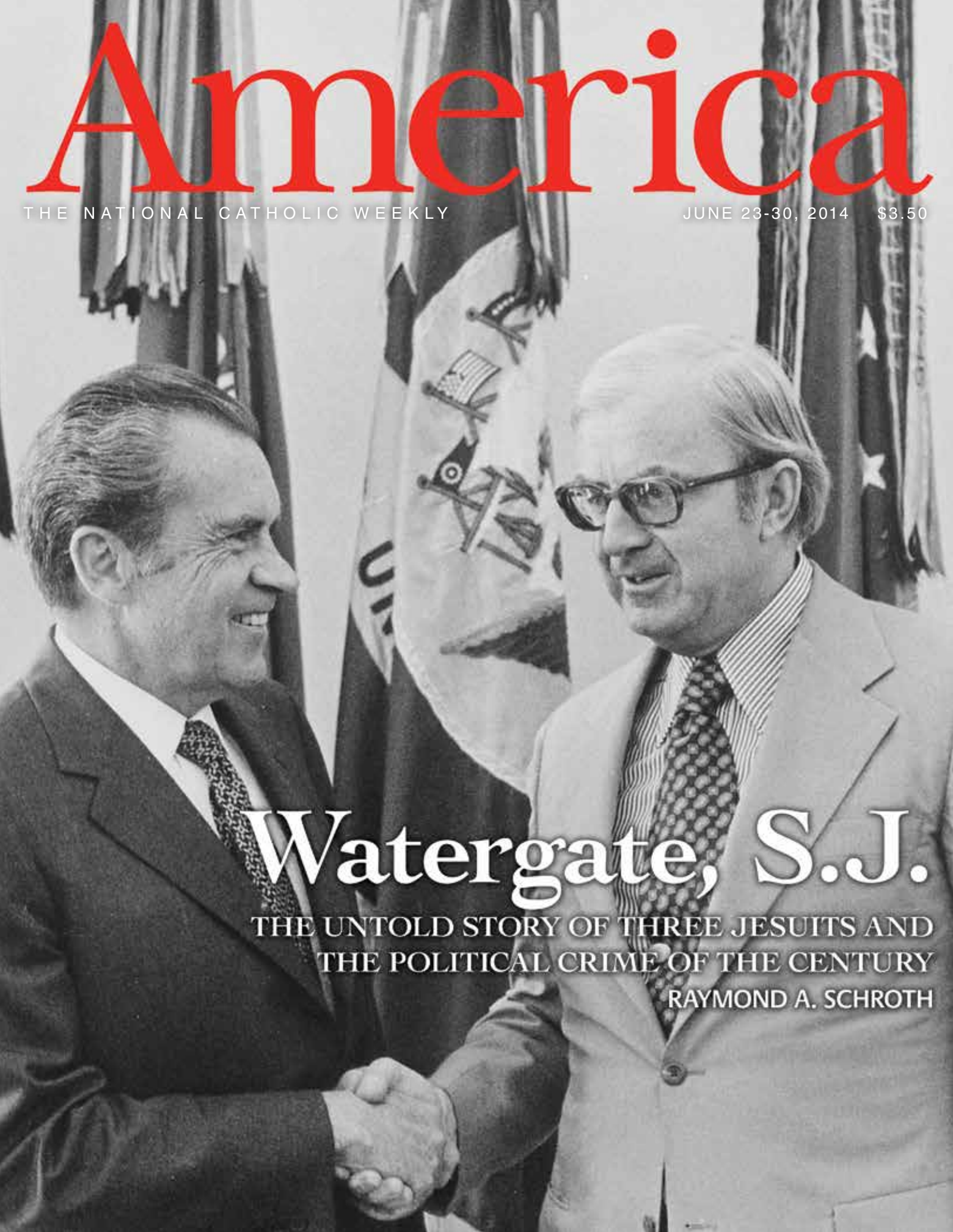


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Watergate, S.J.

THE UNTOLD STORY OF THREE JESUITS AND
THE POLITICAL CRIME OF THE CENTURY

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

The smoking gun had been fired on July 23, 1972, during an oval office conversation between President Richard M. Nixon and H. R. Haldeman, the flat-topped former Eagle Scout Mr. Nixon had chosen for White House chief of staff. The two men were discussing the bungled burglary of the Democratic National Committee two months earlier, a scandal that had come to be known as Watergate, after the name of the Washington, D.C., complex that housed the D.N.C. offices. People were now asking a lot of questions, especially at NBC News, which had just broadcast a special report on the Cuban-born burglars who had been hired by Nixon's operatives to conduct the black bag job.

That gave the president an idea. He directed Mr. Haldeman to tell the Federal Bureau of Investigation to halt its investigation of the Watergate matter because it might lead to the release of classified information about the Bay of Pigs, the botched invasion of Cuba, which had been orchestrated by the Central Intelligence Agency in 1961. Mr. Nixon knew, of course, that this was a lie; but in the midst of the Cold War, with Communism apparently thriving less than 90 miles from Florida, Cubans made convenient political scapegoats.

So Mr. Nixon pulled the trigger: "Say: 'Look, the problem is that this will open the whole Bay of Pigs thing, and the President just feels that,' without going into the details...don't, don't lie to them to the extent to say there is no involvement.... Call the FBI in and say 'that we wish for the country, don't go any further into this case,' period!" The rest, as they say, is history. The Oval Office tapes that secretly recorded all this were subpoenaed and eventually released to the public; and Mr. Nixon was sent packing 40 years ago this summer.

After all these years of research and revelation—years in which we even learned the identity of the mysterious

Deep Throat—it's hard to believe that there is still an untold story about the Watergate affair. Yet here it is.

In this issue, Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., tells the tale of three Jesuits and their connections to the greatest political crime of the century. It's fascinating, not least because these three men, who as Jesuits went through the same basic academic training and spiritual formation, could not have been more different from one another.

While President Nixon and Mr. Haldeman were concocting their Cuban scheme, John McLaughlin, S.J., was commuting back and forth between his White House office—where he had taken charge of the moral defense of the president—and his apartment in, of all places, the Watergate.

At the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, meanwhile, Congressman Robert Drinan, S.J., was actively opposing the president's policies and would eventually vote for his impeachment.

And at the height of the scandal, Frank Haig, S.J., provided quiet counsel to his brother, Gen. Alexander Haig, who just happened to be Mr. Haldeman's replacement as White House chief of staff. Not, perhaps, since the days when Jesuits served as the chief confessors to the crowned heads of Europe had a group of Jesuits been so close to the center of political intrigue. The more things change....

Forty years after Watergate, as Tim Padgett also reports in this issue, Cuba is still on the political—and now papal—agenda. As we look back to that eventful summer of 1974 and as we look ahead to the future of the U.S./Cuba relationship, we would do well to remember these words of wisdom: "Others may hate you, but those who hate you don't win unless you hate them, and then you destroy yourself." The author, Richard M. Nixon, was speaking from experience.

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ON THE WEB

George Drance, S.J., right, talks about his solo theatrical performance of the **Gospel of Mark** on our podcast. Plus, a selection of **America's** coverage of **Watergate**, and a Skype interview with **Tim Padgett**. All at americamagazine.org.



No More Hot Air

After years creating strategic reserves of rhetoric against climate change, the Obama administration released on June 2 new standards aimed at reducing emissions from the nation's roughly 550 coal-burning power plants. The proposal would cut carbon emissions from coal-burning facilities—the nation's top producers of greenhouse gases—by 30 percent from 2005 levels. States have until 2030 to meet individualized goals, either by shutting down coal plants, switching to renewables, deploying more energy-efficient technology or joining cap-and-trade programs.

President Obama finally had little choice but to sidestep Congress and set loose the regulatory dogs of the federal Environmental Protection Agency. The proposed standards, if they survive the scrutiny of courts and Congress, place the United States at the global forefront of efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and, we hope, will hopefully encourage other large producers like China and India to follow suit. The new standards are good for the planet, good for public health and, by setting the stage for new industrial innovations and the broad adoption of sustainable energy technologies, will likely prove good for the U.S. economy.

The state-by-state compliance standards set by the E.P.A. and the unprecedented flexibility offered by the plan suggest complaints about an overbearing federal bureaucracy are unwarranted. That will not, of course, stop critics from arguing that the new standards will sink the economy and throttle U.S. job creation. Let's recall, however, that these are often the same folks who, in the face of 97 percent certainty in the climate science community, continue to deny the threat of climate change.

Soccer's Shadow

Starting on June 12, some 600,000 fans will descend on Brazil to attend the 2014 FIFA World Cup. The quadrennial soccer championship will showcase the host country's vibrant culture and revamped infrastructure as well as the unmatched skill of players from across the globe. But in the shadows of the newly constructed stadiums lurks the ugly underground world of human trafficking.

Brazil has the unfortunate distinction of being a popular destination for sex tourists, and anti-trafficking activists warn that the influx of foreigners around the games will probably lead to a spike in the sexual exploitation of children and vulnerable adults. During large sporting events like the World Cup and the Olympic Games, criminal gangs and

predators seeking to capitalize on the increased demand for prostitution lure poor, vulnerable girls to the arenas and hotels with the promise of lucrative "work." To combat this scourge, Talitha Kum (Little Girl, Arise), an international network of religious orders against human trafficking, has partnered with the Vatican and the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See to launch a new campaign called Play for Life—Denounce Trafficking. Women religious and other advocates are using social media and public demonstrations to raise awareness about the heightened threat of child prostitution and forced labor; and during the month-long tournament, they will hand out leaflets at airports and other tourist spots encouraging visitors to be vigilant and report suspected exploitation to the police.

Churches, nongovernmental organizations and government agencies have mounted serious efforts to combat this vicious assault on human dignity in anticipation of the games. But even without the added risks of a large event, Unicef estimates that 250,000 children become victims of prostitution every year in Brazil. When the last whistle blows, Brazilian authorities and the international community must not shift the spotlight away from this horrific crime.

A Screed in 'Real Time'

The Catholic Church has been subjected to many criticisms over the past few years, some of them well-deserved. We all know about the painful revelations of sexual abuse and the financial scandals at the Vatican. But sometimes legitimate criticism crosses the line into hateful screed. Some mean-spirited words during the May 16 episode of the satirist Bill Maher's show "Real Time" crossed that line.

Mr. Maher mocked Pope Francis' lighthearted comments about the church baptizing anyone who desires to become a Christian—even, say, Martians. In one fell swoop, he attacked the pope, Mitt Romney, Mormons and, most offensively, the sacrament of baptism, calling it "getting sprinkled with magic water." For good measure, he joked about a groping, 50-foot-tall extraterrestrial priest with six arms. Crude smears like these are undignified.

People with influential media platforms should not use them to denigrate anyone's faith. For whatever reason, Mr. Maher has turned against religion. That is his right and a matter for his own conscience. Thoughtful critiques are one thing, but his gratuitous attacks reveal unwarranted hostility. He is not the only person to voice such sentiments, and he will probably not be the last. But Mr. Maher is on the board of Sam Harris's Project Reason. He would do well to practice some of the "vigorous self-criticism" the project seeks to promote.

War and the President

During a commencement address at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point on May 28, President Obama continued to make his public case for a new role for American power abroad. At first blush, there is much for critics of recent U.S. military action to appreciate in the president's remarks. His speech included a strong rejection of U.S. isolationism in a technologically and economically integrated world, but promoted new restraint in the use of America's military might. He issued a strong defense of "soft power" alternatives and a multilateral approach to conflict resolution through engagement with international institutions like the United Nations.

Unfortunately, the president did not address how drone warfare fits into his new, scaled-back vision of U.S. power, a topic he explored in more detail in a speech on counterterrorism at the National Defense University in May 2013. Perhaps he considers such limited extensions of U.S. force too minor to feature in "big picture" pondering of military actions.

According to the president, the new approach employed by the United States has so far proved useful in deterring further Russian aggression in Ukraine and bringing Iran back, peacefully, to the table for negotiations to end its nuclear ambitions. It could also prove fruitful in resolving current tensions in the South China Sea. "To say that we have an interest in pursuing peace and freedom beyond our borders is not to say that every problem has a military solution," President Obama told the cadets. This is a point that very few foreign policy analysts will dispute. Not many people argued for providing boots-on-the-ground military support to the rebels in Syria, and even fewer have called for direct U.S. military intervention in Ukraine. In our war-weary world, the president's case for a reduced role for the U.S. military has a receptive audience.

There are those, however, who argue that the United States cannot shirk its responsibilities as a superpower. Included in this number are not just foreign policy hawks but supporters of the emerging doctrine of the responsibility to protect, or R2P. Proponents of this doctrine, which mandates an international response when a state fails to protect its citizens from serious and widespread harm, may be concerned that the president's address indicates a shift away from U.S. deployments aimed at protecting noncombatants in simmering conflicts in nations like South Sudan and the Central African Republic. The president said that the

United States "will use military force, unilaterally if necessary, when our core interests demand it—when our people are threatened, when our livelihoods are at stake, when the security of our allies is in danger." These scenarios do not seem to include preventing genocide or crimes against humanity, a cause close to the heart of some of the president's advisers.



Mr. Obama characterizes "core interests" as those situations that directly affect Americans and U.S. allies. But is it in the interest of the United States to prevent or stop genocide, to risk lives and treasure to protect the lives of innocent people even in a faraway land? The president's remarks did not adequately explore these questions and seem, at points, to contradict what he has said on other occasions. Just six months ago, the president argued: "Terrible things happen across the globe, and it is beyond our means to right every wrong. But when, with modest effort and risk, we can stop children from being gassed to death, and thereby make our own children safer over the long run, I believe we should act." The president's inconsistency may be explained by the hard case of Syria, a human rights disaster that still weighs on the conscience of the international community. Whether more aggressive intervention in Syria could have forestalled the country's spiral into bloody civil war is a question that still divides many observers, including *America's* editorial board. Any determination of the proper use and limits of U.S. power must reckon with these events.

The president's willingness to think hard about the use of force and to work with international institutions is laudable. Less praiseworthy is his continued insistence, at West Point and elsewhere, that the United States remains an "indispensable nation." Such talk has fueled military misadventures in the past, and could do so again in the future. The president's support of transparency and consistency with the rule of law, both of which received hearty cheers at West Point, could serve as a necessary corrective to the temptations of exceptionalism. He reaffirmed, again, his intention to close the prison at Guantanamo Bay and place restrictions on "how America collects and uses intelligence." He should add to that list a more transparent accounting of the use of drones. Until these concerns are addressed, Mr. Obama's words at West Point may have made for a nice graduation speech, but not much more.

REPLY ALL

Similar Witness

Re “What Martyrdom Means,” by Patrick Gilger, S.J. (5/12): In so many ways, the story of the life and death of Frans van der Lugt, S.J., echoes the story of the seven Trappist monks who lived among Algerians in Tibhirine and who were kidnapped and beheaded during the Algerian civil war in 1996. The Trappists could have left when they were warned of the danger to themselves, but they stayed among the people they served and loved.

Dom Christian de Chergé’s testa-

ment, written in 1993 as the Trappists felt the growing menace, allied him with suffering Algerian people of all faiths, in the same way Father Frans identified himself with the people of Homs, Syria. Dom Christian wrote: “If it should happen one day—and it could be today—that I become a victim of the terrorism which now seems ready to engulf all the foreigners living in Algeria, I would like my community, my church and my family to remember that my life was GIVEN to God and to this country.”

He went on to ask the readers of his testament not to heap scorn on Algerians or its Muslim believers.

Thanks for a superb meditation on lives we find hard to imagine.

CATHERINE MCKEEN
Online comment

A Priest’s Family

In “Shared Sacrifice” (4/28), Msgr. Michael Heintz writes that as in a marital relationship, the availability of the celibate priest “is extended to his spouse, his flock, his community.” This comment pinpoints the special and unique identity of the celibate priest. He is available and related to his flock.

The question for me is, “How does he see himself related?” I experience this ministry not so much as “spouse” but analogously related to it.

It is most important that a priest see himself as part of a family relationship. He is part of the family before him; to the young ones as “father” or “uncle”; to men and women of his age as “brother”; and when he is much older, as “grandfather.”

The priest takes on these various “identities” from the perspective of the different age groups and experiences of his family members as individuals with God-given, unique backgrounds. It is very important for him, young or not so young, to relate sincerely from these perspectives.

WILLIAM A. BEAVER, O.S.B.
Latrobe, Pa.

Other Vocations

“Shared Sacrifice” celebrates the complementarity of Christian love and witness in vowed celibacy and marriage. But this comparison leaves out many people who are involuntarily single, widowed or divorced. While his paean to baptismal discipleship is articulated in these two lifestyles, these other growing populations (now about half of all U.S. adults) are often seen as somehow a lesser witness value—and often without institutional or ecclesial support—in an increasingly less coupled society. And this

WHAT YOU’RE READING at americamagazine.org

1 When Pope Francis asked an Israeli Reporter, ‘How Can I Help?’

by Gerard O’Connell (In All Things, 5/24)

2 Jack, Bobby, Ted, by John F. Baldovin, S.J. (5/26)

3 Simply Loving, by James Martin, S.J. (5/26)

4 We Praise You, O God! by Robert F. O’Connor (5/26)

5 Renewing the Tradition, by Grant Kaplan (5/19)

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and

The French Association
of the Friends of Newman

announce a

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for a Joint Conference on



The Relevance
of
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in a Christian and
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Paris, France November 7 – 9, 2014

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Conference venue: l'Enclos-Rey, Paris

does not even address same-sex couples or those who are not disposed toward a coupled life.

As I look around my parish on a given Sunday, I see a majority of people who serve the parish and humanity immensely and deserve more than the traditional pat on the back or benign glance that says, "You, too, have a vocation...but we don't call it a sacrament or religious vocation as we do for your married and vowed co-parishioners."

The church still has much to do celebrate the role of the single person in the world and not emphasize only the vowed or married life.

DAVID E. PASINSKI
Fayetteville, N.Y.

Communion Disputes

Pope Francis is allegedly rethinking the denial of Communion to divorced and remarried Catholics. The pre-history of the uses and abuses of holy Communion are interesting, as any Jesuit should know.

In 17th-century France, the Jansenists opposed frequent Communion, believing it was the reward for a holy disposition, while their Jesuit foes believed sinners needed grace and should frequently approach the altar. Indeed, the church in the 18th century adopted more frequent Communion, but in practice the clergy generally still used Communion to keep the faithful in line.

Again in France, in Vichy France, many clergy refused Communion to those who resisted the legal government of Marshal Philippe Pétain, a pro-Nazi regime, but they welcomed members of the Milice, a paramilitary group who specialized in murdering Jews and leftists, to the altar.

Is it not time to be clear that Communion is a source of grace for sinners and not a reward for Catholic Pharisees?

NORMAN RAVITCH
Savannah, Ga.

STATUS UPDATE

Readers respond to "We Praise You, O God!" by Robert F. O'Connor (5/26).

The St. Louis Jesuits were my entrée into the Scriptures. They introduced me to the important passages and images in a melodic way that stuck with me more than simple words or pictures could have. When I got more serious about Scripture study, I found that their music was still valuable. Thanks to them for their work.

JULIANA BOERIO-GOATES

So very, very often I will hear a Scripture passage, and the first thing that happens is that I want to sing the song of that Scripture. I, too, am grateful for the contemporary composers. Thanks to these creative individuals, there is always a song in my heart. Many thanks!

TRICIA SUTTMANN

We had wonderful, beautiful classi-

cal music that honored the 157-year-old German heritage in our parish. We lost that in the last nine months, and the reaction of the people in the pews has not been positive. Music is to enhance prayer and should honor the heritage, tradition and culture of the parish. Contemporary music, spirituals, guitar masses, etc., might work in some parishes, but it shouldn't be imposed on those where it doesn't work.

BECKY LENTZ

I enjoy both our traditional classics and contemporary music, depending on my current spiritual thirst. One of the things I most appreciate about being Catholic is our inclusivity and the many rich traditions we have to enjoy, learn from and embody in our spiritual practice and lived experience.

NANCY WALTON-HOUSE

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CARTOON: HARLEY SCHWADRON

THE VATICAN

The Beginning of a New Journey To Peace in the Holy Land?

‘It is my hope that this meeting will mark the beginning of a new journey, where we seek the things that unite, so as to overcome the things that divide,’ Pope Francis said in a forceful speech concluding the historic Prayer for Peace in the Holy Land. The event was held in the Vatican Gardens on June 8 and broadcast live by television to Israel and Palestine. “More than once we have been on the verge of peace, but the Evil One, employing a variety of means, has succeeded in blocking it,” he said, referring to the failed attempts to broker peace between Israelis and Palestinians over the past 66 years. “That is why we are here—because we know and believe that we need the help of God.”

That sentiment was shared by Israel’s president, Shimon Peres, and Palestine’s president, Mahmoud Abbas, elder statesmen who had, as Peres said, “experienced war and tasted peace,” whom Francis had identified as men of peace and men of faith. They were joined at the prayer gathering by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople.

For over half a century negotiators had excluded the religious dimension from the peace process, even though most of the Holy Land’s 12 million inhabitants—Jews, Christians and Muslims—believe in the one merciful

God. By inviting their presidents to pray with him, Pope Francis brought God back to center stage. Such a high profile event has no precedent in the history of these lands. It was the pope’s brainchild, not the fruit of Vatican diplomacy.

Pope Francis originally intended holding it in the Holy Land during his historic meeting in Jerusalem with Patriarch Bartholomew. Political obstacles prevented that, however, so he hosted it in a neutral setting



HISTORIC PRAYER. Israeli President Shimon Peres, Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew I, Pope Francis and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas after their joint prayer.

in the Vatican Gardens: a triangular lawn, closed off on two sides by high hedges, with St. Peter’s dome in the background. It was an idyllic setting for prayer: only the sounds of water flowing in a nearby fountain and birds

IMMIGRATION

Church Leaders Urge Action To Protect Migrant Children

Catholic leaders have raised concerns that Latin American migrants are increasingly in danger of human rights violations, particularly the growing number of minors trying to make the trip from Central America to the United States alone. In a statement released on June 4, Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, auxiliary bishop of Seattle and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Migration, called on the

Obama administration and Congress to protect the unaccompanied children from Mexico and Central America crossing the border and to respond to the root causes of poverty and increasing violence as a long-term solution to the issue. He described President Obama’s announcement on June 3 of a new interagency task force to coordinate a response to the influx of solitary children streaming into the United States as “a good first step.”

The Obama administration estimates that around 60,000 undocumented and unaccompanied minors will enter the United States this year and projects the number will grow to nearly 130,000 next year. As recently as 2011, the number was only around 6,000. In a memo that describes the problem as an “urgent humanitarian situation,” Obama empowered the Federal Emergency Management Agency to coordinate relief for the children, including housing, care, medical treatment and transportation.

“These children are extremely vulnerable to human traffickers and unscrupulous smugglers and must be pro-



singing in the trees broke the silence.

As the sun set, the pope, the patriarch and the two presidents arrived in a white minibus and joined the 18-member interfaith delegations from Israel and Palestine and the papal

tected," said Bishop Elizondo. "Over the long term, the increasing violence from gangs and organized crime in their home countries must be addressed and controlled so they can be secure in their homes."

In separate meetings in May in Central America, bishops, church workers and Catholic organizations from Latin America and the United States arrived at the same conclusions. "Our biggest concern, among others, has been the violation of human rights during migration, the trafficking of persons, the issue of public policy and exploitation of various groups involved," the Department of Justice and

group. There followed a meticulously prepared hour-long prayer service in three parts: first Jewish, then Christian, then Muslim. The format was the same for each: praise of creation, plea for forgiveness, invocation for peace. Each prayer was followed by a musical interlude provided by Jewish, Christian and Muslim musicians.

"Peacemaking calls for courage, much more so than warfare," Pope Francis said. "It calls for the courage to say, 'yes' to encounter and 'no' to conflict; 'yes' to dialogue and 'no' to violence; 'yes' to negotiations and 'no' to hostilities; 'yes' to respect for agreements and 'no' to acts of provocation; 'yes' to sincerity and 'no' to duplicity."

Israel's President Peres agreed. "We must put an end to the cries, to the violence, to the conflict," he said. "We all need peace. Peace between equals." Peres, who reportedly reached a peace agreement with Abbas in back-door negotiations in 2011 only to have it rejected by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, said, "Peace does not come easy. We must toil with all our strengths to reach it, to reach it soon, even if it

Solidarity of the Latin American bishops' council said in a statement following a meeting in Panama on May 16.

On May 22, Central American and U.S. bishops concluded a meeting in El Salvador in which they highlighted the growing trend of young people making perilous migrations to the United States to rejoin family members. The meetings come amid heightening calls for the U.S. Congress to pass a stalled immigration reform bill. The Senate has already passed a comprehensive immigration reform package, but the House of Representatives has failed to vote on similar legislation.

"As pastors, we see the human con-

requires sacrifice or compromise."

President Abbas, who connects well with Peres, said Palestinians "are craving for a just peace, dignified living and liberty." He added, "Reconciliation and peace are our goal." Indeed, "we want peace for us and for our neighbors. We seek prosperity and peace of mind for ourselves and others alike."

After the speeches, Francis, Bartholomew, Peres and Abbas shook hands and together planted an olive tree before retiring to talk in private.

Can Pope Francis' introduction of God into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict open a new horizon for peace? Can it change the political climate among these two peoples by creating a dynamic that political leaders cannot ignore and in which religion can make a positive contribution? Perhaps we will only know the answers to these questions when the olive tree has produced its first fruit.

GERARD O'CONNELL

The author, a veteran international journalist, will file weekly reports from Rome, beginning Aug. 1, as America's new Vatican correspondent.



CROSSING GUARDS. Migrants, mostly women and children, disembark from a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement bus in Phoenix.

sequences of this broken system each day in our parishes and social service programs, as families are separated, migrant workers are exploited, and our fellow human beings risk everything to find a better life for themselves and the ones they love," Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said in a statement released on June 5.

Church workers contend that poor social and economic conditions continue to force residents to flee their native countries. The situation is particularly acute in Central America, where Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador perennially rank among countries with the world's highest homicide rates.

"The forces that are driving them, the predominant push factors, are violence added with poverty and lack of opportunity," said Kevin Appleby, director of migration policy and public affairs for the U.S.C.C.B. Office of Migration and Refugee Services. Appleby, who attended the meeting in El Salvador, said, "One woman at a repatriation center, told us, 'I'd rather my child die on the way to the United States than at my doorstep.'"

Vatican Finance Reform Continues

Efforts to reform and professionalize Vatican financial services and oversight continued as Pope Francis dismissed the all-Italian five-member board that oversees the Vatican's financial watchdog agency on June 5, in a move widely interpreted as a blow to the Vatican old guard. According to a Vatican statement, the pope named five experts from Switzerland, Singapore, the United States and Italy to replace those who were removed from the board of the Financial Information Authority (A.I.F.), the Holy See's internal regulatory agency. The five outgoing members had been expected to serve five-

NEWS BRIEFS

As the United Nations reported that **480,000 people** have fled after months of fighting in Iraq's Anbar province, suicide bombings and clashes between security forces and militants killed 36 people on May 30. • Security forces in Afghanistan on June 6 were questioning three Taliban members arrested in connection with the disappearance of **Alexis Prem Kumar, S.J.**, but have so far not located the Indian Jesuit, who was kidnapped on June 2. • Returning to Istanbul after his historic meeting with Pope Francis in Jerusalem, Patriarch Bartholomew made the surprise announcement on May 29 that the two church leaders had agreed to "celebrate together a **gathering in Nicaea in 2025**," which Vatican officials hastened to describe as a "commemoration," not an effort to convene a third Council of Nicaea. • The North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation voted in early June to encourage the "lifting of the restrictions regarding the **ordination of married men** to the priesthood in the Eastern Catholic Churches of North America." • U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said on June 5 that he is deeply concerned after Israeli authorities approved 1,400 new housing units in **settlements on the occupied West Bank**.



Alexis Prem Kumar, S.J.

year terms ending in 2016. The sole American on the new board is Juan Zarate, a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and visiting lecturer at Harvard Law School. The pope has taken a hard line on cleaning up the Vatican finance system. According to a report by the Italian news agency ANSA, two senior officials at the bank have also been eased into early retirement after reports by two separate ad hoc committees appointed by Francis to study Vatican finances.

Church and Economy

The world financial system "has been built as a new idolatry," charged Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, at a forum on June 3 in Washington, sponsored by the Catholic University of America's Institute for Policy Research & Catholic Studies. During his keynote address,

Cardinal Rodríguez issued a ringing endorsement of the church's competency to critique economic systems. Some of the church's critics ask: "What is the hierarchy of the church doing in the economy? They know nothing about the economy," Cardinal Rodríguez said in his remarks at the forum called *Erroneous Autonomy: The Catholic Case Against Libertarianism*. The church knows about the economy because "we know about the human being," the cardinal said. "The human being was not made for the economy, but the economy was made for the human being." He added that the market's "invisible hand has become [a] thief." Cardinal Rodríguez said political action may help change the ills of the current system. "Politics is often regarded as a dirty game," he said. "Who else but committed Christians can clean it up?"

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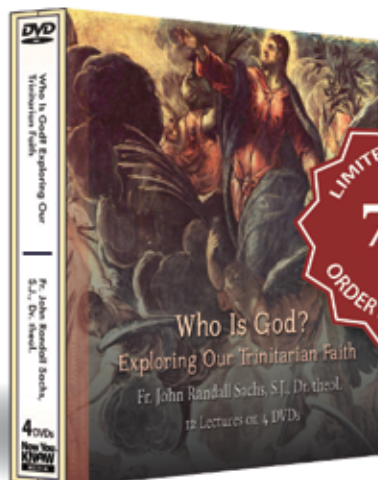
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Immigration Impasse

In Washington, conventional wisdom is widely shared and often wrong. After the 2012 elections, the consensus was that immigration reform was one priority which could be accomplished on a bipartisan basis. In early June, the consensus is that this is almost impossible because of opposition in the Republican House. Let's hope the conventional wisdom is wrong again.

The U.S. Catholic Bishops' Conference is taking extraordinary steps to prove that wisdom wrong. The bishops are following the powerful example of Pope Francis, who traveled to Lampedusa, the Isle of Tears, to defend the lives and dignity of immigrants. In April, Cardinal O'Malley and other bishops made a pilgrimage to the U.S.- Mexico border, where they shared in the Eucharist through the fence and prayed for those who died trying to cross over. In May, bishops came to Capitol Hill for a Mass for immigrants and to carry their message to House leaders. Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski said this broken system was "a stain on the soul of our nation." He called current immigration policies "cynical," because we rely on undocumented workers to pick our food, bus our dishes, clean our offices and care for our children but do not protect their dignity and rights as children of God.

There is also cynicism in the politics of immigration, in the gap between what leaders say and how they act.

National Republicans looking to the 2016 elections are convinced they

cannot win the White House by opposing immigration reform. Apparently, the message "We wish you and your relatives weren't here, but since some of you are citizens, please vote for us" is not a winner among Hispanics. But these leaders are doing little to overcome their members' opposition.

House Republican leaders alternate between calling immigration reform a priority and blaming the president for not moving forward. The problem is not the White House, but the House of Representatives. Some Republicans, focused on the 2014 elections and possible primary challenges from their right, insist the Congress should not anger the party's conservative base, give Obama a victory or permit immigrants to become citizens because of fears they are likely to vote for Democrats. Speaker Boehner has so far refused to let the House consider the Senate's comprehensive legislation because it would probably pass, but without support from a majority of Republicans.

President Obama has acted to protect "dreamers," young immigrants already in U.S. schools and communities, from being deported. But he has yet to limit other deportations, now at record levels, in order to appear strong on border security. He postponed a review of deportation policy to maintain leverage and to avoid antagonizing Republicans.

The broad coalition for reform—Catholics and evangelicals, business and labor, law enforcement and agriculture—needs to persuade undecided lawmakers and overcome resistance

without demonizing opponents or ignoring legitimate concerns about respect for law, impact on U.S. workers and national identity. It is essential that Catholic conservatives and Republicans make the case for constructive action in public statements and private advocacy, as Jeb Bush and Paul Ryan have done. The specifics of reform require "prudential judgment," but doing nothing or just erecting longer and higher

fences are neither prudent nor consistent with Catholic principles or American values. Will Republicans pay a price with their Catholic allies for failure to act?

Will
Republicans
pay a price
with their
Catholic
allies for
failure to act?

The fate of immigration reform probably comes down to the mind and heart of Speaker Boehner. In private he supports reform and

ridicules fear in his own caucus. It is quite possible that Boehner will not be speaker three years from now. He may choose more time with his grandchildren and golf over trying to lead a dysfunctional House. He may be voted out because he is not conservative enough or confrontational enough. What will be his legacy? Will he be paralyzed by divisions in his caucus, or will he have the courage to let the House vote on immigration reform that advances the common good and protects the "least among us?"

Conventional wisdom says he won't choose his heart over his head, that Speaker Boehner will yield to internal political pressures and not respond to the call of his conscience. I hope conventional wisdom is wrong once again.

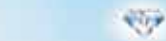
JOHN CARR

JOHN CARR is director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

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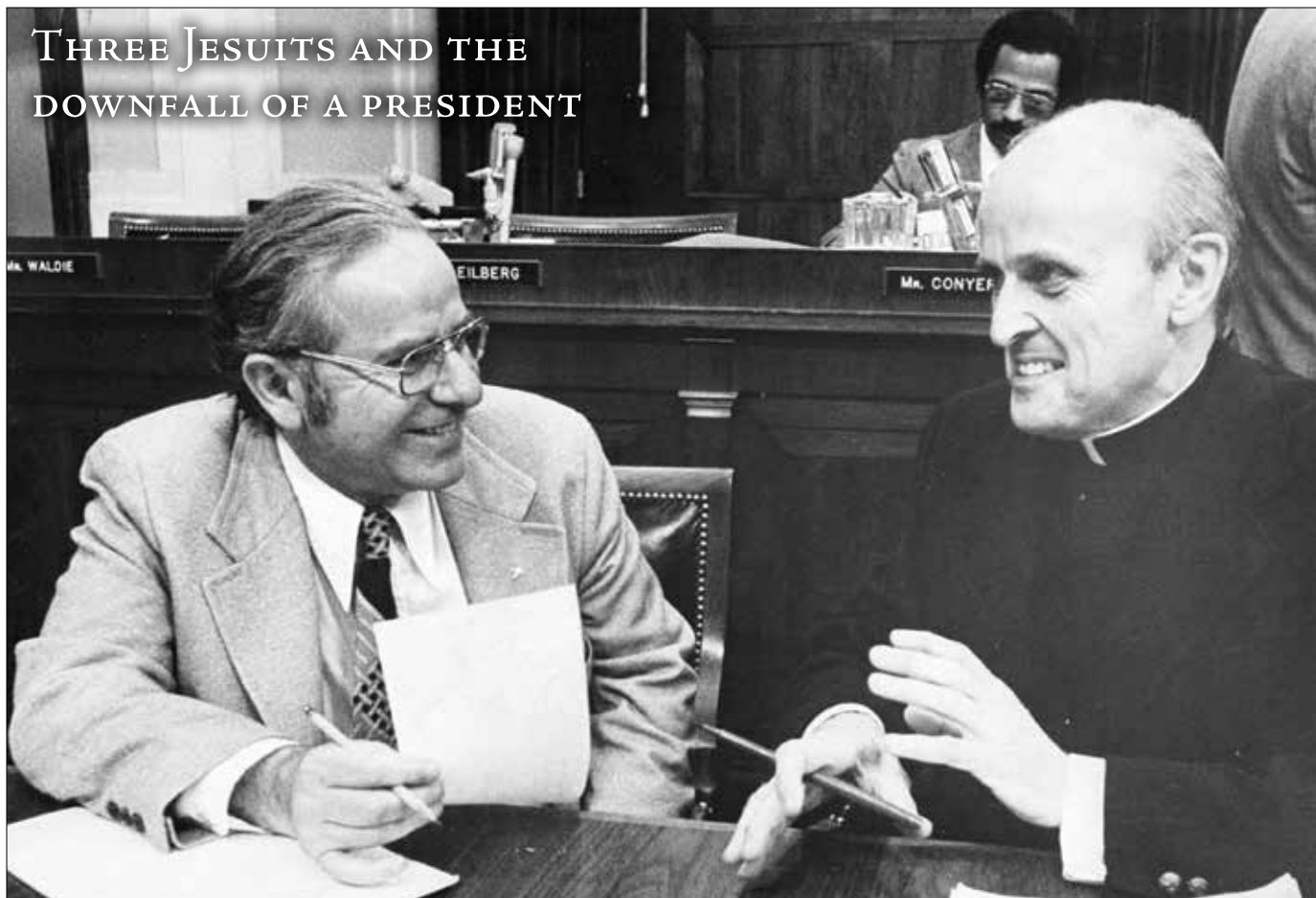
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THREE JESUITS AND THE DOWNFALL OF A PRESIDENT



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Watergate, S.J.

BY RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

The Eastern Point Retreat House in Gloucester, Mass., in the 1970s was ordinary in its accommodations, but striking for its setting—situated at the ocean's edge, where a narrow path reached out to an enormous rock, which rugged souls could mount while a soft or angry sea crashed around and beneath them. It was a good place for Jesuits to pray and to ponder God's grace, evil and American politics.

By the spring of 1973, the break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate office complex in Washington, D.C., had become a sensation but not yet an obsession. It made headlines beginning in January, after President Richard M. Nixon had been re-elected by a landslide. The Watergate burglars, who had been arrested on June 17, 1972, were found guilty; the president's top aides, H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman, and Attorney General Richard Kleindienst resigned; and General Alexander M. Haig Jr. was appointed White House chief of staff.

A young New York Province Jesuit scholastic on retreat at Gloucester at the time, Frank Herrmann, was walking along the ocean shore, when an older Jesuit came touring by on a bike,

HEARING AIDES.
Representative Robert F. Drinan, S.J., talks with Jerome Zeifman, counsel for the House Judiciary Committee in 1974.

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J., is literary editor of *America* and the author of *Bob Drinan: The Controversial Life of the First Catholic Priest Elected to Congress (2011)*.

saw Mr. Herrmann, stopped and introduced himself as Bob Drinan. Mr. Herrmann was impressed; most famous people simply assume you know who they are. When the conversation turned to President Nixon, Father Robert Drinan was quick to reply, “We’re going to get that bastard.”

In truth, Father Drinan was not yet ready to move for impeachment; and, as the controversy progressed, Father Drinan, who had learned that he was on President Nixon’s “enemies list,” described the impeachment in an interview with the *The National Catholic Reporter* as “a way to clear the air” and said he “hoped the president could be vindicated.” But Father Drinan also saw himself as a “moral architect,” a voice for those silent citizens who lacked the inclination or the nerve to speak out against a government’s abuse of power.

As dean of Boston College Law School, he had been active in the civil rights movement; and as the Vietnam War progressed, he saw it as both unjust and immoral. A trip to South Vietnam in 1969 with a study group of eight religious and civic leaders, focusing on human rights and the treatment of prisoners, “galvanized” him, he told *The New Republic*, to work for honest government. Vietnam, he found, was torturing its dissidents, and in the United States a State Department official had lied to him about it. His response was to run for Congress in 1970.

On the night of July 26, 1973, Father Drinan sat late at his desk, which was covered with press clippings. Some were from a series of articles by Seymour Hersh in *The New York Times*, including a report that the Pentagon admitted to 3,360 secret bombing raids on Cambodia in 1969 and 1970 and that it had destroyed the records to cover up the missions. He dictated a two-page memo to his staff explaining that his conscience called him to file a resolution to impeach the president. Yes, there were other reasons, including the plumbers’ invasion of Watergate. But for Father Drinan the illegal secret bombing of Cambodia was the reason he would stand before the House of Representatives on July 31 and say: “Mr. Speaker, with great reluctance I have come to the conclusion that the House of Representatives should initiate impeachment proceedings against the president.” He was particularly proud that he could make that historic speech, the first call for impeachment, on the feast of St. Ignatius Loyola.

“Morally, Drinan had a good case,” wrote House majority leader Thomas P. O’Neill, known as Tip, in his memoirs, “but politically, he damn near blew it.” The House was not ready to back impeachment, and Mr. O’Neill had to strike a deal with the minority leader, Gerald Ford, to keep Father Drinan’s resolution from coming up for a vote.

The View From 56th Street

America’s first editorial on the subject of the growing Watergate scandal, on Sept. 9, 1972, summarized events since the arrest of the five Watergate burglars on June 17 and warned that if no one were indicted, many citizens would conclude that politics had blocked the prosecution. In the following issue, the magazine’s “Washington Front” correspondent, Edward Glynn, S.J., compared the Watergate affair to a spicy stew that had been sitting on the back burner all summer. By May 5, 1973, the editorial board was hitting hard. This is not mere “bungling malfeasance,” but a “sinister strategy overseen by some highly placed administration men whose faces, at this writing, are still in the shadows.” The White House has been “shielding those faces from the light.”

During the spring and summer, *America*’s editorial writers continued Father Glynn’s use of metaphor: a “giant cyclorama that grows ever more crowded” (5/5), “a huge darksome bird of prey hovering over the heads of us all” (the column *Of Many Things*, 5/12), the “fiery poisoned shirt that Hercules could neither endure nor tear off” (8/18) and both a web and an iceberg (6/15/74). A steady theme was “the fundamental danger is a pattern of power exercised in high places of total disregard of law,” characterized by an absolute righteousness that then covers up the truth through “public scorn and contempt heaped on distinguished newspapers” (5/12/73).

As if in anticipation of Father Drinan’s speech in Congress, a two-page editorial in *America* on July 21 took the form of a homily delivered in the White House. “God’s word is a two-edged sword,” it begins, and the role of religion in society is twofold: “to canonize and to criticize, to support society but also to judge it.” The editors believed that Watergate represented a new kind of political corruption: “American politics has known before men who abused positions of power for private gain. The Watergate conspiracy betrayed the public trust in more deadly fashion. It stole our birthright.”

Enter John McLaughlin, S.J.

Both Robert Drinan and John McLaughlin were members of the New England Province of the Society of Jesus, wrote for *America* and, at different stages, opposed elements of the Vietnam War. They ran for Congress in the same year—Father Drinan for the House from Boston and Father McLaughlin for the Senate from Rhode Island. Having lost his Senate race as a Republican, Father McLaughlin went to the Nixon White House as a speechwriter. If anyone believed that all Jesuits, having been molded from the same spiritual clay, shared the same mind-set or lifestyle, Drinan versus

Father McLaughlin’s
argument, often repeated,
was that Mr. Nixon had
not committed a crime.

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McLaughlin was a rich case study.

Born in Providence, R.I., in 1927, John McLaughlin entered the Society of Jesus after graduating from LaSalle Academy and, after completing the ordinary Jesuit course of studies at that time, was ordained in 1947. At Boston College he earned master's degrees in English and philosophy. He then taught high school, earned a doctorate in communications at Columbia University and became an editor at **America** in the late 1960s, where he published an article criticizing the bombing strategy in Vietnam. He also gave lectures on sexual morality. When he left **America**, the editor in chief, Donald Campion, S.J., declined to tell *The New York Times* why, though he described him as a man “who has a way with words in a baroque way—you don't know quite what they mean, but they sort of stun you.”

Patrick Buchanan, then a White House adviser, brought Father McLaughlin to the White House as an assistant speechwriter and “resident Jesuit,” a priestly advocate for the Nixon administration. He took an apartment in the Watergate Hotel, gave his blessing to the 1972 Christmas bombing of Hanoi, defended the president's obscenities on the tapes as “emotional drainage” and told CBS News that Mr. Nixon was “the greatest moral leader in the last third of this century.” When the president insisted that there would be no more tapes released to anyone, Father McLaughlin explained that according to a theological analysis of the transcripts, they were neither amoral nor immoral and that the president had acquitted himself with honor during these discussions. He described Senator Hugh Scott's concern about the tapes as “erroneous, unjust” and containing elements of hypocrisy. To Father McLaughlin, Representative Peter Rodino, who led the House Judiciary Committee's investigation of the Nixon White House, was a “crude political tactician.”

Father McLaughlin was a Republican attack dog, picking up where former Vice President Spiro Agnew, who had resigned on Oct. 10, 1973, amid a bribery scandal, had left off. On Oct. 20, in what became known as the Saturday Night Massacre, President Nixon fired the Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox; and Attorney General Elliot Richardson and Deputy Attorney General William French Smith resigned in protest. Three days later, 44 Watergate-related bills were introduced in Congress, including 22 that called for an impeachment investigation.

Against this background Father McLaughlin defended the president in a series of radio and television talk show appearances in the Boston area. In one 53-minute radio encounter, he argued that the special prosecutor had “provoked his firing” by rejecting a reasonable compromise when Mr. Nixon refused to release tapes that were “private.” He compared the investigation to the Spanish Inquisition and said all the charges of “abuse of power” and maladministration were vague and weak

and that, while Mr. Nixon had made mistakes, all presidents had made mistakes and pursuing all these charges would weaken future presidents.

Father McLaughlin's basic argument, often repeated, was that Mr. Nixon had not committed a crime, and impeachment required a crime. Father Drinan, a member of the House Judiciary Committee that would address the impeachment case, had studied that question and concluded, with the committee, that no crime was required for impeachment.

The display of two battling Jesuits challenged the Washington press. Father Drinan had decided that when Father McLaughlin barked, he would not bite back; but the Los Angeles Times national correspondent Jack Nelson simulated a debate by bringing together two separate interviews in “Two Jesuits at Odds Over Nixon” (10/10/74). Father McLaughlin compared the House Judiciary Committee to the novel *Lord of the Flies* and charged Father Drinan with a “rape of justice” and with having characterized Mr. Nixon's policies as “Hitlerite genocide.”

Father Drinan replied, “Never said it,” and blew up at Mr. Nelson: “If [Father McLaughlin] had any goddamn sense of decency, he would not misinterpret my position.... But don't quote me on that, I don't want to have anything to do with this. I only talked to you [Mr. Nelson] because I thought you wanted to talk about impeachment.”

Responding to questions about lifestyle, Father Drinan refused to say why he wore the Roman collar, although he had previously told the press that he had only one suit or that he wore it to get attention. He lived in one room in the Jesuit community at Georgetown University, with a bathroom down the hall, and turned in half his salary to the Society of Jesus for the room. Father McLaughlin said his Watergate suite was less luxurious than many Jesuit rooms, did not want to “trade off the collar” and would not disclose his salary, reported to be \$30,000 a year—the equivalent of more than \$150,000 in 2014.

The Brothers Haig

The forced resignations of John Ehrlichman and H. R. Haldeman in April 1973 threw President Nixon into a state of depression. Withdrawing even from his wife, he retreated to his haven in Key Biscayne, Fla., where at Mr. Haldeman's insistence he summoned General Haig to assume the role of chief of staff. General Haig was a decorated veteran of the wars in Korea and Vietnam and had earned a master's degree in international relations from Georgetown University. He was formerly on the staff of Henry Kissinger, who described him as “strong in crises, decisive in judgment, skillful in bureaucratic infighting.” The top White House staff job was to stand in the midst of the conflict and both keep order and

ON THE WEB
America's coverage
of Watergate.
americamagazine.org/vantagepoint

protect the president. Mr. Haig resisted, but he could not refuse his commander in chief.

As months passed, evidence mounted that the president was taking less responsibility for his behavior. Mr. Haig had witnessed this development. Mr. Nixon began calling his friends and advisers at night, asking whether he should resign. His chief of staff repeatedly said no. But once he became aware in July 1974 of the June 23, 1972, tape that made clear that the president had ordered the cover-up of the Watergate break-in, his role changed, shifting from protecting the president to managing the president's resignation in a way that would allow Mr. Nixon to come to the decision on his own. Mr. Haig admonished Mr. Nixon's visitors to give the president the facts about the mounting opposition but not to suggest quitting. Mr. Nixon had to resign "freely."

Throughout, Mr. Haig's off-scene supporter and confidant was his younger brother, Frank Haig, S.J., a physicist who had been president of Wheeling College from 1966 to 1972, and after his brother served both President Gerald Ford and President Ronald Reagan, was president of LeMoyne College in Syracuse, N.Y. (1981-89). Though he had always been a Democrat, he called himself a Rockefeller Republican to support his brother.

According to Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein in *The Final Days* (1976), Alexander Haig "detested" John McLaughlin, S.J., whose ideas on morality were not going

to save the president. According to Father Haig, in a recent interview for this article, his brother had opposed bringing Father McLaughlin in as a speechwriter, but later accepted him, though in his estimation the Jesuit speechwriter was not what a good Catholic priest should be, not a strong defender of both the faith and the truth.

For a while, Mr. Haig was suspected of being the unidentified source known as Deep Throat, who fed information to investigative journalists at *The Washington Post*. But there was no way Alexander Haig could have been Deep Throat, his brother said. He would rather have quit. What should Mr. Nixon have done? The Haigs thought he should have told the whole truth right away and the issue would have died.

On Trial

On July 24, 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court, at the request of the special prosecutor Leon Jaworski, decided 8 to 0 (Justice Rehnquist had recused himself) that executive privilege did not apply to the White House tapes and ordered President Nixon to surrender them all to Judge John Sirica, who had been hearing the Watergate case since the arrest of the plumbers two years earlier. The court asked Sirica to review the tapes and decide which should be released to the special prosecutor's office. Thus the public learned that Mr. Nixon had said to his aides, "I want you all to stonewall it, let [the burglars] plead the Fifth Amendment, cover up, or anything else, it'll save it—

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save the plan." That evening the House Judiciary Committee, which had been working on impeachment since the previous December, began its deliberations in earnest.

Over the following several days, the committee voted by wide margins to recommend impeachment on the first three articles: obstruction of justice, abuse of power and refusal to cooperate with the committee's investigation. Father Drinan seldom spoke during the hearings. He had already had his moment in the sun with his original proposal; he was surrounded by 37 other lawyers who had a lot to say, and he had a hard time getting recognized. The fourth article of impeachment, on the bombing of Cambodia, was anti-climactic and was rejected, although Father Drinan had to ask, "How could we impeach a president for concealing a burglary but not for concealing a mass bombing?" On Aug. 9, 1974, President Nixon resigned.

Exit John McLaughlin

Three months earlier, in May, Richard Cleary, S.J., the provincial superior of the Jesuits in New England, told the Boston press that he had called Father McLaughlin to return to Boston for an eight-day retreat to reconsider his lifestyle and his interpretations of moral laws, which some had misunderstood as representing those of the Society of Jesus. Father McLaughlin dismissed Father Cleary's comments as coming from the "geopolitical center of liberal thinking... Massachusetts, the only state out of step with the rest of the country." By the end of the month they had resolved their differences. But in October The National Jesuit News reported that Father Cleary had ordered Father McLaughlin to resign from the White House. Father McLaughlin claimed he quit because President Ford wanted a new staff. He promptly left the Society of Jesus, worked for several years in radio and television talk shows, and still presides over a long-running Sunday morning political panel called "The McLaughlin Group." He did not respond to several requests to be interviewed for this article.

Frank Haig, S.J., asked recently what his brother learned from the Watergate experience, described Alexander's impatience when diplomats from other countries as well as Americans talked in terms of loyalty to the president or some national leader. "He learned that being an American has nothing to do with race or color or religion or origin or wealth. It is your devotion to the founding principles: the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution."

America, in its end-of-the-year editorial (12/28/74), said that "our national experience reflects the dilemma behind the crisis of leadership throughout the world.... The temptation is to withdraw and seek compensation...in...prayer and intimacy. Still, total preoccupation with a private life...becomes unreal. The challenge, then...is to bring the insight and the courage that arise from this personal center into the public struggle to redeem the systems within which we live." ■



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A Pope for the Americas

Can Francis help bring stability to Latin America?

BY TIM PADGETT

Venezuela is mired in a deadly and crippling standoff. Since early February, anti-government protests, largely student-led, have turned many of the oil-rich nation's cities into scenes of street barricades and tear gas. More than 40 people have been killed so far.

This is the crisis Hugo Chávez left behind. The radical left-wing leader died last year after ruling Venezuela for 14 years. Chávez's socialist revolution did empower and improve life for Venezuela's poor. But Chavismo (the name given to the country's socialist movement) has undermined his achievements as a result of authoritarian governance and mismanagement. Venezuela is saddled with South America's highest inflation and homicide rates, not to mention a currency crisis and chronic shortages of basic goods like eggs and toilet paper.

Hence the demonstrations aimed at Chávez's elected successor, President Nicolás Maduro. He has made things worse with his security-force crackdowns and arbitrary jailing of protesters and opposition politicians, not to mention his delusional insistence that the disorder is all a plot backed by the Central Intelligence Agency to raise a coup against him. Not that the protesters have been saints. Their own, sometimes violent tactics have alienated the half of the population that still at least grudgingly supports the revolution.

Here is the bottom line for both sides: The protest movement is not likely to oust Maduro, but Maduro is not likely to get rid of the protest movement, at least as long as the country's social and economic situations keep deteriorating. The only way out is to sit down and negotiate an end to the fracas. But who could mediate this ultra-polarized mess?

The pope.

The only good news for Venezuela since the strife began was the announcement by the Vatican in late March that it was "willing and desirous" to help broker a solution, which it is now trying to do. "I urge you not to get stuck in the conflict of the moment," Francis wrote in April as talks got underway. While he recognized "the restlessness and pain,"

he called for "reciprocal recognition and respect."

That last part is a tall order. But Pope Francis is perhaps the only credible nonpartisan go-between that both the government and the opposition can trust at this juncture.

In the bigger picture, however, it seems time for Pope Francis to dive not only into the Caracas conflict but numerous other problems in Latin America. In his case, this should not be just an issue of diplomacy. It is a matter of duty. Francis, after all, is the first Latin American pope. And, fairly or not, he cannot escape his historic responsibility to make that mean something. Just as Pope St. John Paul II, the first Slavic pope, was instrumental in the downfall of communism in Eastern Europe, Pope Francis can bring his background to bear on the challenges facing Latin America.

As the Venezuela controversy points up, the development of Latin America is still weighed down by its own lingering, Cold War albatrosses. Not the least of these is the region's epic inequality, which while improving, remains among the worst of any region in the world. It is the kind of yawning gap between rich and poor that Francis all but declared his papal priority last autumn in "The Joy of the Gospel." What better place to focus his example and energies in that 21st-century crusade than on his home continent?

A Political Player

Francis' rock-star popularity has already brought a New World glow to a Holy See worn down by centuries of Old World gravitas. His emphasis on the poor, on backing the underdog, is a big part of that. But so is the relative open-mindedness he has encouraged. His call for the church to stop obsessing about "small-minded rules" reflects the sort of independent thinking that has long defined Latin America. Now is the time for Pope Francis to get involved in the Americas with the same sense of purpose Pope St. John Paul II brought to the Soviet bloc.

Venezuela seems the best place to start. "The Vatican is an obvious player in Venezuela," Michael Shifter, president of Inter-American Dialogue, told me recently. "It can fulfill that role better than anyone right now." Francis has a captive Roman Catholic audience on each side of the divide, not just the mostly middle-class opposition but Maduro and the socialists as well. Perhaps even especially the Chavistas, as

ON THE WEB

Thomas M. Kelly on Pope Francis and the Latin American Church.
americamagazine.org/pope-francis

TIM PADGETT is editor for the Americas at the South Florida NPR affiliate WLRN and WLRN.org.

Venezuela's socialists are known, for two reasons.

First, like many Latin American leaders, Chávez injected large doses of Catholic spirituality into his politics. That was especially true during the battle with the cancer that took his life, when he regularly evoked Christ's passion and reported visions of Jesus appearing to him. Critics suggest it sprang more from Chávez's messianic self-image and that Maduro laces his speeches with Christian rhetoric as a cynical means of deifying the late *comandante* and bolstering his own rule.

like the late Cardinal Ignacio Antonio Velasco García were practically arm-in-arm with the putsch leaders. As a result, the Chavistas might love nothing better than to bypass the Venezuelan hierarchy and work directly with what they perceive to be a more socially conscious Vatican under Francis.

But the pope has an even more effective tool for leverage: his secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin. The Italian diplomatic veteran, whom Francis made a cardinal this year, was the Vatican's ambassador to Venezuela from 2009 to 2013, and he is well regarded by both the government and the opposition. Maduro even mentioned Cardinal Parolin by name when the Vatican's intervention in the Venezuelan crisis was first broached.

The bigger question, though, is whether Pope Francis and Cardinal Parolin can get the two bitterly distrustful sides to agree on any points substantive enough to end the conflict. It certainly will not be easy, but I think Francis can be most effective by reminding both parties how badly they have failed Venezuela's poor.

Life Before Chávez

For Maduro's opponents, one of the most frustrating things about the protests is how ineffective they have been at galvanizing poorer Venezuelans to the antigovernment side, despite the country's acute economic hardships. But the opposition still fails to understand that while the poor may no longer be that fond of the revolution, they do not yet see an alternative they are willing to embrace. What they do recall is life before Chávez, when the elite's lavish corruption helped keep half the nation in poverty. I saw this up close when, as a graduate student in the 1980s, I was a teacher for the Catholic education movement *Fey y Alegría* in one of the slums of Caracas.

Some opposition leaders—like Gov. Henrique Capriles Radonski of Miranda State, who almost defeated Maduro in last year's special presidential election—do appreciate that reality. But too many others need a reminder that Chávez came to power for a reason, and they are more likely to pay attention if that knock on the forehead comes from Pope Francis.

The pope's involvement might make it easier to convince opposition leaders that their goal should be developing a platform that persuades the Chavista base to help them

FRANK TALK. Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro visited the Vatican in June 2013.



But the last time I interviewed Chávez, in 2006, he sounded at times like the kind of liberation theologian that “The Joy of the Gospel” has made respectable again. “If you really look at things through the eyes of Jesus Christ, who I think was the first socialist,” he told me, “only socialism can really create a genuine society.”

Second, the Chavistas consider the Venezuelan church a partisan arm of the opposition. When Chávez was briefly ousted by a coup in 2002, for example, Venezuelan prelates

ject Maduro at the ballot box, perhaps in a recall referendum next year, instead of at the ramparts. Maybe then they would be more willing to ease out of the protests, provided Maduro makes concessions—real ones.

Maduro should start with the release of prisoners convicted in kangaroo courts, like opposition leader Leopoldo López. Just as important, he should agree to revise certain disastrous Chavista policies, especially economic ones. How can the Vatican convince someone as rigidly and narrow-mindedly ideological as Maduro to back off his vision of a Cuban Venezuela? By making him see—as Brazil and many other leftist-led Latin American countries have discovered in this century—that socialism and capitalism are compatible and that snuffing out the latter as ardently as the Chavistas are trying to do simply undercuts the former.

As an Argentine, Francis knows all too well that hyperinflation is the worst tax you can dump on the poor. He needs to remind Maduro, a former bus driver, what it is like for low-wage families to wait entire days outside grocery stores for rice or cooking oil. Or what it is like to see 50 murders per weekend in their barrios, thanks to the utter ineptitude of the Chavista police.

Jailed in Cuba

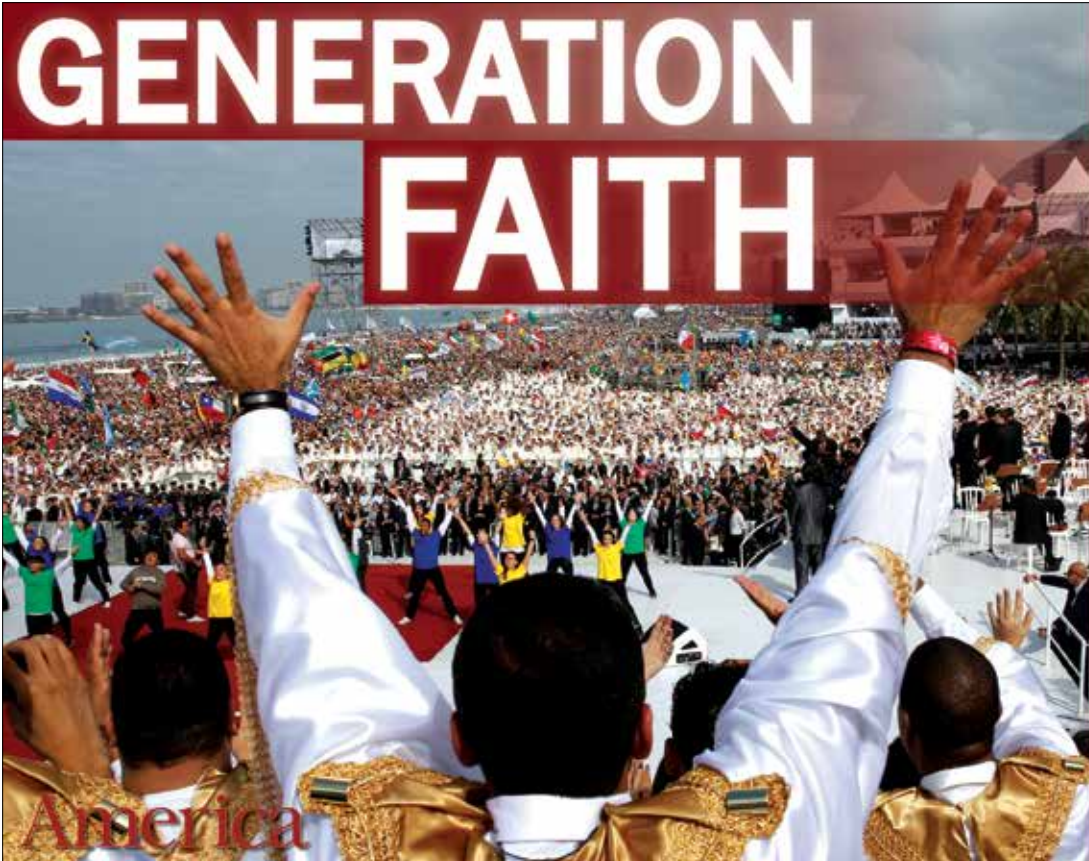
For now it is enough that Francis and the Vatican are at the Venezuelan table. Meanwhile, he has other crises in the

hemisphere to address—including Communist Cuba. Take the case of 64-year-old Alan Gross, a contractor for the U.S. Agency for International Development. Since 2009, when he was arrested for bringing unlawful satellite communications equipment to the island, Mr. Gross has been serving a 15-year sentence on highly questionable espionage charges.

Mr. Gross's imprisonment is now the biggest obstacle to thawing U.S.-Cuban relations. That also makes it an obstacle to improving relations between the United States and Latin America as a whole. This is why U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, during his visit to Rome in January, was smart to seek the Vatican's help in winning Mr. Gross's release.

The Catholic Church's recent and robust revival in Cuba, a half-century after Fidel Castro all but extinguished it, makes this another potentially successful project for Francis. The church, in fact, is the only non-Communist institution that current Cuban leader Raúl Castro, Fidel's younger brother and successor, has shown trust in. Cuban bishops brokered the release of more than 100 political prisoners in 2011. Just as important, the church has served as a conduit for Raúl's free-market-oriented economic reforms, helping to train fledgling entrepreneurs and even partnering with a Spanish university to offer Cubans M.B.A. degrees.

Alan Gross's Washington, D.C., attorney, Scott Gilbert, told me at first he thought it "highly unlikely that the Vatican in and of itself" could win the contractor's freedom. But



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he now realizes that the sturdy bridges between Cuba's Catholics and communists "could be very useful."

The Vatican's diplomatic guns first have to convince Raúl that the outcome he desires—a Cold War-style spy swap of Alan Gross for a handful of Cuban agents doing time in the United States—is not going to happen. They then need to help the Obama administration find a bargaining chip that is acceptable to both Washington and Havana. A prime prospect: taking Cuba off the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. As most Cuba experts tell me, any evidence that keeps Havana on that roster today is scant if not entirely missing.

Stateless in the D.R.

The pope can also help with the plight of hundreds of thousands of Haitians caught in legal purgatory in the Dominican Republic. In September, the Dominican high court essentially stripped citizenship from anyone born in the Dominican Republic after 1929 if their parents were undocumented immigrants or non-Dominicans. Haitians call it a racist decision aimed at them—meaning blacks—something Dominican leaders deny.

The United States and the Caribbean Community, a 15-member organization known as Caricom, have urged the Dominican Republic to perhaps find legislative ways to reverse the court ruling. But one of the key persons hold-

ing back those efforts is the influential Dominican Cardinal Nicolás López, who backs the ruling and has called anyone who opposes it "liars and charlatans."

That probably was not what Pope Francis wanted to hear. Ralph Gonsalves, chairman of Caricom, told me in December that when he met with the pope that month, Francis agreed the Dominican ruling was "unacceptable." (The Vatican has not denied that.)

In January, by naming Haiti's first cardinal, Bishop Chibly Langlois, who has a more common touch than his Dominican counterpart, the pope may have been sending López a message. The move both symbolically and practically alters the hierarchical center of power on the island of Hispaniola, which the Dominican Republic shares with Haiti, the hemisphere's poorest country. That smoothes the way for a much needed Vatican intervention.

The list goes on. Francis should work harder, for example, to advance the cause for sainthood of the late martyr Archbishop Óscar Romero of El Salvador, who was killed for supporting the very causes the pope trumpets in "The Joy of the Gospel." And while Francis will not overturn "Humanae Vitae," he could perhaps convince Latin American prelates to shift their focus away from restricting birth control to addressing poverty. These issues may not seem as epic as the ones faced by Pope St. John Paul II; but if a Latin American pope does not confront them, a historic opportunity will be lost. **A**



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Among Mercies

My grandmother, Catherine McAuley and me

BY TY BARNES

My grandmother was one of the most faithful people I've ever met. In my fondest memory of her, she is walking through the house on a warm summer day, watering plants while singing spirituals—those Christian songs created by enslaved people in the United States as a form of prayer and worship. Whether Grandma was caring for her grandchildren, assisting people in the community or doing chores, she presented her faith through song.

Along with her songs, my grandmother's way of helping others also became a form of prayer. When I was in fourth grade, I remember rushing to her house after school on an extremely cold winter day. While passing through the vestibule, I heard her say, "Have as much as you'd like, we have plenty." There was a family of three sitting at the kitchen table eating a bowl of soup. After saying hello, I joined them at the table. I learned later that the family had been living in their car. My grandmother's generosity, humility and grace were infused by her faith.

Grandma also inspired me to start my first faith-sharing group in elementary school. Nine of us sat in a circle on someone's front porch and opened with prayer before sharing. I know we discussed biblical stories, but now I recall the fellowship more than the discussions. At the end of each gathering we held hands and thanked God for our time together, praying:

God is good all the time, and all the time God is good. Amen.

My family was raised in the African-American Baptist Church. Influenced by my grandmother, I continue in that tradition, but I also had the awesome privilege of being surrounded by several faith traditions as a child. We lived in Baltimore, Md., where I knew people who were Protestants, Catholics, Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists and Jews. Learning about each of these practices taught me to be respectful of God's presence in different forms and helped me to have an open mind when interacting with people of other faith traditions. Out of respect for one of my Jewish friends, we were mindful to not hold our faith-sharing meetings on the Sabbath, nor did we eat foods that might have insulted his kosher lifestyle.

Bearing witness to the merciful spirit of my grandmother helped to build the foundation for my desire to create community today. Her example helped me to see the importance of not limiting my faith community to the boundaries of one denomination and instead to allow God's teachings to be the cornerstone of my faith.

This mind-set allowed me to be open to new opportunities when my family and I moved to North Carolina

in May 2008 to enjoy a slower pace and lower cost of living. Six months after our move, my employer went out of business. Unemployed, I volunteered at area schools. About a year later, I was offered a position as part-time secretary. In January 2011, I learned that my part-time position was being eliminated. I was devastated at the thought of going from underemployment to



From the top: the author's grandmother, Nancy Wilks; Sister Jane Hotstream blesses the author's hands.

unemployment again. This was one of the most vulnerable times of my life.

Four weeks later, I learned of an administrative assistant position with the Sisters of Mercy in Belmont, N.C. Before the interview process began, I prayed to work someplace where I could openly talk about my faith and be with likeminded colleagues. Fortunately, I was offered a position to support the sisters' Office of Association and the Office of Justice.

TY BARNES is the director of Mercy Association for the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, South Central Community, in Belmont, N.C.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AUTHOR

This is where I was introduced to the life of Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy. I would have never imagined how much Mercy Association and social justice would become a part of my life.

In truth, the Sisters of Mercy had been around me my entire life, though I hadn't realized it. Some of my very close friends were educated by the Sisters of Mercy. I remember going to dances and community programs at those schools and feeling drawn to the spirit of compassion and hospitality. There was a sense of great consideration for the betterment of the students and affiliates of the school as well as the overall community. The relationship between the students and sisters felt familiar. In many ways I compared it to the appreciation that my grandmother had for her community. Both the Sisters of Mercy and my Grandma were purposeful in their affiliations in order to foster positive relationships within society. I wanted to be like them, too.

Learning about Catherine McAuley felt like meeting an old friend with a common interest in serving the unmet needs of marginalized people. Life taught her about the vulnerabil-

ity of indigent people. Her legacy inspired me to identify prejudice toward God's people and advocate for change. Unknowingly, this was an introduction to Catholic social justice. As a woman of faith, I didn't know what to do with this sudden eruption of passion, because becoming a vowed member of the Sisters of Mercy was not an option. I am a Protestant, married mother of three. During this time, I was introduced to Mercy Association.

Mercy Association is an alliance of lay women and men who are called to share in the mission of Mercy while maintaining independent lifestyles through a covenant with the Sisters of Mercy. After a period of prayer and discernment about Mercy Association, it became very clear that I was called to be part of this community. I joined on Sept. 24, 2012, and now help to organize the associates in my region.

The charism of Mercy inspires and challenges me to confront issues of overlooked populations with compassion. It provides a platform by which I can wholly honor traditions of my culture and my faith while moving

forward in Jesus Christ through service, prayer and community. For the first time in my life, I choose not to ignore the person on the corner asking for help. I pay attention to the people around me because my covenant and community hold me accountable to live with devotion.

Upon reflection, I see the spirit of Catherine McAuley in the life my Grandma lived. Like Catherine, she had a great desire to meet the immediate needs of the people around her while living Gospel values. Both women have inspired me to do the same, because I believe God ultimately wants us to be-

come partners on the journey. As I continue to grow, I thank God for the manifestation of faith in my life.

With love and mercy,

I can't help but be thankful and embrace the varied paths of faith surrounding me.

My journey has been an awesome blend of sharing and learning. For instance, as part of an Association anti-racism workshop in Mississippi, our participants attended Mass at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church. There was a mix of all races and a Gospel choir. There I sat intimately with God amongst friends and acquaintances of every age, sex, race and religion—in hope and community with one another.

Some may ask, how does an African-American Baptist woman identify with an order of apostolic vowed Catholic religious? It is actually very simple: The presence of God exists in both places. As a society, we must learn to build intimacy with God and trust the Holy Spirit to guide us how we should go. Catherine McAuley and my grandmother worshiped God by doing the works of mercy. I praise God for each part of my journey. Between my Grandma's mentorship and my relationship with the Sisters of Mercy, I can fully embrace God in both traditions.

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THEATER | ROB WEINERT-KENDT

CREATURE DISCOMFORTS

Journeys of hurt and healing on Broadway

When a playwright puts a character with a prominent disability or a disfiguration at the center of his or her work, it can seem like a craven shortcut to an audience's empathy, not to mention a sure magnet for actors hoping to add an award statuette to the mantle. Of course, a serious play—even if it is a comedy—is up to more than simply tickling our tear ducts and making us think, “What a great performance.” By placing characters with afflictions or impairments in the fore, authors and actors inevitably raise the moral stakes of their endeavor, since to depict such challenges is to reflect on the nature of the world and of creation. It gives the question of suffering, of theodicy, an irreducibly human form: What kind of creator makes flawed creatures? How do we relate to each other, all of us flawed? Might outward imperfection point the way to inner truth?

The answers, as provided in a pair of stellar play revivals on Broadway, are not pretty, though both productions are things of beauty in their own right. In John Steinbeck's 1937 classic *Of Mice and Men*, the world of migrant farm workers in central California is a place of punishing, almost atavistic scarcity and severity. It is not only the Depression-era economics that give the work its potent fatalism; in this milieu of solitary, mutually mistrustful men, every shred of hope and human feeling is either snuffed out mercilessly or channeled into merciful killing. The show's only loving relationship, between itinerant laborers George (James Franco) and

Lennie (Chris O'Dowd), doesn't stand a chance in this unforgiving sphere, not least because Lennie—a brutishly strong man-child with an unnamed type of intellectual disability—can't help but cause harm. He not only lashes back, if reluctantly, when attacked; in Steinbeck's cruelest irony, even Lennie's embrace of the things he loves is deadly.

In the face of that bleak vision, director Anna D. Shapiro's riveting production teases out the work's humanity

be enough to keep the howling winds of despair from the door, but it's enough to draw us around its campfire warmth. In the iconic leading roles, the deceptively casual Franco and the soulful but meticulous O'Dowd have the unmistakable chemistry of hard-knocks comradeship; the smiling tenderness between them feels no less genuine for being forged under such crushing conditions.

An irrepressible sweetness is also the saving grace, and quite possibly the Achilles heel, of *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, Martin McDonagh's 1996 comedy, being given a belated and crowd-pleasing Broadway debut by the British director Michael Grandage. In the title role of Billy Claven—a



UNFORGIVEN. Chris O'Dowd and James Franco in “Of Mice and Men”

and humor, which of course only serves to heighten its excruciating tension and tragedy. The corrugated-tin bunkhouse where the farm workers swap stories and plot getaways over cards is as close as the show gets to a welcoming hearth, and the exquisite ensemble actors create a glow of fellow feeling. It may not

well-meaning errand boy in 1930s Ireland who has, in the playwright's simple, non-medical diagnosis, “one leg and one arm crippled”—Daniel Radcliffe gives an endearing, slightly effortful performance, as if he's working to convince us of Billy's infirmity.

Luckily, this eagerness on the part

of the actor dovetails nicely with Billy's own chipper determination against the steep odds of his poor and misunderstood existence in a seaside village, where he has the unappetizing choices of condescension from two adoptive spinster aunts, open mockery from a pair of teenage frenemies or gossiping interference by the town's official busy-body, Johnnypateenmike. It's no won-

more accessible, ostensibly more mature, less angry play; whereas elsewhere McDonagh's characters were comically distorted by ignorance or hatred, putting a boy with congenital disabilities at the center of "Inishmaan" seems to have forced McDonagh to reckon with the possibility that human suffering may be a larger and less comprehensible thing than could be explained by mere stupid-

bodied by sitcom star/awards-show maven Neil Patrick Harris, takes us from humble beginnings in East Germany to a humbling fringe career in middle America, and then beyond, to a glam-rock *walpurgisnacht* that, improbably, acquires the shape of a passion play, complete with a resurrection.

Best of all is **Violet**, yet another 90s-era piece just now finding its way to Broadway. This gorgeous, country-inflected chamber musical by composer Jeanine Tesori and librettist/lyricist Brian Crawley, based on Doris Betts's short story "The Ugliest Pilgrim," is as strange and unconventionally beautiful as its title character, a North Carolina farm girl whose father accidentally wounded her face with an axe. With the aid of judicious flashbacks, the show follows the adult Violet's bus trip to seek a holy makeover from a faith healer in Memphis—a quixotic mission as doomed to disappointment as it is meant to signify a deeper search for meaning and repair.

It's a remarkably affecting show, with many sharp and surprising turns, and it doesn't hurt that it has two of the best performances of the season: from Joshua Henry, as a rueful but tenderhearted soldier Violet meets on her travels, and from the flinty, supple and achingly transparent Sutton Foster, in the title role. As Violet reaches the last turn of her journey, she is surprised by a beauty no scar could ever take from

her, but that would never have shown itself without first having been hidden. "If I show you my darkness/ Will you bring me to light?" she sings, backed by a gleaming chorus that is her answer. She is no longer disfigured by suffering but transfigured by it.

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



Pat Shortt and Daniel Radcliffe in "The Cripple of Inishmaan"

der then that Billy spies an escape hatch when an American film crew descends on a nearby village to make a documentary. "Ireland mustn't be such a bad place, if the Yanks want to come here to do their filming," says Johnny, in a recurring, look-on-the-bright-side joke that neatly sums up the play's sourly satirical view of Irish self-loathing and passivity.

It's been much noted that this biting irreverence for the Emerald Isle—and in particular for the potato-parade tropes of Irish playwrights like Sean O'Casey and J. M. Synge—likely comes from McDonagh's upbringing in London, with frequent visits to, but crucial distance from, his parents' Irish home. And in the exuberant gallows humor of plays like "The Beauty of Leenane" and "The Lieutenant of Inishmore," you get the sense of a young punk literally slaying those ancestral demons, exploding blarney into rubble.

"The Cripple of Inishmaan" is a

ity or venality.

But McDonagh's play never really rises to the occasion invited by Billy's condition, instead mining it for straight-up pathos and laughs. The new Broadway production wisely plays to those strengths. Grandage has given the play the brash bounce of a boulevard comedy; if it edges toward the cartoonish, that seems to be the ideal way to put across the play: as a kind of Gaelic sitcom-fable, to be quaffed like a pint and forgotten in the morning.

Elsewhere on Broadway, two musicals deserve a mention in this space, since both represent resoundingly moving journeys from hurt to healing. In **Hedwig and the Angry Inch**—like "Inishmaan," a late-90s phenomenon just now getting its Broadway debut—a transgender chanteuse, memorably em-

ON THE WEB

Raymond A. Schroth, S.J., reviews the film "The Last Sentence." americamagazine.org/things

OUTRAGE AGAIN

It feels useless, even shameful, to write one more column expressing outrage about yet another outburst of gun violence in the United States. What a parade of editorial futility follows each new gun aberration as we “opinion makers” fall into a predictable line to dispatch our familiar script of frustration and anguish. Years of such folly and we remain confronted by the same ghoulish, draining drama.

While the rest of the industrialized West has long put the problem of everyday gun violence behind it, the United States endures 31,000 firearm deaths each year. I feel foolish even writing another word about it. If the abomination at Sandy Hook elementary in Newtown, Conn., was not enough to change the national dialogue on gun violence, I am under no illusion that the comparably “minor” bloodletting at the University of California, Santa Barbara, will lead to any meaningful change now.

What has to change first, as the father of one victim pointed out, is the nation’s “craven” political class. Cowed by the gun manufacturers’ shadow lobbyists at the National Rifle Association, they have demonstrated persistent institutional cowardice in confronting this national crisis.

As after each such incident, some column writers will bemoan the toll of gun violence, while the gun apologists will just as predictably continue to distort the meaning of the Second Amendment. That perspective has rarely been so explicitly expressed as it was when the conservative oracle Samuel Joseph Wurzelbacher, a.k.a. Joe the Plumber, was asked his opinion of the matter: Sorry for your trouble, he told the parents of these young people cut

down before they could legally drink, but “Your dead kids don’t trump my constitutional rights.”

That’s pretty much it in a nutshell for gun absolutists, who attempt to mainstream a profound misreading of the Second Amendment. This reading was rejected by the Supreme Court’s Heller decision in 2008, which endorsed both the right of individuals to own guns and the power of the state to regulate the same. They are content to accept as customary and normal the level of gun mayhem experienced by the United States as long as their access to guns remains the primary social good.

Each mass shooting incident seems to highlight something uniquely “off” in American society. Sandy Hook spotlighted the nation’s woeful mental health care system—an issue gun lovers rushed to embrace. This latest incident revisits that problem while tapping into another: a cultural undercurrent of a seething-to-subtle hatred of women, especially among an emerging cohort of apparently self-entitled, angry and occasionally violent young men. The sad and creepy video posted by the Santa Barbara shooter Elliot O. Rodger and his emailed manifesto detail his loneliness and his isolation, but mostly they declared his simmering misogyny. He was a heart-breakingly lonely boy ignored by most girls and young women—and other boys for that matter—when he wasn’t being taunted by them. He sought solace in Internet chat rooms, but instead of support he found

only new humiliation and resentment, generously stoked by the jeering and anger of his peers among male “incels,” as these “involuntary celibates” called themselves.

Should American parents, especially those struggling with troubled young boys, be worried about the state of mental health services in the United States? Of course they should. Should they be concerned about the subterra-

nean hatred of women exhibited by Elliot Rodger and the young men with whom he made common cause on the Internet? You bet. Fathers especially need to add this agenda item to their regular discussions with their children on sexuality and human dignity, especially with boys, who will soon confront a confusing swirl of contradictory messages about their sexuality, their power and their relationships with girls.

Elliot Rodger suffered life-long problems with mental health; and, absorbing cues from the culture and society around him, he acquired a furious resentment toward women. But with a gun in his hand (and, yes, in his case, also a knife), he became a murderer. Let’s not take our focus off the real problem. These especially violent incidents make headlines and sometimes startle us into action, but the truly shocking monotony of gun violence in America—85 deaths each day—should make as compelling and consistent a claim on our outrage.

KEVIN CLARKE

Each mass shooting highlights something uniquely ‘off’ in American society.



SAND GETS IN YOUR EYES

I'VE GOT YOU UNDER MY SKIN A Novel

By Mary Higgins Clark
Simon & Schuster. 328p \$26.99

Sand between the pages: that pretty much captures how I feel. Even without a summer vacation, a blue horizon, a rich red sunset off Acapulco, Long Island or Nantucket, a good summer read engages me. Well, sure, not everyone gets to the beach in the summer. Yet there's a certain moment when summer hits hard, temperatures soar and many of us yearn to get lost in a book. Mary Higgins Clark is that sort of reader and that sort of writer. She writes for those who want full immersion in a story but can't squeeze in time for even short books, let alone long ones.

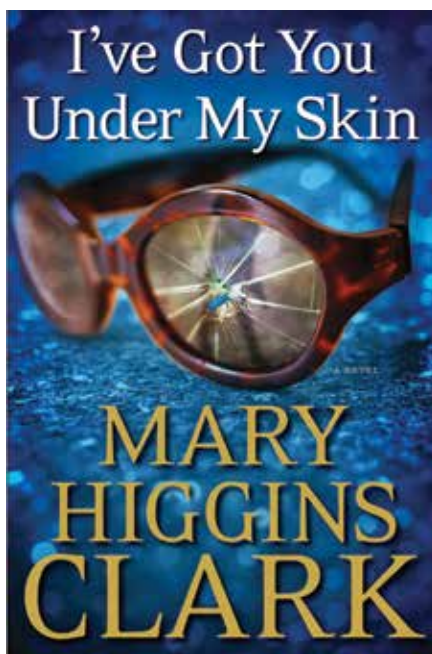
I've Got You Under My Skin is Clark's latest, and looks like a good candidate to get sand, or gumdrops, between the pages. This book is fat, heavy to cart around, but Clark herself (in a *New York Times* interview some time back) confessed that she lugs around heavy volumes to the dentist, the doctor's office, all her appointments. Her reason: she never wants to lose a minute of reading time.

No doubt you're thinking, What's all this about, anyway? Is it the summer solstice? The magnetic field? Earth wobble? Summer makes us feel like it's time to relax, kick shoes off, leave the dishes, let paperwork pile up while we follow the twists of a really baffling mystery.

Timmy was three when his father was killed right in front of him. He called out in alarm "*Blue eyes just killed my daddy!*" Now it's six years later; Timmy is 9; his mother and grand-

father still don't know who Blue Eyes was, or whether this unsolved crime will ever be unraveled. But there's more. Blue Eyes sent a message, which the boy still remembers. *Tell your Mom she's next, then it's your turn....*

The place is Manhattan. I haven't lived there for some years, but felt Clark's vivid simplicity walk me across



every street corner. Those who have never lived in Manhattan may feel the same. First Deputy Commissioner Leo Farley of the New York Police Department, just retired, shepherds his grandson to and from St. David's school. I can almost see the curbs on 98th Street as they move together, talking about simple stuff, when a fast-moving skateboarder flashes through their conversation, reminding us of uncertainty and doubt. Anything can happen in tales like this one, and frequently does. Meanwhile Timmy's good-looking mom, Laurie Moran, is trying to launch a television series on unsolved murders and cold cases. The

big unsolved mystery is not their stories but her own.

Next question: why the song title? Why do so many of Clark's titles echo a well-known song? And how about the way she builds suspense? Short sentences, staccato dialogue, characters who voice their inner thoughts. At first, in the early pages, I was impatient with Clark's careful descriptions. Hazel eyes for one character. Light brown for another. Long legs. Short legs. Crutches that slip out of control. Then I realized all this was part of Clark's artful, deliberate style. Somewhere between Chapters 3 and 17 my irritation gave way to an urgent need to know what happens next.

No one is what she or he seems in this classic tale of murder, hatred, grief, shame, guilt, anger and revenge. Is Clark's fiction an inverted way of portraying vice and virtue? Scenes unfold like photo stories in *Vanity Fair*, windows and balconies overlooking West Hollywood harbors and socialites smothered to death with fancy pillows.

A hundred pages later I found myself thinking, "Where is God in all this?" Clark's mentions of God are sparse and non-theological, popping up in phrases like "God-given opportunity" and expletives like "Oh God!" But for me, God, rarely named, is an actor in Clark's drama, where justice often takes center stage. I was sure of it when the murderer (never mind the name) heads out to do mischief with a reference to wailing and gnashing of teeth, a biblical reference for sure. There are plenty of human actors in Clark's drama, too, asking make-up artists to make them look not like themselves, but someone else. Illusion, appearance, secrets long buried in memory, not to mention Shakespearean devices like draughts or potions: sleeping pills on a hospital table as a police detective tries to pinpoint a crime soon to be committed many miles away.

It's a page-turner, but more than that, a reflection on the human heart.

That's what murder is about, and why summer reading never goes out of style.

For years I carried around a 3-by-5 card with this verse from Jeremiah 17: "the heart is more devious than any other thing...who can pierce its secrets?" Oddly, a remark of Meg Ryan's also comes to mind: "There is no upside to fame." Her comment applies to wealth and privilege as well. Handsome people, rich estates, well-manicured hands and lawns still hide unspoken secrets: loathing, the desire to do harm, feelings of guilt, fear of retribution. It's all there, as in Dante, and the staircases lead straight down. Unless they lead up, where the angel is pointing to joy, beauty and long, lazy afternoons. And the song title? I've known the Cole Porter lyric many a

day. "I'd sacrifice anything, come what might, for the sake of havin' you near." Not just a lyric, but a motive. Clark is a master of both logic and intuition. She grasps the meaning of songs, and their cautions: "Don't you know, little fool, you never can win." *I've Got You Under My Skin* is a good read, as Clark's big sales figures suggest. As a suspense novelist, she's skilled, intuitive, sometimes funny. But with the insight of ancient playwrights and thinkers, she is always probing for justice. That, of course, is ultimately up to God.

EMILIE GRIFFIN is an award-winning playwright and author of many books on religious faith, including *Green Leaves for Later Years: the Spiritual Path of Wisdom*. She lives in Alexandria, La. Her latest title is *Goodbye Birds & Other Poems*.

DONALD SENIOR

PATHFINDER

JESUS A Pilgrimage

By James Martin, S.J.
HarperOne. 544p \$27.99

James Martin, S.J., the engaging author of this book on Jesus, had to be persuaded to travel to the Holy Land by his fellow Jesuit, Drew Christiansen, S.J., then editor in chief of *America*. Martin felt he knew enough about Jesus and the Gospels from a lifetime of study and reflection and didn't need to travel to the Middle East. But he finally agreed to go—and the readers of this book on Jesus will be grateful.

This book on Jesus of the Gospels joins a host of other such explorations, but it has its own special flavor and spirit. The author, a popular spiritual writer and frequent spokesperson on behalf of the Catholic Church, draws deeply on several wellsprings in the composition of the book. One is the two-week trip to the Holy Land Martin made in the company of a

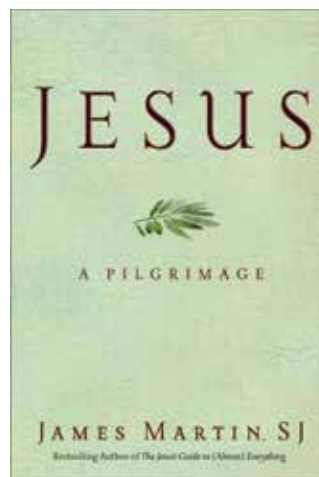
Jesuit friend. He visited all the pertinent sites, especially those connected with the ministry of Jesus. As one who has taken numerous groups to these spots over the years, I thoroughly enjoyed Martin's account of his visits and experiences.

A second source is his competent acquaintance with current biblical scholarship about the historical Jesus. He does not pretend to be a frontline scholar on this subject, but his own theological training and wide reading in the area enable him to speak accurately and in an easily accessible manner of what we know and don't know about the historical circumstances of Jesus' life and times.

A third source is his Jesuit background. He speaks frequently and affectionately of his Jesuit vocation, his

experiences in the formation program and in his Jesuit community life and ministry as a Jesuit, including stints in East Africa and the Caribbean. Martin's obvious joy and satisfaction in his religious life, coupled with his honest and open personal manner, makes his work an unwitting vocational poster for the Jesuit priesthood.

And, finally, Martin offers the reader a wealth of spiritual reflection on all of the above. This, ultimately, is the point of the book, which he describes as inviting the reader "to meet the Jesus you already may know, but in a new way. Or, if you don't know much about Jesus, I would like to introduce him to you. Overall, I would like to introduce you to the Jesus I know, and love, the person at the center of my life." To achieve this heartfelt goal, the author shares his own joys and sorrows, his moments of tears and ecstasy as well as his frustrations and struggles. The overall tone of the book at these points is like a well-crafted homily on various facets of the Gospel accounts: personal, narrated with passion, filled with examples and stories, leading to sound reflections on the meaning of Christian life led in the spirit of the Gospel.



Father Martin artfully blends these various wellsprings in each chapter of this rather substantial book (over 500 pages). A visit to a particular site or region of the Holy Land triggers a reflection on some aspect of Jesus' life and ministry, which in turn leads to a wider reflection on Christian life. Some of these are

fairly predictable paths, others less so. Watching some fishermen ply their trade on the Sea of Galilee, for example, leads to a reflection on the stories of the call of the first disciples and then to a reflection on how we are called by Christ today, a reflection further illus-

trated in an earlier encounter Martin had with a young man who was searching for meaning in his own life.

Discovering the coves along the northwest corner of the Sea of Galilee's shoreline and surmising that this could have been the spot mentioned in the Gospels where Jesus preached from Simon's boat (Lk 5:1-11) leads to a discussion of the parables and culminates in a reflection on the parable of the lost sheep, illustrated by an experience of the shepherd's care for the sheep Father Martin had during his mission work in Kenya and the key lesson that God will never abandon us.

The overall flow of the book attempts to follow the unfolding story of Jesus in the Gospels, beginning with his baptism at the Jordan River and culminating with the passion of Jesus

in Jerusalem and his final resurrection appearance in Galilee along the Sea of Tiberias as recounted in John 21. As those who have traveled to the Holy Land know, such a neat chronological and geographical framework is difficult since the Gospel stories move back and forth across the terrain; some repetition and backtracking in Martin's visits to sites is inevitable. Nevertheless, the value of Martin's work is not in the flow of the overall presentation of Jesus' life and mission but in the beautiful and enticing individual reflections that come with each site he visits and with his compelling portrayal of the Jesus of the Gospels and his meaning for Christian life.

DONALD SENIOR, C.P., is professor emeritus of New Testament Studies at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

LISA A. BAGLIONE

REVOLUTION ROCK

WORDS WILL BREAK CEMENT

The Passion of Pussy Riot

By Masha Gessen
Riverhead. 320p \$16

On Feb. 21, 2012, a group of Russian female performance artists slipped into Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Savior to stage "A Punk Prayer," beseeching "Virgin Mary, Mother of God, chase Putin out" and to protest the impending re-election of Vladimir Putin to his third term as president. The group chose the cathedral for the action because the church supported the Russian regime and symbolized the luxury and commercialism of the era. Playing down the political, anti-Putin nature of the action, the authorities portrayed it as a blasphemous and disrespectful act against believers, and for those crimes, three women were each sentenced to two years each in prison.

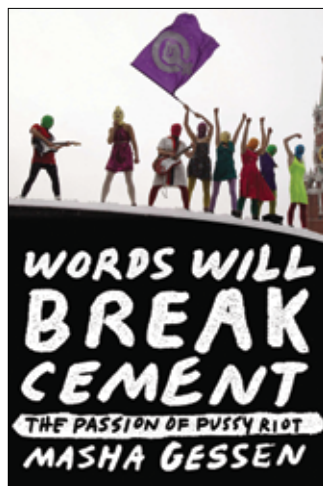
In *Words Will Break Cement*, Masha Gessen investigates the origins of the act and the women's experiences with the Russian criminal justice system. After emigrating to the United States from the Soviet Union as a young teen in 1981, Gessen went back to her homeland 10 years later and became an accomplished journalist and L.G.B.T. activist. Her understanding of the Russian language and culture, close following of political developments, talent as a journalist and sensitivity to issues of human rights and justice uniquely position Gessen to tell this story.

At the outset, readers learn about the three young women—Nadezhda

(Nadya) Tolokonnikova, Yekaterina (Kat) Samutsevich and Maria Alyokhina. Self-taught in literary criticism and philosophy, Nadya earned admission to the philosophy department at Moscow State University, where she joined a co-ed group of performance artists. In time, Nadya became more interested in feminist and L.G.B.T. causes and formed an all-female music group that ultimately called itself Pussy Riot. Another member was Kat Samutsevich, who studied computer programming, took a job at a defense research institute and quit her post after becoming disgusted with corruption in the industry and frustrated with her daily work life. Thereafter, Kat became interested in photography and politics, which led her into the same artistic circles as Nadya and brought them together in early performance art actions.

Maria joined them later. An activist in the environmental movement as a youth, she studied journalism and hoped to change the world; Pussy Riot gave Maria that venue. While there were other members of the group, these three went on trial in 2012, and Nadya and Maria were ultimately forced to serve time. Released just prior to the Sochi Olympics, the group has reconvened and has been trying to focus attention on authoritarianism, nationalism, patriarchy and homophobia in Russia. They see Putin's conservative coalition—those in support of the Russian Orthodox church, Russian nationalism and traditional gender roles and norms—as his new bulwark, and their aim is to expose the nature of his rule.

For observers of Russian politics, the strength of this book is in its coverage of the trial. Here, Gessen's translation of the actual transcripts and commentary on them is invaluable.



able. What the behavior of the judge and the lawyers reveals is what many have known—these courts are charged with providing the politically desired outcome, and they will stoop as low as they must to obey those in power. The statements of the women are, in addition, remarkable because of their sophistication, despite the relative youth of the speakers and the exhausting and debilitating conditions under which they had to compose them. They are also courageous. The activists never shrank from taking on the regime and its contradictions.

As the speakers and Gessen remind the reader, these trials are similar to proceedings in both tsarist and Soviet times. In particular, the comparison that is most fitting is with the dissident trials of the 1970s. In fact, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's words, which Nadya slightly edited and voiced at her trial, became Gessen's title. The Nobel Prize winner wrote, "So the word is more sincere than concrete? So the word is not a trifle? Then may noble people begin to grow, and their word will break cement."

During her turn, Maria excoriated the Russian educational system for churning out unthinking automatons

who give in and follow the regime, having lost their ability to think critically and see the lies the system is purveying. Kat took on the church itself and how it had lost its way, becoming a tool of Putin's rule. Like the others, she asserted that the group's action exposed the truth about contemporary Russia and that veracity would ultimately undermine the system. This theme has been central to the resistance of autocracy for centuries; regarding anti-Communism, it is perhaps best associated with the work of Vaclav Havel who exhorted others to refuse to "live the lie."

Ultimately, two were incarcerated; Kat had her sentence suspended. While Nadya endured hazing and was breaking under the impossible prison work requirements, Maria became energized and fought for eight-hour work days and other decent prison conditions. The book ends with Nadya's going on a hunger strike, which earned her a move to a more humane facility, and Maria's legal efforts securing significant improvements in prison conditions for her peers.

There is much to recommend in

this book; it shows the triumph of the human spirit, gives us hope in the idealism and creativity of youth and uncovers more unseemly details of Putin's rule. It is also valuable for highlighting historical similarities. While some analysts today seem to see the 1930s as the appropriate analogy, Gessen suggests that a better comparison is with the Brezhnev era, a time of corruption, leadership ego, popular acquiescence and economic decline. Given that the regime's structural weaknesses and moral bankruptcy are clear to some Russians, as

the 2011-12 protests revealed, speaking out and undermining the new, conservative formula for legitimacy are important. Words will break cement, and Pussy Riot and Gessen have brought an effective hammer down on the concrete. But given Putin's recent nationalist efforts, even more words from people who know the truth are going to have to follow to crack this authoritarian edifice.

LISA A. BAGLIONE is professor and chair of the political science department at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia.

ON THE WEB

The Catholic Book Club discusses *Rekindling the Christic Imagination*.
americamagazine.org/cbc

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Building on Faith

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL (A), JUNE 29, 2014

Readings: Acts 12:1-11; Ps 34:2-9; 2 Tm 4:6-18; Mt 16:13-19

“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” (Mt 16:13)

The question for the disciples came from Jesus himself, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” The problem for Christians today in answering this question might be how to make sense of Jesus’ humanity in the context of his true divinity. For Jesus’ apostles, standing face to face with the flesh and blood of their friend and teacher, the relevant issue seems not to have been was Jesus God, but what sort of man has God sent to us in Jesus.

In puzzling out an answer to Jesus’ question, the disciples drew on what they heard from others and perhaps what they themselves were struggling to figure out: people say you might be John the Baptist, or Elijah or some other prophet. They might have been wondering as they spoke these answers whether Jesus was more than a prophet. Could Jesus be the Messiah? It is difficult, however, to imagine the disciples, all first-century Jewish monotheists, looking at Jesus, even in light of miraculous healings, exorcisms and feedings, and saying, “We think you are God.”

But faith revealed this to Peter. When Jesus asked the disciples to answer the question for themselves, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered boldly, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus affirmed Peter in his answer by telling him: “Blessed are you, Simon son of

Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.” But what had been revealed to Simon son of Jonah? Was it that only divine revelation could unveil the faith necessary to affirm Jesus’ messiahship?

Or was it Peter’s faith that had allowed the revelation of Jesus as “the Son of the living God” to emerge? The title “son of the living God” does not necessarily imply more than messianic identity (see 2 Sm 7:14 or Ps 2:7), though clearly by the time Matthew’s Gospel was written, belief in the divinity of Jesus, however inchoate, was emerging. Jesus is affirming both the messianic identity that Simon proclaimed and the depths of Jesus’ divinity that the disciples could not yet comprehend fully but Peter brashly named in faith.

Even more, though, it is through Simon’s proclamation that Jesus makes clear that a true understanding of “who he is” is a “revelation,” an insight given by God, just as the faith given to the “infants” in Mt 11:25 was a “revelation.” Upon this revelation, Simon is given a new name, Petros, which all the Gospels attest Jesus gave to Peter (Mk 3:16, Lk 6:14, Jn 1:42). The Greek word *petros*, “rock,” translates the Aramaic *kepha* and indicates not just the faith of Peter but his function as the foundation rock of the church. It is not Peter, mind you, who builds the church, but Jesus himself who “on this

rock...will build my church.”

And the rocks with which Jesus would continue to build would surprise his apostles, especially when Paul received his own “revelation” of the risen Lord (Gal 1:12, 16). The apostles were wary of Paul when he came to Jerusalem because “they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple” (Acts 9:26). Could Jesus build the church with Paul, the persecutor of the earliest disciples? Could the one who ripped stones off the foundation now construct like a skilled master builder? The apostles would need to accept that Paul had been chosen to continue to build the church.

Jesus built on the



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Reflect on the faith of Peter and Paul. How does your confession of Jesus the Messiah allow you to build and to be built into the church?

faith of Peter, who had denied him three times, and he would build with the faith of Paul, who had persecuted the church of God. Indeed, Paul continued the work of the Twelve, planting churches throughout the Roman Empire. Paul acknowledged that on human terms he was “unfit to be called an apostle” (1 Cor 15:9), but the Second Letter of Timothy presents Paul offering his last testament, in which he confesses that “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” The faith Peter confessed was the faith that Paul maintained and is the faith handed on to us, by which we are built and by which we build the church today.

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

The Little Ones

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (A), JULY 6, 2014

Readings: Zec 9:9-10; Ps 145:1-14; Rom 8:9-13; Mt 11:25-30

“You have hidden these things from the wise and have revealed them to infants” (Mt 11:25)

How quickly should we move from the literal to the allegorical, figurative or spiritual meaning of words in the Bible? There is no one answer, for in reading the Bible sometimes the literal meaning of a word or a passage is indeed the spiritual meaning itself; at other times, the literal reading grounds a separate spiritual or allegorical meaning; and at still other times, both a literal and figurative meaning exist together. As Jesus prays in the Gospel of Matthew, he says, “You have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants.” The Greek word *nepioi*, which literally means “infants” (NRSV), might also be rendered figuratively as “little ones” (NAB). What does it matter?

Ancient Jews and Christians believed that every word of Scripture mattered in interpreting God’s word. Careful interpretation ought to matter to us as we determine whether Jesus is literally speaking of children or figuratively of all of us as children of God, or both, for this has implications as to how we ought to live. Why, for instance, has God “hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and...revealed them to infants”? Are all adults considered “wise and intelligent”? Does this verse mean that the “wise and intelligent” are shut out of the kingdom? Does *infants* reflect chil-

dren alone or all who are simple and considered little ones by the world? What makes children worthy recipients of God’s revelation?

On the surface it seems ridiculous to think that Jesus could intend human children by *nepioi*, except that in Mt 19:14 Jesus instructs his disciples to “let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” In this verse, actual children are in view, and it is to them that the kingdom belongs. If children are the intended recipients of the kingdom, it is indeed possible that Jesus has in mind actual children to whom the reality of God and God’s kingdom has been revealed.

Yet in Mt 18:3 Jesus teaches that “unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” This suggests that while literal children are the model disciples, the adult followers of Jesus are able to “change and become like children” in order to enter the kingdom.

What is it that children have that the wise and intelligent lack in Jesus’ equation? Children are vulnerable, open, trusting, reliant, weak, inferior and must depend upon those with power to protect and care for them. Such reliance opens children to the revelation from the Son. Jesus’ way is revealed to infants because the “little

ones” model the necessary trust, dependence and reliance upon God the Father that the Son has revealed to them. It is this reliance that the adult disciples of Jesus must demonstrate if they are to become “little ones.” Jesus directs us all to become like them and to adopt the proper stance toward God and God’s kingdom.

Jesus’ way is not the way of the philosopher, wisdom carved out by the intelligentsia for the elite. Jesus’ way is gained by God’s gracious will and revealed to all those who can turn to God and trust, who can become like children and open themselves to the truth. It seems that just as the rich are tempted by false reliance upon wealth, the wise and intelligent are tempted by false reliance upon themselves.

God’s wisdom is available to all, whether we are young, poor, frail, elderly, wise or lacking intelligence, be-

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Imagine yourself listening to Jesus speak these words. What must you do to become a “little one”?

cause God’s way must be available to all if it is the way of salvation. Adults, especially religious experts, often feel we must know it all, have it all under control and always take charge; it is a heavy burden, which Jesus asks us to lay down. Then, he assures us, “you will find rest for your souls.”

What, then, is the meaning of *nepioi*? It refers to those who are literally and figuratively the “infants,” who are open to the love of God and who accept that we are all children of God. Jesus asks that we lay down the burdens of the world and rely on God to become what we are intended to be: “little ones,” to whom God desires to reveal his kingdom.

JOHN W. MARTENS

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