

# America



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## What Does Donald Trump Believe?

MICHAEL O'LOUGHLIN

GREG ERLANDSON ON  
THE POWER OF  
THE PRINTED WORD

I was dining with a friend in Manhattan last week when the bomb went off. We were several blocks north of the explosion, so we didn't physically experience the impact. Our first indication that something was wrong was when the AP bulletins started to light up and buzz cellphones throughout the restaurant. First a few customers, then nearly everyone knew what had happened and we started fielding calls and texts from worried relatives and friends who wanted to know that we were safe. When broadcast news caught up with the AP, a bulletin interrupted the football game on television and the place fell silent. One bomb had exploded in Manhattan; perhaps there was a second. Some injuries, no fatalities. Within 10 minutes or so, most of the customers were back where they started: enjoying the evening, almost as if nothing had happened.

Writing in *The New York Times*, Arthur Brooks seemed to capture the sentiment of the crowd: "Thank God no one was killed by the attackers, but this seems to be becoming the new normal." Indeed, Donald J. Trump told us in his usual, provocative fashion, "This is something that will happen, perhaps, more and more all over the country." (Unless we elect him president was the implication.) For her part, Mrs. Clinton suggested somewhat anemically that we should work with our allies to combat the terrorist threat.

I take little comfort in either of these reactions, for they both seem tone-deaf to the true threat, which is not the violence and destruction per se, as terrible as they are, but the fear that violence and destruction are about to be unleashed at any moment, anywhere, by miscalculation or madness. It is that fear that surfaced and made its way like a thick and eerie fog through the restaurant that night. And while the vast majority of us will never be killed or injured in a terrorist attack, all of us are touched by the fear that we just might be.

The experts who study terrorism tell us that the primary goal of the terrorists is not to inflict maximum damage, though this they also seek to do, but to induce maximum panic. They seek to infect the body politic with a rapidly metastasizing terror, one that destabilizes and disorients. It is not the last attack that does the most damage, but our fear of the next one. One expert, Jonathan White, recently wrote that modern terrorism "requires responses that emphasize rationality over emotion." That seems about right. Emotional responses to terror are just as likely to feed the fear as they are to contain it. Fear also "moves people to become much more polarized in their viewpoints," says Justin Sinclair, a psychologist, for it "motivates people to go to further lengths to feel safe," essentially meeting extremism with extremism.

Other cities have experienced what happened in New York on an even greater scale. For most of the second half of the 20th century, London was routinely subjected to random acts of terror. Perhaps this is the fate that will now befall New York. Perhaps not. But this much is clear: London survived the terror in large part because Londoners defeated the enemy within. Somehow they were able to defuse the ticking time bomb of panic within themselves and simply kept calm and carried on. There is a lesson in that history and in ours as well. In 1933, in a time of national crisis, Franklin Delano Roosevelt gave us the prescription for what ailed us then and even now: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," he said, "nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and of vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. And I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days."

**MATT MALONE, S.J.**

106 West 56th Street  
New York, NY 10019-3803  
Ph: (212) 581-4640; Fax: (212) 399-3596  
Subscriptions: (800) 627-9533  
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**EDITORIAL E-MAIL**

america@americamedia.org

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Cover: Republican presidential nominee Donald J. Trump at a church service in Detroit, Mich., Sept. 3, 2016. AP Photo/Evan Vucci.



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## ON THE WEB

A new government report calls for reining in **religious liberty protections** in favor of nondiscrimination statutes for L.G.B.T. people. Plus, **Kenneth L. Woodward** on the changing place of religion in the United States. More digital highlights on page 16 and at [americamagazine.org/webfeature](http://americamagazine.org/webfeature).



### Election Day Spoilers

Slate plans to tell us on Nov. 8 which presidential candidate is ahead, long before the polls close. The website will relay projections by VoteCastr, a group of statisticians who use voter turnout in selected precincts to determine, say, whether Hillary Clinton or Donald J. Trump is leading in Ohio. As early as 6 a.m. on Election Day, these number-crunchers will project a winner in Colorado based on where absentee ballots are coming from.

It is a disconcerting innovation for many who respect the civic rituals of Election Day, from the small talk with the volunteers at polling stations to the moment when all the television networks break their silence to let us know what is in those exit polls. But there is probably no going back. With the right data, the voter turnout model is sound (these days, elections are more about motivating supporters than about changing minds), and there is no way to prevent VoteCastr volunteers from reporting on what they see at polling stations without shredding the First Amendment.

Some worry that people will skip voting if the presidential election seems to be over by noon, but there are also legislative races and ballot questions to be decided. It is also possible that the release of data throughout Election Day will encourage more people to vote. Certainly, it will be difficult for the civic-minded to get through the workday without being distracted by the cascade of projections from VoteCastr and, if they are successful, the inevitable imitators in future elections. This is yet another reason to make Election Day a national holiday.

### Islamic Misinformation

“Islam is peace,” said George W. Bush just days after the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Earlier this year, President Obama wrote that it reflects a “tradition of peace, charity and justice.” And Pope Francis has repeatedly said it is wrong to identify Islam with violence. But many Catholics disagree. According to a new report from Georgetown University’s project The Bridge Initiative, 45 percent of U.S. Catholics believe “Islam encourages violence more than other religions,” and fewer than two in 10 have a favorable view of Muslims.

Catholics’ negative impressions of the world’s second largest religion may be explained in part by their unfamiliarity with its adherents: 70 percent of Catholics say they do not know a single Muslim. (Those who do are more than twice as likely to view them favorably.) That means most Catholics “know” Islam through the media, where it is most often discussed in relation to violence

and terrorism. And, it is disturbing to note, those who frequently read Catholic publications have on average more unfavorable views of Muslims than those who do not.

This report should prompt those who work in Catholic media, including **America**, to examine how we write and talk about Islam. It is important not to downplay the atrocities committed by the Islamic State—whose victims are primarily other Muslims. But it is also vital that we not speak of our Muslim neighbors as if their value depends solely on their being allies or instruments in the fight against violent extremism. They are, first and foremost, in the words of St. John Paul II, fellow believers “in the same God, the one God, the living God.”

### Do Mosquitoes Matter?

The spread of the Zika virus, with its tragic effects on children developing in the womb, has invigorated discussion about preventing mosquito-borne diseases. In affected areas, mosquito-control measures, like spraying and eliminating standing water, help to slow their advance. But there are more radical options being considered that would drastically reduce the population of disease-bearing mosquitoes, perhaps even deliberately driving entire species toward extinction. Often, these methods involve genetic engineering to make mosquitoes produce sterile offspring.

The potential reduction in human suffering from eliminating disease-bearing mosquitoes would be vast, addressing not only the transmission of Zika but also of dengue fever, malaria and many other tropical diseases. The World Health Organization estimated that 214 million people were infected with malaria in 2015 and 438,000 died. Standard measures for mosquito control, even where effective, are harder to implement in poorer countries, as evidenced by the fact that 80 percent of all deaths from malaria occur in 15 African countries.

The near-total elimination of disease-bearing mosquitoes will have unpredictable and potentially unwelcome effects on plants pollinated by them and on animals higher up the food chain. But even if scientists can assure us that elimination of some types of mosquitoes carries small practical risks, questions remain about the wisdom of permanently destroying any part of creation. Human beings have eradicated viruses before. Smallpox and rinderpest are gone, and polio is following quickly; these are widely acknowledged as scientific and human triumphs. Whether or not the moral analogy can extend from disease-causing viruses to disease-bearing mosquitoes is a challenging question, which deserves careful attention from scientists, ethicists and theologians.

# The New Know-Nothings

It was a time of great economic uncertainty and political turmoil. The next election promised to move the nation closer to a terrible precipice, and the native-born were frustrated by their diminished status, one accelerated by an apparently endless flow of newcomers who seemed destined to dislocate and replace them. Cries of “America for Americans” rose across the anxious republic.

Was that 1856 or last week? It appears it has been both. Responding to the “dog whistling”—or worse—of politicians, the xenophobia and neo-nativism of the so-called alt-right, thinly veiled as a political position, has emerged from the murk of the internet. The alt-right’s message has found an especially receptive audience among white males frustrated by reduced economic prospects and a perception of a loosening hold of white hegemony in U.S. society.

Voices from within this fringe sometimes bluntly promote hate and a juvenile, pseudo-scientific delusion of the superiority of European culture, denigrating others as polluters or diminishers of its greatness. But the Hispanic presence in the New World is old and deep enough to rival any Anglo claim to cultural legitimacy on these shores. Of course it is not as old as that of the “Americans” regularly ignored by such competing claims of authenticity: the indigenous people whose cruel eradication made room for everyone else in the first place.

The reek of this creed of tribalism and intolerance should be instantly recognizable to modern-day Catholics. To the Know-Nothings, Irish Catholics came to America merely as paupers or felons in service to a Romish plot to undermine American liberty through the ballot box. Recycling 19th-century nativist headlines would require little more than the adjustment of a few words: Replace *Irish* with *Mexican*, *Catholic* with *Muslim*.

In the 19th century the Catholic Church was considered the nexus of the disorder that the nativists believed imperiled a near-deified Republic. The contemporary church remains suspect to neo-nativists because of its presumed self-interest in facilitating the acceptance of Latinos into the United States. But the Gospel demands that the church welcome and support modern immigrants; no dark conspiracy is required.

Since its founding, the United States has been vulnerable to such spasms of nativism; the anger and hate on display in this election season may mercifully prove to be no more than one of these temporary lapses of civic sanity. But even if the present episode proves transient, gathering the moral and cultural resources to confront the forces that propel

it will only become more important. The United States will continue to be a nation of immigrants.

Mr. Trump is a native of perhaps the most multicultural metropolis in the nation, a low-crime, high-energy city that has consistently drawn new economic and creative vigor from its ever-evolving immigrant communities. This is an irony that appears lost on the candidate’s alt-right enthusiasts. While they pursue a Mexican bogeyman of their own creation, in the real world there are now more immigrants arriving in the United States from India and China, a trend that will continue for the foreseeable future.

In a few decades the percentage of the U.S. population born elsewhere may match or exceed 19th-century highs. Descendants of earlier immigrant groups now rightly celebrate their forebears’ verve as a vital expression of their own American heritage. They should actively support today’s immigrants as they strive to establish the same communal and economic footholds in a new land. And because of their historical experience in the United States, Catholics have a special responsibility of solidarity and hospitality toward new immigrant groups.

As it absorbs these latest waves of immigrants, the United States of the mid-21st century will be a different place from the nation that assimilated white European immigrants over the last two centuries. That inevitability may contribute to the anxiety experienced among some U.S.-born Americans of European descent, especially if the current job insecurity, income inequality and stagnating social mobility persist. A dramatic transition will be underway. Will the nation be psychically prepared for it, or will it still be revisiting 19th-century battles over cultural and political turf?

Few American institutions can claim the connections with European-descent, Latino and Asian communities that the Catholic Church enjoys. Given its culture of community, theology of unity and practical experience with diversity, the church has a unique capacity to assist in this transition, assuaging anxieties even as it assists newcomers. It can begin that work now by offering a clear, scriptural and consistent condemnation of today’s echoes of nativism, wherever they originate.



Courtesy, Granger Collection



## REPLY ALL

### Who are “Real” Catholics?

Re *Of Many Things*, by Matt Malone, S.J. (9/12): Is the answer to “Who gets to say who real Catholics are?” not “the church”? Our Lord gave the church as the final arbiter in matters of sin between brothers, going so far as to say that if the accused would not listen to the church we are to treat him as a non-member of the community (cf. Mt 18:17).

There are two senses in which the question is understood. Fundamentally, the determining trait is a valid baptism, and that mark can never be erased: once Catholic, always Catholic. But there is another, likely more relevant factor: one’s alignment with the church and one’s willingness to submit to church authority. To that point, I would ask the author what topics are off limits for dissent, if one so clearly articulated as abortion and its proper legal status is not. Can a “real Catholic” deny points in the Creed, one of which is the belief in an apostolic church? This seems absurd.

JARROD OZEREKO  
*Online Comment*

### Work as Prayer

Re “Workplace Philosopher,” by E. Jane Doering (9/12): Two thoughts. First, decades ago, while representing newly legal immigrant workers, I was caught saying a prayer and invited some to join me. One worker responded, saying: “I haven’t time, Señor. My work is my prayer.” I still think of that man. Doing even inglorious chores (and trying to do them well) is Christ-like to me, possibly more prayerful than most of my praying. Second, those worse off than a worker who is “overworked...exhausted, disheartened and desperate” are the unemployed “men and women who [are] exhausted, disheartened and

desperate about maintaining a sustainable income” for themselves and their families.

Just imagine if we were all engaged—perhaps imitating Mother Teresa—and all our neighbors were cared for, in communion with and otherwise treated with dignity by each of us all the time.

ROBERT O’CONNELL  
*Online Comment*

### The Unhappy 29 Percent

Re “Bad Choices,” by John Carr (9/12): Actually, the election presents “bad choices” only for those who do not have a favorable opinion of either candidate: 29 percent. That is including the 5 percent who have no opinion or are undecided. According to the Gallup poll (8/11), 32 percent of adult Americans had a favorable opinion of Donald Trump, and 39 percent a favorable opinion of Hillary Clinton. While that unhappy 29 percent will determine the outcome of this year’s election, they are not the majority. It is fair to say they will be the ones who will cast a vote for third-party candidates or stay home.

JOSEPH O’LEARY  
*Online Comment*

### Catholic Receptivity

In “Indispensable” (9/12), Robert David Sullivan states that over half of U.S. Catholics think that discrimination against Christians is a significant problem. The article also says that Catholic supporters of Donald J. Trump are concerned with religious freedom and find “a surrogate in the ethnic and nationalistic victimhood professed by Trump against Latinos and the Chinese.” This seems to prove that the constant refrain of Catholic bishops that freedom of religion is under attack in the United States has had results.

I just find it amazing, however, that the bishops somehow have demonstrated no taste for prominently and loudly challenging Mr. Trump on his anti-immigration statements. His campaign started and burgeoned by describing those “rapists” and criminals from Mexico, our fellow religionists from one of the most Catholic countries in Latin America! I wonder if too many of our bishops of European heritages agree with Mr. Trump because those new immigrants have upset the ethnic balance and economic well-being in U.S. parishes. A harsh statement, perhaps, but the numbers of Latino immigrants falling prey to evangelical churches makes me wonder about immigrants’ perception of receptivity in U.S. Catholic churches.

VINCENT GAGLIONE  
*Online Comment*

### Called to Do Better

Many thanks to Angela Alaimo O’Donnell for highlighting two giants of the faith in Baltimore, in “Saints of Southwest Baltimore” (9/12). I always have a sense that I am unworthy even to speak about Brendan Walsh and Willa Bickham, as their witness evermore calls me to do something that I am not doing right now. They do not make me feel embarrassed that I am not serving enough—that is all on me. For me they stand as genuine people who put the Gospel words into action, and Ms. O’Donnell rightly portrays them as beacons of hopefulness amid the rubble where they live and serve. There is no guile in them, only hearts filled with the goodness of Christ waiting to be shared. Brendan and Willa don’t shame me, they challenge me to do better. My prayer is always that I will.

BARRY FITZPATRICK  
*Online Comment*

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## No Single Solution

Re “Reinventing Catholic Schools,” by Charles Zech (8/29): Is the model broken? Yes—for both parishes and schools. The numbers do not lie, and the history lessons from both the article and the comments online clearly show how we got to here. They also indicate that there is no single solution. The inner city, the suburbs and the rural areas all have issues that are unique. I do believe there are more than just the three options Mr. Zech has outlined. To begin with, all of us Catholics need to step up and give more, so we can have the independence we need to teach and to worship freely.

We cannot solve the problem of our schools without also addressing the problem of our parishes and our overall administrative structure. Our priests, whose numbers continue to dwindle, increasingly find themselves serving as business managers and school administrators instead of as pastors. Furthermore, in the developed world we have a lay population that is the most experienced and educated in the history of the world, one that needs more than a fear of Hell to see the glory of a relationship with God. This requires a whole new ministerial approach for a large portion of the population. Bottom line: we need an ecumenical council to address these longstanding issues: It’s time for Vatican III.

JOHN McGLYNN  
*Online Comment*

## No Precedent Required

Re “Commending Phoebe” (Editorial, 8/29): Another aspect of the question, “Who should serve?” is “Do we need women deacons?” We need women leaders who take a greater part in liturgy so that we have women preaching at Mass. If only men are allowed to preach, only a masculine interpretation of the Gospels is heard. That is like looking at a question with only one eye when two are available. We need women leaders in the church.

In order to lead, one has to be able to speak publicly. It is good that there is a historical precedent for women deacons, but we would need them even if there were no precedent.

LISA WEBER  
*Online Comment*

## New Dimensions

“This Old Church,” by Lisa Middendorf Woodall (8/15), triggered my recollections, stretching back to the pre-Vatican II days. Instead of putting us in the basement of an old church, our liturgies were held in the school cafeteria. All the tables were removed and the folding chairs were arranged in orderly rows. The motivation for putting on a guitar Mass was the suburbanization of my small town on the edge of St. Louis. The population exploded and so did church attendance, so much so that there was no room in the church—even though extra Masses were scheduled. The cafeteria Mass had no organ, obviously (and there were no electric keyboards back then), so a group of us teens volunteered to lead a guitar Mass. Something beautiful and wonderful

happened there. The Mass opened up new dimensions of worship. It brought people closer together, and made the prayers intelligible and accessible to those who were not literate in Latin.

Over the years, the music written for guitar Masses improved, as did our expertise as a singing group. We were not welcomed by all, but that is another story. Never did I witness the alleged abuses that “plagued” the “new Mass.” People of all ages attended, including the grandmas and grandpas who welcomed the warmth and family feeling of the Mass. My wife and I continued leading guitar Masses for over 30 years. It was our ministry.

I do not know why Mass attendance shrank over the next 50 years. I do not know a single person who left the church because the Mass was in English or because it was accompanied by guitars and pianos. When the Mass was in Latin, I loved the Mass. When it became changed to vernacular, I loved the Mass. The Mass is always a close encounter with Jesus in the sacrament and in the body of Christ.

BOB KILLOREN  
*Online Comment*



CARTOON: HARLEY SCHWADRON

IRAQ

## Fall of Mosul May Prove Greatest Humanitarian Crisis of 2016

**U**.S. and Iraqi military strategists are preparing for a final drive on Mosul, hoping to dislodge *Islamic State* militants from their last stronghold in Iraq. But how well are they planning for the inevitable impact of that offensive on the city's residents?

Hani El-Mahdi is the Iraq country representative for Catholic Relief Services. He told *America* during a text interview by Skype this week that he expects that the fall of Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, will represent the worst humanitarian crisis of 2016. That is saying a lot during a year and in a region that has already produced millions of people displaced by civil war and ISIS terror.

Anticipating the offensive, C.R.S. and other aid groups are preparing as best as they can, El-Mahdi says. He worries that the fall of Mosul could mean anywhere between 1 to 1.5 million more displaced people, a figure he bluntly calls "overwhelming."

C.R.S. has already been training new staff and volunteers to assist, setting aside materials to meet the crisis whenever it occurs and "building more relations with local communities to guarantee safe access" to desert shelters.

The U.S. State Department announced on Sept. 14 more than \$181 million in additional assistance. El-Mahdi has already seen evidence of significant new

U.S. humanitarian resources flowing into the region, funding much of the repositioning of emergency resources. All the same, he expects a large-scale crisis as thousands of people may be on the move to get away from ISIS or to escape the fighting.

With almost 3.4 million people driven from their homes, Iraq already represents one of the world's biggest internal displacement crises. There is little reason to expect that refugees from the siege of Mosul will experience anything different than those who recently fled during the fight for Fallujah. El-Mahdi explains that most of them escaped the fighting into the harsh desert "with no preparation" and nothing more than the clothes on their backs.

Most of the internally displaced people C.R.S. works with are living in temporary quarters throughout the city of Erbil in the northern Iraqi re-

gion currently under the authority of the Kurdistan Regional Government. These internally displaced people represent older waves of dislocated communities, including Yazidi and Christians who fled in 2014 and who "were allowed to get into cities like Erbil and Duhok."

These persecuted groups have been accepted in the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq, according to El-Mahdi. But the 2016 arrivals to the north from Fallujah—and most of those likely to flee north from Mosul—are Sunni Arabs.

El-Mahdi is uncertain how the K.R.G. will respond to a large movement of Sunni Arabs into areas under its control. The Sunni Arabs are suspect to many Kurds because of their real or perceived support for ISIS. A large influx of Sunni Arabs north might provoke some effort at containment from



the K.R.G., El-Mahdi fears.

Most of the people dislocated from Fallujah, he says, have already been prevented from entering Erbil and are living in precarious to life-threatening conditions on the open desert. "Imagine fleeing [your] town and villages, then staying in the open in temperatures that exceed 115 to 120 degrees all the time," he says.

The end of the ISIS reign of terror would surely be welcome in the region, El-Mahdi says, but it will not mean the end of ISIS—an ideology he fears will persist whatever the outcome in Mosul—nor the end of crisis in Iraq. Though CRS intends to stand by to help, he says it could be years before anyone will be able to return to homes in communities that have been torn apart by combat, booby traps and sectarian divisions.

**KEVIN CLARKE**





**AFTER THE FALL.** A displaced woman and her sleeping child fled to a camp near Mosul, Iraq, in June.

## INTERFAITH RELATIONS

# Catholics Have a Lot to Learn About Islam

Fewer than two in 10 U.S. Catholics hold a favorable view of Muslims, and many have little understanding of the world's second largest religion. When asked, "What is your overall impression of Muslims?" 30 percent of those Catholics polled said they held unfavorable views, 14 percent said favorable, and 45 percent said they held neither favorable nor unfavorable views.

That is according to a report released on Sept. 12 by Georgetown University's The Bridge Initiative, a program at the Washington, D.C., Jesuit university aimed at improving public understanding of Islam while track-

ing the public discourse on Islam and Muslim life.

"We hope Catholic educators, catechists and clergy can use this report as a starting point to ask, 'What do Catholics know; what do Catholics not know; and what do we need to be communicating?'" Jordan Denari Duffner, the author of the report, told *America*.

The survey also asked about religion and violence. Forty-five percent of Catholics said that Islam encourages violence more than other religions, while 24 percent said it encourages violence as much as other religions. About four in 10 U.S. Catholics agree that "Muslims have sufficiently condemned acts of terrorism committed in the name of Islam" while another four in 10 disagree.

Catholics in the United States are not sure about what they share in terms of religious belief with the world's 1.6 billion Muslims. About a third of all U.S. Catholics (32 percent) believe that Catholics and Muslims worship the same God, while 42 percent say they do not. About a quarter are unsure.

In Vatican II's "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions," the church affirms that the three Abrahamic faiths—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—all worship the same God. But as the report shows, this teaching is still not fully understood or accepted by all believers.

The report notes that St. John Paul II reiterated Catholic teaching about the three monotheistic faiths worshipping the same God in a 1985 speech

to Muslim youth in Morocco in 1985. He said then, "We believe in the same God, the one God, the living God, the God who created the world."

Denari Duffner noted that Pope Francis often portrays Islam in a positive light, which has affected how the Catholic press in the United States represents Islam. "The way our religious leaders talk about Islam is often the way people learn about Islam," she said.

Most Catholics understood that key components of Islam include daily prayer (93 percent) and fasting (77 percent) and knew that Muslims do not believe in the Trinity. But 86 percent of Catholics thought incorrectly that Muslims worship Muhammad.

When it comes to Jesus, 74 percent of Catholics said Muslims do not hold Jesus in high regard and 88 percent said they do not honor Mary. In fact, Muslims believe Jesus is a revered prophet and that Mary is his virgin mother.

Nearly half of U.S. Catholics, 44 percent, said either that they did not know of any similarities between the two faiths or that they believed there were none at all.

**MICHAEL O'LOUGHLIN**



**CLOSE ENCOUNTERS.** Archbishop Blase J. Cupich of Chicago visits with a couple during a Catholic-Muslim dinner in Bridgeview, Ill., in June. A Georgetown University study found Catholics who knew Muslims had the best impressions of them.

## Duterte Seeks Revived Death Sentence

Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan, the head of the Philippine bishops' conference, urged Catholic lawmakers on Sept. 14 not to support "any attempt to restore the death penalty" and called on Catholic lawyers to "study the issue and to oppose" it by filing legal cases against it. Less than a week after Rodrigo Duterte was sworn into office as president of the Philippines, a staunch political ally and the new speaker of the Philippine House of Representatives, Pantaleon Álvarez of Davao del Norte, filed a proposal to reinstate the death penalty. Duterte ran, and won by a large margin, on a platform of ridding the country of criminals by having them killed and encouraging the public to kill them. He has repeatedly called for the death penalty to be reinstated and, in early September, again urged the Philippine Congress to pass the bill. Since Duterte took office on June 30, more than 3,400 people accused of drug dealing or addiction have died at the hands of law enforcement and private citizens.

## 'Shocking' Liberty

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released a report on Sept. 7 that calls for reining in religious liberty protections in favor of nondiscrimination statutes aimed at protecting L.G.B.T. Americans. "The phrases 'religious liberty' and 'religious freedom' will stand for nothing except hypocrisy so long as they remain code words for discrimination, intolerance, racism, sexism, homophobia, Islamophobia, Christian supremacy or any form of intolerance," the chairman of the commission, Martin R. Castro, wrote in the report. Archbishop William Lori of Baltimore, who chairs the U.S. Conference

## NEWS BRIEFS

With a Mass near the tomb of St. Ignatius Loyola in Rome, **215 Jesuits from around the world** gathered on Oct. 2 for a general congregation to elect a new superior general to replace Adolfo Nicolás, S.J., who is retiring. + Brazil's **Indigenous Missionary Council** in a new report highlighted abuses against the land rights of the nation's indigenous people and said 137 of them were killed in 2015. + Hailing the **Rev. Jacques Hamel**, a French priest assassinated on July 26, as "a martyr" and declaring him "blessed," Pope Francis said on Sept. 14, "To kill in the name of God is satanic." + Catholic Relief Services announced on Sept. 16 that the agency's chief financial officer, **Sean Callahan**, will succeed the current chief executive officer and president Carolyn Woo when her five-year term ends in January 2017. + The United States signed a **new security agreement** with Israel on Sept. 14 that will give the Israeli military \$38 billion over 10 years. + Auxiliary Bishop Eusebio Elizondo of Seattle, chair of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Migration, said on Sept. 14 that Catholics "are **called to overcome** the partisan divides that separate us" on migration issues.



Callahan in El Salvador

of Catholic Bishops' Subcommittee on Religious Liberty, called those comments "shocking" and "reckless." He warned that the church's vast social services network could cease to exist if conscience protections are tossed aside. "We do not seek to impose our morality on anyone, but neither can we sacrifice it in our own lives and work," he said. "The vast majority of those who speak up for religious liberty are merely asking for the freedom to serve others as our faith asks of us."

## Good Investments

Small sums of financial assistance can help stabilize housing for low-income people and stave off homelessness, with its numerous related social problems, a University of Notre Dame study concluded. Targeted emergency

financial assistance of a few hundred dollars for rent, security deposits, utility payments or other cash emergencies can save taxpayers \$20,000 or more each time homelessness is prevented, according to the study published in the August issue of Science. Cash assistance can keep people off the street for two years or more, said James Sullivan, co-director of Notre Dame's Wilson Sheehan Lab for Economic Opportunities and one of the study's authors, during a Capitol Hill briefing on Sept. 15. "The key takeaway is that...we want to address this one-time emergency so that they stay on their feet, don't fall under this downward spiral and then they don't fall into homelessness again in the future," he said.

From America Media, CNS, RNS, AP and other sources.

## Colombia's Zero-Sum Conflict

**B**ack in 2014, during the thick of negotiations to end Colombia's interminable civil war, I was invited to interview President Juan Manuel Santos, and he wanted to get something off his chest.

Knowing our conversation would air in Miami, he took aim at the city's large Colombian expatriate community. That cohort is mostly opposed to peace talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—the Marxist guerrillas known by the Spanish acronym FARC.

"Many people in South Florida have bought this black propaganda that I am giving the country away to the Communists," Santos said. "This is nonsense."

Like their Cuban exile counterparts, many Miami Colombians have adopted a zero-sum mindset about their motherland. Any concession to the FARC—like any engagement with the Castros—suggests to these expats a complete surrender.

But that outlook faces serious challenges now that government and guerrillas, after four years of talks in Havana, finalized a peace agreement in late August. Suddenly, the end of a 52-year-old war that has killed more than 200,000 people and displaced six million more—the longest and last armed conflict in Latin America—looks imminent.

That is, provided Colombian voters, including those who now reside in Miami, ratify the accord in a referendum on Oct. 2. Most polls indicate they will—and for good reason.

No one knows better than Santos how weak the FARC is today compared to the turn of the century, when the rebel force controlled a swath of Colombia the size of Switzerland. In the 2000s, as the United States poured billions of dollars of Plan Colombia aid into the country, Santos was the defense minister who used the funds to beef up the Colombian military and put the guerrillas on the ropes.

‘There has to be  
a different way than  
continuing with  
the war.’

Still, Santos is well aware that while the FARC can be diminished, it is most likely never going to be defeated. For one thing, its war chest is too large—thanks to the hundreds of millions of dollars it reaps every year from cocaine trafficking.

So when Santos was elected in 2010, he decided that the surest way to keep the FARC from rebuilding was to address seriously, for once, the gross socioeconomic inequality that led to the war. He has staked his presidency on it.

But to do that—to modernize Colombia's infrastructure, carry out epic land reform and give rural teens a future instead of the FARC—there has to be peace. The "mule in the middle of Colombia's road," as Santos calls the conflict, must be removed.

"Bottom line, a permanent state of war, a situation where you have whole cities cut off from the mainstream economy because they're controlled by either guerrillas or paramilitaries...keeps

Colombia from ever realizing its potential," says Carlos Parra, a Colombian expatriate and business professor at Florida International University in Miami.

Or, as Santos told me, "What I'm trying to tell the Colombian people is: Wake up. We have to be a normal country."

The FARC leadership finally seems to agree, which is why the peace accord's main points include transforming the guerrilla movement into a mainstream political party.

What sticks most in the craws of the accord's opponents, however, is a sense that it treats the FARC too leniently. Colombia's guerrillas, after all, look more like Tony Soprano in military fatigues, a group that bankrolls its crusade not only with drugs but with relentless ransom kidnappings that have often ended in murder.

"They're just a mafia," says Miami travel agent and Colombian expat Maria Cascante, who saw numerous relatives abducted by the FARC. "Mr. Santos wants to make peace with the devil."

But a growing number of Miami expats side with Santos, pointing out that Colombia's military and right-wing paramilitary groups have committed myriad atrocities, too.

One is Angela Maria Tafur. Her father, a Colombian politician, was killed by a young guerrilla in 1992. Now she runs a charity that is partnering with Santos's government to bring education and employment opportunities to rural Colombians affected by the violence.

"There has to be a different way than continuing with the war," she says.

And a different way than the zero-sum politics both left and right have played for too long in Colombia and Latin America.

**TIM PADGETT**





# Writers and Reconcilers

If you work in Catholic publishing, it's a certainty you've been asked one question at cocktail parties: Whatever happened to the Catholic novel? The tone of the query usually betrays declinist sympathies—Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio?—even for folks who are otherwise glad to be rid of the subculture from which Flannery O'Connor, Walker Percy, Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene and J. F. Powers arose. Many who yearn for those classics might be horrified to discover that four of the authors mentioned above preferred Mass in Latin. (The fifth died before the Second Vatican Council ended.)

It is perhaps human nature to imagine yesteryear was better, and Catholics are not the only ones who do this handwringing. Witness Alan Jacobs in the September issue of *Harper's*, asking, "What Became of the Christian Intellectuals?" Jacobs is what most of us think of as a Christian intellectual, an evangelical scholar who can "speak the language of other intellectuals, including the most purely secular," who plays the role "of the interpreter, the bridger of cultural gaps; of the mediator, maybe even the reconciler." Jacobs points to C. S. Lewis, Reinhold Niebuhr and Dorothy Sayers as past examples, but he won't call himself one. He is not sanguine about his peers either, noting that 50 years ago our country had "serious Christian intellectuals who occupied a prominent place on the national stage. They are gone now."

Jacobs suggests that it was, ironi-

cally, the rise of Christian intellectual institutions after World War II—the university, the publishing house, the journal of opinion—that allowed Christian scholars to speak to each other rather than engage the culture. By the time they realized they should be doing the latter, the culture had changed too much for them to understand it or be understood. Now we have two types of Christian public figures: those who chose bland accommodation (Marilynne Robinson is his example) and those who retreated into a "separate-but-equal domain," like the late Richard John Neuhaus.

But if the Christian intellectual is dead, has a Catholic cousin survived? Think back to 1955, when Msgr. John Tracy Ellis published his devastating critique of the intellectual mediocrity of American Catholic culture, "American Catholics and the Intellectual Life." Six decades later, is Catholic intellectual life in decline? In the ascendant? Going dark after a final flare-up, supernova-style?

That question has to be answered the same way as the query about Catholic novelists: It depends on what you mean by *Catholic*. If it means a culture radically distinct from that of not-Catholics, then there are very few Catholic intellectuals left, except for a few trad-bros on Twitter who fancy themselves theocrats. Even advocates for a new Catholic ghetto, "Benedict option," are often more American in their thinking than Catholic (the Pilgrims were pursuing a Benedict

option; so, too, the Mormons and Quakers).

If it means higher education that is distinct from the secular realm, then no, there are precious few Catholic intellectuals left. While Jacobs may be right that many Christian colleges ignored American culture, most Catholic colleges revamped their curricula in the 1960s to respond to the needs of the American workforce. So long, metaphysics!

If it means a culture in which an educated elite of priests sits atop a pyramid with a broad base of intellectually amenable laity, then no, there are almost no Catholic intellectuals left.

But what if by *Catholic intellectual* we mean someone who

sees the world through a unique heuristic heavily influenced by the symbols, tropes and values of a Catholic faith?

Well, those folks are everywhere. Better educated and more influential than in 1955, they are represented heavily in the ranks of politicians, justices, professors, artists and writers. Many have beliefs and practices that do not pass muster with certain Catholic crowds, but when won't that be the case? These folks can speak the language of other intellectuals, including their secular peers, and they play the role of interpreter, bridger of cultural gaps, mediator, maybe even reconciler.

And maybe *this* is the Golden Age of the Catholic intellectual.

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JAMES T. KEANE is an editor at Orbis Books in Ossining, N.Y., and a former associate editor of *America*. Twitter: @jamestkeane.



'I owe so much to Christianity,' the Republican nominee tells supporters.

# Trump Makes a Place for Faith

BY MICHAEL O'LOUGHLIN

**F**or more than a year now, religiously motivated voters and political pundits have tried to figure out what role faith plays in the life and politics of the Republican White House hopeful Donald J. Trump, discerning whether or not the Manhattan real estate mogul might make a good partner on issues ranging from abortion to religious liberty and everything in between.

The conclusion among those who have mined his past, visited his former churches and studied old interviews is that, like his campaign itself, Mr. Trump's beliefs cannot be pinned down to any particular ideology or movement, and as a result, they could be molded to fit various agendas.

Mr. Trump was born in 1946 into a family who attended a Presbyterian church in Queens, N.Y., one that, according to a recent profile in *The Atlantic*, offered full member-

**WORSHIP AND PRAISE.** Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump attends a church service in Detroit, Mich., on Sept. 3.

AP PHOTO/EVAN VUCCI

MICHAEL O'LOUGHLIN is *America's* national correspondent. Twitter: @mikeoloughlin.

ship only to white worshipers until the 1950s. Today, that church is mostly black and Hispanic, reflecting the changing neighborhood where it is located.

By the 1970s, Mr. Trump's parents, Fred and Mary, joined Marble Collegiate Church in Manhattan, home of the "positive thinking" preacher Norman Vincent Peale. According to *The Washington Post*, Mr. Trump also worshiped at the church into the 1980s, and he had one of his children baptized there. Mr. Trump has repeatedly praised Mr. Peale's oratorical skills and can-do message of positive thinking. (For his part, Dr. Peale waded into politics once, saying ahead of the 1960 presidential contest, "Faced with the election of a Catholic, our culture is at stake." He later said he regretted the remark and promised to stay out of politics.)

The candidate's affinity for Dr. Peale manifests itself today in a slew of high-profile supporters who represent what many call the "prosperity gospel," the notion that if you behave in accordance with biblical values, God will reward you. That idea remains popular today among certain groups of Christians. Pastor Joel Osteen, for example, still fills arenas and sells millions of books preaching something akin to this message.

Mr. Trump, whom voters viewed as the least religious major presidential candidate in either party in a January Pew poll, calls himself an active churchgoer, and he told reporters last summer that he still attends Marble Collegiate Church. But last August, the church released a statement to CNN indicating that while he and his parents had a long history with the church, the presidential candidate was "not an active member."

Given his persona as a tough businessman who made a fortune in part through casinos, who has bragged of his sexual exploits and who has been married three times, Mr. Trump has conceded that people are sometimes surprised to hear him talk about faith at all.

"People are so shocked when they find...out I am Protestant. I am Presbyterian. And I go to church and I love God and I love my church," he said at an Iowa event last year.

He has said on other occasions, however, that he is an evangelical Christian. Earlier this year, James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, called Mr. Trump a "baby Christian," telling reporters that the candidate had accepted "a relationship with Christ" and deserved some slack because he was not raised in an evangelical home.

Some, however, are not sold on Mr. Trump's religiosity, and they point to his trouble with Christian lingo and theology as examples.

"Donald Trump is certainly not seen as someone who even understands the tune when evangelicals sing their tradition," D. Michael Lindsay, president of the evangel-

ical-affiliated Gordon College and author of *Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite*, told **America**. "He doesn't even know the words to say that would be appealing to evangelicals."

Mr. Trump infamously messed up a reference to St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, calling it "Two Corinthians," but perhaps more tellingly, he mangled 2,000 years of Christian theology by saying that he cannot recall ever asking God for forgiveness.

"I think if I do something wrong, I think, I just try and make it right," he said at an Iowa forum last year. "I don't bring God into that picture. I don't."

Then there is the way Mr. Trump handles the politics of religion.

Presidential candidates tend to court faith-voters either by highlighting their own religious bona fides or by showing them that

they at least understand their worldviews. Mr. Trump has done neither. He tussled with Pope Francis when the pontiff said those who support building walls are not Christian, and he has driven away many conservative leaders in both evangelical and Catholic camps.

All that said, Mr. Trump has retained the support of a bloc of voters traditionally enthusiastic about the G.O.P. but who pundits and political rivals thought might have been turned off by his personal life: evangelical Protestants.

"I owe so much to Christianity," Mr. Trump said to a crowd of evangelical activists and pastors in New York earlier this summer. "I owe it, quite frankly, to be standing here because the evangelical vote was mostly gotten by me."

Polls seem to bear that assessment out.

The Pew Research Center reported in July that 78 percent of white evangelical voters plan to vote for Mr. Trump in November, three points higher than the number that supported former G.O.P. nominee Gov. Mitt Romney at this point in 2012. (Half of white Catholics said they would support Mr. Trump, a few points lower than the number who said they would back Mr. Romney in 2012.)

Some high-profile evangelical leaders such as Mr. Dobson, Liberty University president Jerry Falwell Jr. and radio personality Eric Metaxas have endorsed Mr. Trump, but critics say they represent an older style of evangelicalism.

They note that younger evangelical leaders have been outright hostile to Mr. Trump, including Russell Moore, president of the influential Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission. This, said Andrew Johnson, a research associate at the University of Southern California's Center for Religion and Civic Culture, is evidence of a fracture between the movement's old guard and its more diverse and less politically oriented younger members—one that could become more pronounced should Mr. Trump win the White House.

This article is the second in a two-part series about the faith lives of the major presidential candidates.



“Trump is exposing the cracks in what is called ‘evangelical America,’” Mr. Johnson told *America*. “Some evangelical leaders are doubling down on ‘religious right’ strategies from the past as younger evangelicals are trying to separate themselves from that.”

Mr. Johnson said to expect more pushback from evangelical leaders under a Trump presidency than during the Reagan administration during the 1980s, when the senior Jerry Falwell and his Moral Majority group were at the height of their power.

“In some ways, some churches have learned their lesson from siding too wholly with one party,” he said.

On the Catholic side of things, conservative stalwarts such as the Princeton University professor Robert George and the St. John Paul II biographer George Weigel have urged their fellow believers not to support Mr. Trump, though they have stopped short of saying a vote for his rival, Hillary Clinton, would be acceptable.

Even some Catholic bishops viewed to be politically conservative in the past have expressed skepticism about Mr. Trump, blaming him for coarsening the nation’s political conversation, in part through his attacks on immigrants.

But if Mr. Trump is able to turn around his campaign and defeat Mrs. Clinton, faith communities in the United States will have no choice but to work with his administration. What might that look like? Some religiously motivated voters who make the case for Mr. Trump highlight two issues: his promise to appoint pro-life judges and his commitment to religious liberty. The president of the Susan B. Anthony List, Marjorie Dannenfelser, told the Christian Broadcasting Network earlier this summer, for example, that she was happy with Mr. Trump’s promise to appoint pro-life judges to the Supreme Court.

“I was encouraged when Mr. Trump reiterated the most important pro-life commitment he has made to date: that he would appoint pro-life judges to SCOTUS,” she said following the candidate’s June meeting with nearly 1,000 evangelical religious and political activists in New York.

But it is on the religious liberty front that other faith leaders seem to be rallying around Mr. Trump more intensely, even as they concede that his past support for abortion rights calls his commitment to the pro-life cause into question. Questions about religious liberty in the United States have swirled in recent years in Catholic circles primarily over objections to the contraception mandate in the Affordable Care Act, and, more broadly, around issues related to the

2015 legalization of same-sex marriage. Mr. Trump has not spoken frequently about those issues, instead framing the religious liberty question in terms of political power.

He has accused political leaders of “selling the evangelicals down the tubes,” saying that Christianity in the United States is getting “weaker, weaker, weaker,” and he has promised to boost the political and cultural clout of Christians should he be elected. To that end, Mr. Trump promised to repeal a 1950s-era I.R.S. rule that prohibits churches from engaging in overt political behavior, known as the Johnson Amendment.

“I think maybe that will be my greatest contribution to Christianity—and other religions—is to allow you, when you talk religious liberty, to go and speak openly, and if you like somebody or want somebody to represent you, you should have the right to do it,” Mr. Trump said earlier this summer.

Jonathan Merritt, an author who writes about evangelical Christianity, told *America* that promises like those “resonate with the remnants of the religious right movement” that, while diminished in recent years, “still exists in large numbers today.”

He pointed to the chasm between younger evangelical leaders who are opposed to Mr. Trump and “pew-sitting evangelicals” who see in the G.O.P. nominee the possibility of slowing the dramatic pace of cultural change that has occurred in their lifetimes.

“Donald Trump talks a lot of the ‘good old days’; he talks a lot of ‘making America great again’; and he’s harkening back to the days of the Ronald Reagan in his speeches,” Mr. Merritt said. “For some evangelicals, these were their glory days, the 1950s kind of era.”

Take Sunday school, for example. Mr. Trump lamented in front of a crowd of evangelical Christians that at one time, it was “automatic. Today it isn’t. Maybe we can get back into a position where it’s automatic.”

Then there is the issue of having a seat at the table. Mr. Trump’s biggest supporters from the evangelical, and to a lesser extent, the Catholic worlds are figures whose cultural impact has waned considerably in recent years. With Mr. Trump, these figures see an opening for the religious right to regain a seat at the table, Mr. Johnson said.

“There are some evangelical leaders who have had a very small voice in the political discussion who are rising up because of this vacuum created by people leaving Trump,” he said.

**‘Donald Trump is certainly not seen as someone who even understands the tune when evangelicals sing their tradition.’**

But for certain religiously motivated voters, even those traditionally supportive of Republican politics, some of Mr. Trump's promises could make their social advocacy work more difficult.

Take the issue of immigration, for example.

Catholics and evangelical leaders have in recent years emerged as some of the most vociferous supporters of immigration reform, highlighting especially how U.S. border policies separate families. Some have allied with Republicans sympathetic to their cause, including some of Mr. Trump's former rivals, like Gov. Jeb Bush and Senator Marco Rubio.

But Mr. Trump, of course, favors building a wall and deporting nearly 12 million people living illegally in the United States, though in recent weeks his aides have said he is reconsidering this stance.

Then there is the issue of who would be allowed into the United States under President Trump. He has promised to prohibit Muslims from entering the country, and his vice presidential pick, Gov. Mike Pence of Indiana, clashed with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin of Indianapolis when the local Catholic Charities agency announced plans to resettle a Syrian family there last year. Those who support immigration to the United States have criticized Mr. Trump's plan, both on humanitarian and religious liberty grounds.

And Mr. Trump added a further wrinkle in August when he announced that would-be immigrants would be subject

to extra scrutiny, including questions about their views on gay rights. Though the Trump campaign hasn't specified which questions will be asked, during the convention Mr. Trump promised to "do everything in my power to protect our L.G.B.T.Q. citizens from the violence and oppression of a hateful foreign ideology." If the qualifications for entry into the United States include support for L.G.B.T. non-discrimination laws, a Trump administration would be requiring refugees to hold more liberal views than many conservatives profess.

There are no easy answers to those questions because the Trump campaign has not released many details about the candidate's proposals on immigration or religious liberty. That, says Mr. Lindsay of Gordon College, is what makes some faith voters reticent to support him.

Mr. Lindsay told **America** that despite Mr. Trump's wooing of conservative Christians, he is not sure they will come out on top in the end after a Trump victory.

"A Trump presidency would raise a lot more questions than answers for evangelicals, which would in itself be novel because every Republican candidate who has been running in the general election since Ronald Reagan has been one that evangelicals felt like they knew and understood," Mr. Lindsay said.

His conclusion? "With Donald Trump, there's a lot of mystery." **A**

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# The Power of the Word

## The enduring value of Catholic media

BY GREG ERLANDSON

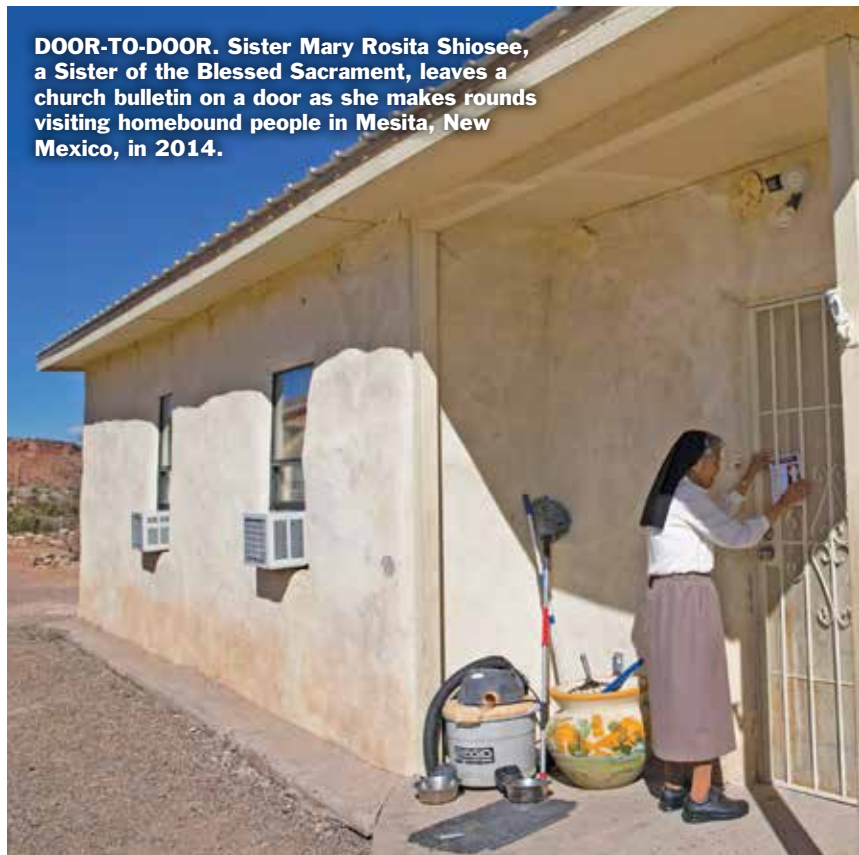
**I**n September 2014, a committee of six international Catholic media experts along with five Vatican officials began a series of meetings to review the Vatican's hydra-headed, highly siloed media operations. Our appointment came from the Council of Cardinals, and our mandate from Cardinal George Pell of Australia laid out three priorities: a more effective embrace of new media, better cost control and improved collaboration among the various Vatican media entities.

After half a year of meetings, interviews, field trips and debate, our committee in March 2015 recommended a dramatic restructuring of the media operations. Our recommendations were in large part accepted, and in the remainder of 2015 a series of changes were made, beginning with the creation of a new Secretariat for Communications under the leadership of Msgr. Dario Viganò, until then the energetic leader of the Vatican's television office.

How this restructuring will fare in the change-averse corridors of the Vatican remains to be seen, but I took heart from the fact that Pope Francis and the cardinals were in essence doubling down on the importance of a multipronged media effort to communicate with the world. The key to the committee's recommendations was its recognition that the real payoff of the proposed reorganization would be in the multiplier effect of all the Vatican media arms working together. This collaboration would demand an enlightened leadership team that, while recognizing the unique needs and capacities of each medium, would for the first time coordinate resources, messaging and staff, bringing the power of print, digital, video and audio together.

### A Distress Call

I left Rome optimistic that the fruit of such a reorganization may well be a world-class Catholic media operation that more effectively communicates the Gospel, the mission of the church and the vision of the pope. Back in the United States, however, pessimism may be more the order of the



**DOOR-TO-DOOR.** Sister Mary Rosita Shiosee, a Sister of the Blessed Sacrament, leaves a church bulletin on a door as she makes rounds visiting homebound people in Mesita, New Mexico, in 2014.

day. Our own Catholic media seems in disarray and retreat at a time when it is needed more than ever.

Rates of Catholic affiliation and sacramental practice are falling, and movements and ideologies contrary to Catholic thought are increasingly effective in dominating cultural conversations.

Yet it is exactly at this moment in history when we are seeing a general decline in the diocesan Catholic press in terms of frequency, news focus and numbers. Earlier this year, *The Catholic Chronicle*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Toledo, shut its doors after 82 years, citing financial reasons. Other events are also contributing to the feeling that the Catholic media industry is in decline.


Just in the past few months *The Boston Globe's* quixotic two-year effort to develop an ad-based business model for its website *Crux* foundered (though John Allen quickly arranged a second act for *Crux* thanks to the support of the Knights of Columbus). And the bishops' own Catholic News Service

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**GREG ERLANDSON** was recently appointed director and editor in chief of the *Catholic News Service*. He is the former president and publisher of *Our Sunday Visitor Publishing*.

has been under economic pressure for some years as its competition has increased while its client publications—primarily diocesan publications—have been cutting frequency and changing formats.

According to figures released by the Catholic Press Association, its newspaper members have declined 17 per-



In the face of declining Catholic affiliation and sacramental practice, the church should shore up its print media, not watch it fade away.

cent in the last 10 years and its magazine members by 25 percent. Not all of this membership slippage reflects closures, but it is one gauge of the Catholic media's general decline.

Catholic newspapers are in crisis today, and Catholic print media is bleeding. Identifying a cause is to a certain extent a chicken-and-egg challenge. Reduced circulation, declining budgets and scaled back editorial and design resources weaken publications, which in turn leads to further losses in both readers and budgets.

In addition, the digital world has introduced a host of new competitors: blogs; news aggregator sites, like New Advent; and various news feeds, like Aleteia, Zenit, News.va, Crux and the Catholic News Agency, many of which operate on a donation-based rather than a subscriber model.

Under this relentless pressure, Catholic weeklies become biweeklies, become monthly magazines, become websites. Our Sunday Visitor's O.S.V. Newsweekly is the last truly weekly national Catholic newspaper, and only about 18 per-

cent of diocesan publications currently publish 45 or more times a year, making timeliness and relevance an always greater challenge.

Because salaries and paper/print/postage are the two biggest areas of expense, finance departments target both. Staff is reduced. Experience and talent are judged to offer an insufficient return on investment. ("I know we can't afford anyone other than the new and inexperienced," one bishop told me years ago. "After five years, they'll have to move on.") The allure of digital media promises an end to paper, print and postage costs. If the diocesan site can simply aggregate press releases and news from other feeds, it barely even needs staff, the reasoning goes.

Each cut leads almost inevitably to further cuts. And cut by cut, closure by closure, one of the glories of the Catholic Church in the United States is fading away. Catholic readership is declining in many areas, but in the diocesan press, the decline particularly affects whom the bishops are speaking to and how effectively they speak.

### **Don't Stop the Presses!**

The irony is that polling data continues to show that Catholics trust their own media and particularly rely on its print incarnations.

A survey in 2011 by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate of self-identified Catholics found that 26 percent of Catholics had read a print diocesan publication in the previous three months. Only 3 percent reported reading an online version of a diocesan newspaper. The poll said 18 percent of adult Catholics typically read a print copy at least once a month.

For engaged Catholics, those who attend Mass weekly, 55 percent read a print version of their diocesan publications weekly. CARA found that older Catholics are more likely to read a print publication than one online, and the same holds true for millennials. While 22 percent of millennials had read a print copy in the previous three months, only 4 percent had read the publication online.

A Marist Poll commissioned by the Knights of Columbus before the visit of Pope Francis in September 2015 looked in part at the news media in the context of the pope's visit. It reported that a resounding 69 percent of practicing Catholics trust Catholic news outlets by a significant margin over secular print, television or digital outlets.

While Catholic news media usage could benefit from more—and more current—data, some observations can be made. The first is that there is no single silver bullet for reaching Catholics. The strong tradition of print Catholic media continues to have a hold on Catholic readers. This is particularly true of older Catholics, who often are the most consistent donors and have the time and inclination to be highly engaged. Rather than being disdainful of this

audience, a parish or diocese should strive to stay connected with it.

Second, digital is attracting a certain percentage of Catholics, but its reach can be overstated. Surveys show that Catholics are more likely to visit a parish website than a diocesan, U.S.C.C.B. or Vatican site, but researchers suggest this may be simply for the purpose of finding out the times for Masses or other events. A large percentage of Catholics have no significant awareness of the Catholic online presence.

Investment is often justified in the digital arena as a way to reach a broader audience, but the metrics of success rarely get beyond boasts about numbers of pageviews or numbers of unique visitors. Who is looking, what they are looking at and how long they are looking at it or, indeed, what impact any of these pageviews are having, is left to a large extent unexplored. And the digital landscape is constantly reinventing itself, making investment both risky and effective only over a short term.

Digital is and will be a powerful communications medium, but print remains the ultimate “push” technology. It arrives weekly or biweekly and by doing so demands attention. As marketers and e-retailers can testify, email inboxes are crowded, and mobile media apps, while efficient, succeed if they meet a great need but are more likely to languish unused. One estimate is that 60 percent of mobile applications are never downloaded. Another 25 percent of all applications downloaded between 2011 and 2015 were opened only once.

## Keeping Faith With Catholic Media

In this time of great cultural transition, the church faces some significant challenges in its use of media. For the foreseeable future, the only sound strategy is both/and rather than either/or, but the temptation to cut print efforts weakens communications efforts as a whole.

There are better arguments for the Catholic press, however, than the Monty Pythonesque “We’re not dead yet.” Indeed, the need for a viable, effective Catholic press remains great.

Whatever one thinks of the quality of secular media, its media coverage of the church is uneven at best, whether in newspapers, radio or television. At a time when the church often seeks to be engaged in the great issues of the day, its voice barely rises above a whisper in most settings. Stories about Pope Francis get play because he attracts readers, which is fine. But so do abuse stories. Stories about where bishops stand on particular issues, reports on events or issues from a Catholic perspective or profiles of Catholics who are living lives in fidelity to the Gospel are rare to nonexistent in secular media.

For Catholic media to make a difference, however, it needs

to cultivate and highlight its own Catholic journalists, photo-journalists, editors and designers who have, or should have, the knowledge to report accurately on local, national and global events relevant to a Catholic audience.

Accurate reporting of the news is a critical need if the church is also interested in both mobilization and formation. Regarding mobilization, it is only the Catholic media that can get the word out on events of importance, whether that is the “24 Hours for the Lord” initiative, immigration rallies or religious liberty campaigns. This kind of mobilization necessarily involves social media for specific events, but it is traditional news reporting, backgrounders and analysis that educate and arouse the interest of Catholics and explain what is important about the event.

And formation is one of the aspects of Catholic news media that is least discussed. For while the bishops have often talked about the importance of adult faith formation, Catholic news media remain the primary means of this formation. The regular appearance of a Catholic publication with news, analysis, columns and features in a virtual or actual mailbox does more to help form adult Catholics than any other method or tool.

For the Catholic press to survive, however, it will need more than lukewarm support or elitist disdain. It cannot continue to be kept on a low-budget, low-quality strategy of making-do. If church leaders want a vibrant Catholic media that can gain readers’ attention in a media-saturated environment, their leadership is critical.

First, we must make our own Catholic media a priority. This means investing in quality. Ours is a media-savvy world that expects strong writing and good graphics. Catholic readers want their press to provide context and inspiration. They are not looking for a safe, sanitized and noncontroversial publication that seems disconnected from what is happening in their communities and the larger world.

Making Catholic media a priority means offering not just resources, but also time and attention. If there is a church announcement or a scoop about church issues to be offered, it should not be going to the local secular news outlets first. That makes the diocesan media report on it days or weeks later look late or irrelevant. Use the diocesan media to make the big reveals and then direct the secular media to that source.

Second, we must keep the editor and the communications director in the inner circle. Papers where directors are aware of the priorities and concerns of the church’s leadership—whether at the Vatican or in a chancery—are much more likely to produce useful, informative and relevant publications.

Third, we should take a cue from Rome: Look at ways to integrate diocesan communications efforts. The divide between the communications director and the editor is fading in many chanceries in part because increasingly one is becoming the other. This blurring of lines offers its own risks, and it is



also not a substitute for strategy. Whatever the outreach to the community—print, social media, websites, radio, television and other parish-linked communications efforts—there should be a collaborative and flexible strategy for getting the word out. It is critical that the integrity of each media channel be recognized.

A newspaper is not a collection of press releases. A Catholic nonprofit radio station not owned by the diocese must be seen as independent. Yet a sound, integrated communications strategy that engages Catholic media leaders collaboratively will pay great dividends for the church. This strategy can connect geographically far-flung dioceses or culturally diverse ones. It can also compensate for spotty or even hostile coverage in secular media outlets.

Fourth, we should put our mouth where our money is: Challenge Catholics to read, listen and learn. Bishops, pastors and educators have extraordinary influence if they make this a regular part of their messaging in homilies, talks and off-the-cuff remarks. Catholic media, especially local Catholic media, needs to be promoted.

Finally, we must support national Catholic media organizations that seek to promote best practices and professional training for their members. There are several, but the one I have been closely connected with is the Catholic Press Association. Its recently revived consultation process, funded in part by the Catholic Communication Campaign, is being

used by more and more bishops. It is helping diocesan publications address their many challenges with the assistance of outside expertise.

One of the strategic goals of the press association is the professional development of its members through webinars and conferences. Decades ago, there was a school for Catholic journalists in Denver that taught both the professional craft of journalism and the teachings of the church.

Now, as then, those entering the Catholic press could benefit from opportunities to develop their journalistic skills and their knowledge of the church they are covering. A short-term strategy of low-paid positions occupied for brief periods of time benefits no one, neither the readers nor the church. The church needs to foster the vocation of professional Catholic communicators who strive for the highest standards of quality and who are capable of engaging the issues and events of the day as well as the teachings of the church in a context that is thoroughly Catholic.

The tumultuous changes now rocking journalism will surely continue. With thousands of jobs slashed and newspapers becoming thinner, traditional journalism is hurting even as the need for an intelligent parsing of the day's events becomes more critical. I do not know where journalism will end up, but I know for certain that it will not end. It is an indispensable pillar of our democracy, and it is equally indispensable for our church. ▲

# Generation Faith

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America MEDIA  
CATHOLIC MINISTRY

# Reviving Liberal Education

A new age needs the old tradition.

BY JOSEPH J. DUNN

University presidents and professors of history, classical and modern languages, literature, philosophy, sociology and similar specialties have long commended the value of liberal arts in the education of citizens, whatever their career objectives. But over the past half century business courses have gained popularity among undergraduates. More recently, colleges and universities are responding to renewed interest in STEM careers—science, technology, engineering and math. In the current election campaigns, our political leaders promote job readiness as the main purpose of a college education. A few institutions, however, are taking action to reassert the importance of a liberal education and make it attractive to more students. How did we come to this point, and how is this revival of the liberal arts happening?

The first European universities included courses on grammar, logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy, theology and Aristotelian subjects like physics, metaphysics and moral philosophy. The study of these “liberal arts” consisted in reading aimed at discovering truth accompanied by discussion and reflection that might lead to wisdom and understanding.

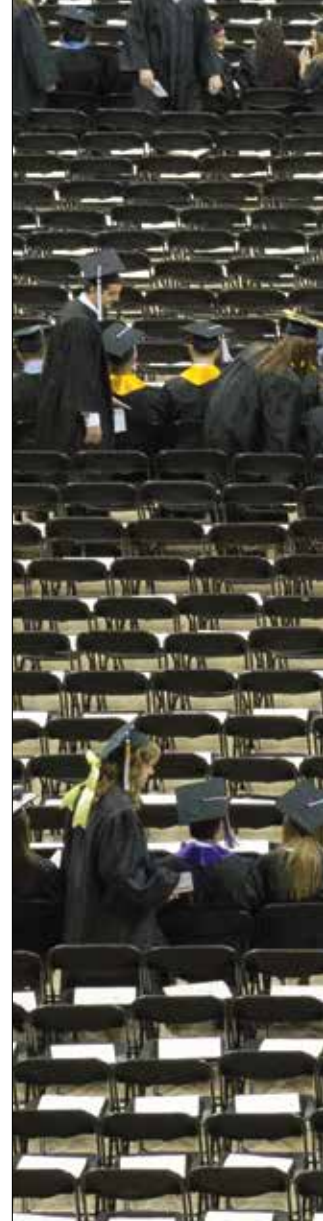
With the Enlightenment came the thought that one could discover truth by reason, using scientific experiment, as much as by revelation and ancient texts. Studying Newtonian physics became popular among thinkers. Universities respected scientific discovery: The honorary degree that Yale University granted to Benjamin Franklin in 1753 commends his “ingenious Experiments and Theory of Electrical fire.” Harvard University likewise recognized Franklin’s experiments. On their campuses, however, scholarship emphasized classical languages, moral philosophy and memorization.

In 1800, Thomas Jefferson proposed a curriculum for the new University of Virginia that departed sharply from that of the established U.S. colleges. When Harvard was founded in 1636, Galileo was under house arrest for supporting the Copernican model of the universe, and Isaac Newton

had not yet been born. Williams College, established in 1793, followed a traditional curriculum. These imitated English colleges like Cambridge, where the mission was primarily to assure an educated elite steeped in the Aristotelian worldview. At Monticello, Jefferson kept his scientific instruments as close as he kept his beloved books. For the new university, Jefferson wanted “Botany, Chemistry, Zoology, Anatomy, Surgery, Medicine, Natural Philosophy, Agriculture, Mathematics, Astronomy, Geology, Geography, Politics, Commerce, History, Ethics, Law, Art, Finearts” and the classics read in their original Latin and Greek. Work toward a bachelor’s degree would be the capstone for many citizens or the foundation for graduate work in medicine, law or ministry. A year after the founding of the University of Virginia, Jefferson wrote proudly, “This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow the truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error as long as reason is left free to combat it.” This was to be an education for free men living in democracy.

Before the Civil War, a growing number of colleges built observatories, and science labs slowly became important to a truly liberal education. In 1869, Harvard’s new president, Charles William Eliot, announced that “This university recognizes no real antagonism between literature and science, and consents to no such narrow alternatives as mathematics or classics, science or metaphysics. We would have them all, and at their best.”

Eliot pointed to his principal concern: “An unintelligent system of education from the primary school through the college is responsible for the fact that many college graduates have so inadequate a conception of what is meant by scientific observation, reasoning and proof.”



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JOSEPH J. DUNN, *the author of After One Hundred Years: Corporate Profits, Wealth, and American Society, writes frequently on the role of business in society.*





And he proposed a solution: “It is possible for the young to get actual experience of all the principal methods of thought.” Language study has its method, as do mathematics and natural and physical science, as does faith. Without “a general acquaintance with many branches of knowledge... there can be no such thing as an intelligent public opinion... [which] in the modern world... is the one condition of social progress.” Jefferson’s revolution in education had spread to America’s oldest university.

### In Modern Times

By the mid-20th century, an educated person had experienced both the scientific and the Socratic methods of learning. Then, somehow, scholars began once again to regard math and science as separable from the liberal arts. Perhaps this trend was an effort by universities to become more customer-oriented. Some students, after all, had no interest in STEM careers. Their aspirations, if defined at all, lay more

in the direction of teaching or writing, perhaps journalism, maybe law or not-for-profit work, but surely nothing where employers required competence in math or science. Lecture-format science courses with no lab experiments, often held in high-capacity lecture halls, were far less expensive than constructing new labs and stocking supplies.

To further accommodate, some colleges allowed students to opt out of all math and science courses. Credit hours once devoted to understanding nature were given instead to a variety of new courses. As long as the college had led the students to read good books, to think critically and write clearly and to consider the morality of their actions, had the college not met its obligations to the students and to society?

In 1967, Harvard-trained economist John Kenneth Galbraith expressed concern about another influence tending to separate the study of language, philosophy and great literature from math and science. In *The New Industrial State* he warns: “Modern higher education is, of course, ex-



tremely accommodated to the needs of the industrial system. The schools and colleges of business administration... are preparatory academies for the technostructure...the lesser prestige and lesser support for the arts and humanities suggest their inferior role." Professor Galbraith urged: "The college and university community must retain paramount authority for the education it provides and for the research it undertakes. The needs of the industrial system must always be secondary to the cultivation of general understanding and perception."

But administrators were hardly able to retain paramount authority while students were, in those days, breaching all historic norms of on-campus decorum, including protesting against the Vietnam War, occupying the offices of deans and presidents and confronting police and National Guard troops. Traditionally white campuses were admitting African-Americans. Men's colleges admitted female undergraduates. "Paramount authority" was being challenged on campus and in society generally.

Then there is grade inflation. The first studies of the phenomenon of G.P.A.'s rising faster than S.A.T. scores and national literacy scores were conducted in the 1960s. A 2013 study conducted by the University of North Texas's department of economics summarized: "Studies often discover evidence of differential grade inflation by subject. Most commonly, disciplines that are traditionally more quantitative such as economics, mathematics, psychology, chemistry and computer science exhibit less evidence of grade inflation, while courses such as art, English, music, speech and political science typically have higher rates of grade inflation."

Many students consider higher grades, and a higher G.P.A., vital to preserving financial aid and competing for future employment. A paper discussing the themes of *Wuthering Heights* is more amenable to circumspect grading than evaluation of the model structure that collapsed under the required two-kilogram load. The clear liquid sample in the 10-milliliter test tube either did turn blue or it did not, leaving little room for nuance. Accommodating the student who felt that math was too hard or that science was "not my strong point" seemed an easy concession. Jefferson's passion for broad, liberal education and Eliot's interest in an educated public opinion and social progress yielded to more immediate and personal concerns. Saving the 4.0 became the paramount consideration.

## Finding Our Way

What is an undergraduate to do, and what should a university president endorse, in the quest for knowledge, wisdom and understanding? Can we find a way of proceeding that properly values the humanities and reinvigorates a liberal education? The rising national frenzy to get everyone to go to college, with no objectives beyond employability, will leave us with hundreds of thousands of functionaries in service of Galbraith's technostructure. The risk is great that they will "live and reason from the comfortable position of a high level

of development and a quality of life well beyond the reach of the majority of the world's population... lead[ing] to a numbing of conscience and to tendentious analyses which neglect parts of reality" ("Laudato Si," No. 49).

Yes, some employers want new hires who are "job-ready" for their immediate contribution to the firm. Some entry-level positions, like accounting and engineering, require a bachelor's degree in that major. But undergraduates who forsake too many humanities courses fail to see an overarching reality: Over years and decades, leadership accrues to the man or woman who

understands the human condition. George Washington was highly qualified in the science of fortifications, maneuvers and logistics. But his military skills would have been for naught without the ability to rally his officers with his address at Newburg. With that short speech he poured his sense of duty into their distraught hearts and matched their deepest wishes to his vision. That afternoon they pledged new loyalty.

Franklin Roosevelt won the presidency four times by directing his public statements to the voters' greatest fears in each election cycle. The warmth and comforting cadence of his fireside chats and the vigor of his campaign speeches embraced the common man, and he responded.

Business confers its laurels similarly. If Steve Jobs had relied only on marketing strategy or engineering, then Apple Inc., and all the other device manufacturers, would meet in commoditized competition where the lowest price always wins. But a calligraphy class at Reed College showed Steve Jobs how the same set of words conveys very different sentiments when different fonts are used. So Apple differentiates itself by meeting human needs in its hardware and software, like commands that follow intuitive logic and anxiety-free customer support.

Great businesses, those that last for many decades without scandal, are built on functional excellence in the cause

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of human betterment. Their leaders see business as “a noble vocation, directed to producing wealth and improving our world. It can be a fruitful source of prosperity for the areas in which it operates, especially if it sees the creation of jobs as an essential part of its service to the common good” (“Laudato Si,” No. 129). A student who has devoted real effort to discovering how humans have thought about and acted on the great questions of life has pursued the ultimate business skill—understanding human customers, workers, investors and suppliers. To paraphrase Eliot, there is no antagonism between the humanities and business.

How should colleges and universities strengthen a liberal education to prepare graduates for the challenges that must be decided by democracy today? A model can be seen in my alma mater, St. Joseph’s University in Philadelphia. While preserving the core requirements of theology, philosophy, language and history, St. Joseph’s now includes one year of mathematics and one year of laboratory science as minimum requirements for a bachelor’s degree in any major in the College of Arts and Science. Today, decisions of guilt or innocence often hinge on scientific evidence. We rely on models to predict next year’s economy and global climate change in coming decades. The citizen who would truly promote social progress needs an appreciation for math and its method of thought and an adequate concept of scientific observation, reasoning and proof. And the first lesson of the

science lab is humility, which is a prerequisite to wisdom.

At the request of the university’s student senate, class schedules are being changed so that liberal arts majors will be able to take elective business courses, acknowledging that many of these students will seek careers in the private sector. This basic fluency in business language can help the new employee connect the work of her small team to the larger mission of the company. Business, too, has its method. That understanding can jump-start advancement up the corporate ladder. In large corporations, decisions that affect customers, workers, investors, the neighborhood and the environment are often made far below the C.E.O. level. Equipping the humanities student to understand the language and functions of business, and its role in society, seems a proper objective of the university.

Thomas Jefferson saw the need for a citizenry of broad education to sustain a republican democracy. Charles William Eliot believed that understanding and wisdom might be achieved by studying a variety of subjects. Pope Francis wants people who can help develop “decisions, programs, mechanisms and processes specifically geared to a better distribution of income, the creation of sources of employment and an integral promotion of the poor” (“Joy of the Gospel,” No. 204). These men challenge our colleges and universities to deliver the wisdom of ages and knowledge of today’s world, to help students fit themselves for service to others. ▲

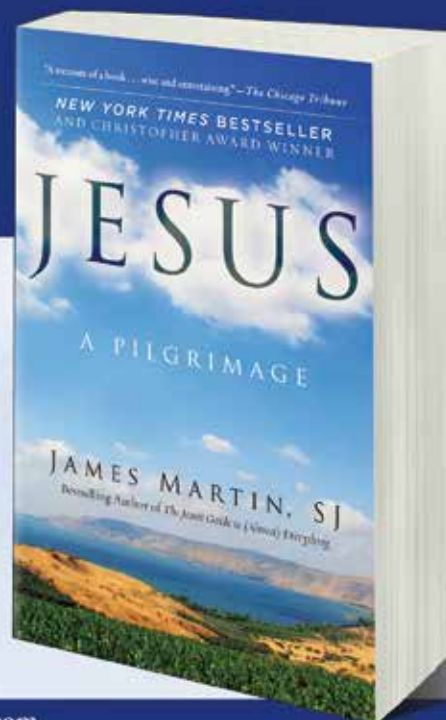
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# The Source of Suffering

In a June 14, 2013, report on the war in Syria, the BBC raised a fundamental question: “Who is supplying weapons to the warring sides in Syria which has kept the conflict going?” More than three years later that remains a key question that demands an honest answer, but it is not being given one. Why?

The conflict, which began in March 2011 in the context of the Arab Spring protests, has already caused an estimated 400,000 deaths, forced 4.5 million of its 22 million citizens to leave the country and become refugees, internally displaced 6.6 million others and left 13.5 million people dependent on humanitarian aid.

It continues because there is a steady flow of arms to the Assad regime, to the rebels, to ISIS and to others engaged in the fighting. One does not need to be a rocket scientist to know that if the supply of arms stops, the war will have to end.

Cedric Prakash, an Indian Jesuit who lives in Beirut and works as advocacy and communications officer for the Jesuit Refugee Service in the Middle East, emphasized this point when I spoke to him during a visit to Rome for Mother Teresa’s canonization and asked what is keeping the war going.

Apart from the lack of political will on the part of the big players, he identified several factors. First among them is that the Assad regime blames the rebels for the conflict and wants to end any rebellion, wherever it is. Then there

is ISIS, and the regional clash between Saudi Arabia and Iran, between Sunni and Shiite Muslims. There are also “many, many other stakeholders, interested parties, Western interests like the arms and ammunition industry,” he said.

“Everybody knows that every single faction in this conflict milks the same cow!” he said. Father Prakash visits Syria frequently and has seen that the shells used by the regime, the rebels and ISIS all bear the same brand. Denouncing the global arms industry as “absolutely scandalous,” he said it “should be condemned by all interested groups wanting peace in the area.”

He noted that whenever Pope Francis speaks about the refugees, he also denounces the arms trade that keeps the conflict going. He recalled that in the pope’s address to the U.S. Congress on Sept. 24, 2015, when referring to the many armed conflicts throughout the world, he said: “Here we have to ask ourselves: Why are deadly weapons being sold to those who plan to inflict untold suffering on individuals and society? Sadly, the answer, as we all know, is simply for money: money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood. In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade.”

Father Prakash concurs: “If we want to stop the war in Syria, then we have to stop the flow of arms to the different groups in conflict.” But echoing the

pope’s words, he added, “the interests are big, the profits are big,” and so arms continue to flow freely.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute shows clearly who are the major players, who are the ones that produce arms and ammunition and reap enormous profits, he said. He underlined that the U.S. arms and ammunitions industry—the largest in the world (followed by Russia)—is a major player. Indeed, eight of the world’s 10 top arms producers are American.

On the other hand, he said, Saudi Arabia and India are the world’s largest arms importers, followed by China and the United Arab Emirates. U.S. officials have assured him they would never sell arms to

ISIS or the Assad regime, but the question remains: How do they get arms and ammunition?

According to the J.R.S. officer, there are thousands of mercenaries who are smuggling these arms to anybody who is able to pay. But from whom do the mercenaries get these arms in the first place? This is a question that needs to be addressed, he insisted. It is a question of political will to find out for whom the arms and ammunitions industry are producing and to whom they sell their wares.

These are serious questions that need to be addressed with determination. Otherwise the conflict in Syria will continue, as will others in the region, Father Prakash said.

**GERARD O’CONNELL**

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



# Group Therapy

What I learned during my McLaughlin years

BY MAUREEN MILLER

The Yale University Art Gallery and Center for British Art face each other across Chapel Street in New Haven, Conn. They are the closest thing on campus to church, including churches, though I rarely think of anything so lofty when I walk by. It's where Bill Clinton crossed a picket line to pick up a girl. My own church was News Haven, the newsstand where I spent hours poring over journals.

Dr. John McLaughlin was my patron.

I am at the youngest end of the viewership for "The McLaughlin Group," which debuted around the time I was born. Outside of family stories, "The McLaughlin Group" was my most significant encounter with pre-Vatican II Catholic culture. It was ritual for as long as I can remember. The NBC affiliate in Washington, D.C., broadcast the show twice, once on Saturday after the vigil Mass and once on Sunday after the high Mass. My mother's side of the family was, like McLaughlin, from Providence and other places. My father, like McLaughlin, was educated by the Christian Brothers, and he would just laugh and laugh through the whole show. My parents dressed like the panelists, preppy and crisp; they told me Jesuit schools weren't a financial option for their families and that McLaughlin was what a Catholic education was.

They knew that I was a generation removed from Catholic guilt: No one

made me diagram a sentence or memorize the *Baltimore Catechism*. If my skin was red and my hand muscles wailed, I probably hurt them in sports practice. No autocrat ruled my public school classrooms. We sang folk songs. Each week, I hastily filled in C.C.D. worksheets, then went home to "McLaughlin," my real religious education.

As a kindergartener, I strained to imagine anything more fun than "The McLaughlin Group." It was campy, with personalities who ate scenery like classically trained actors. It allowed girls like Eleanor Clift to play with the boys, which made me think I could. The panelists lived nearby and looked and talked like people I knew, even if they didn't think like me. Niceness was a bipartisan consensus. Argument was higher ground. I liked it better than most sitcoms. Sometimes I would ask my parents to reschedule Mass times to accommodate viewings.

The Clintons fascinated "The McLaughlin Group," so they fascinated me the way other kids my age might have obsessed over dinosaurs or outer space. The names of their advisers rolled off my tongue as naturally as the 50 states and first ladies. I eagerly read *Primary Colors* when it was first released, then read the Reliable Source column in *The Washington Post* and watched "McLaughlin" to hear the gossip surrounding the identity of the author. I'm not sure I'd ever heard a

Fleetwood Mac or Joni Mitchell song before the 1992 election, but "The McLaughlin Group" told me what they meant as Clinton signifiers.

"The McLaughlin Group" knew Clinton was selling a fantasy, a fantasy that surrounded me in everyday life. Within weeks of Bill Clinton's election, women on both sides of the pew aisles had Hillary Rodham haircuts. Their fantasy of wonk life nonetheless inspired me to apply to Yale. When I enrolled as an undergraduate in fall

2002, I had the idea in my head that post-9/11 Yale would be a live-action "McLaughlin Group."

That is not how it worked. I did not live in a Gothic tower or a brick meetinghouse, but an ahistorical "swing space" next to a power station. On one side was the gym where a researcher used to measure the entering freshmen's spines to figure out what physiques are the strongest. A famous photo of the Clintons appears to have been taken in this area, with Bill holding books loose in his right hand (per Hillary) "like a Viking." I could very easily imagine this Bill at the seaside reading *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Next to the power station was the turn to the law school, near Grove Street Cemetery, whose entrance reads, "THE DEAD SHALL BE RAISED." Even the graveyard was triangulating! At Yale, everybody was a Clinton.

I was horribly homesick. To distract



myself, I would visit any place on campus that reminded me of Washington, including weekly Mass, and watch “The McLaughlin Group.” The campus had a great Catholic intellectual life, but I was too suspicious of its earnestness to throw myself in. It wasn’t like TV.

I was painfully shy around men, except when taking them down in front of an audience. Instead, I studied shag coats, buffalo plaids, vintage ’86 Mets stuff, bomber jackets and keffiyeh scarves. Occasionally I would find my footing, then back to nerves. Other wonks did not feel my pain. I can’t blame them, I was in my head. Where was the girl obsessed with “The McLaughlin Group”?

One year, I decided things would be different, that I would become the Eleanor Clift I had always known myself to be. Despite being a social democrat, I got really, really into debunking movement conservatism, which made me a lot of McLaughlin-like friends. When I wasn’t taking classes about the history of the modern conservative movement, I was living it in my academic work, my reporting for the campus newspaper and my social life. I would watch episodes of William F. Buckley’s “Firing Line” for fun. Where we were, conservatism was intellectual gamesmanship even for true believers, something you would hash out to the death, then laugh about over a beer (some were partial to port wine). Many of the guys—and they were mostly guys—played debates by the rules. There was something fundamentally unserious about it. It was a diversion from deeper engagement, like watching “The Simpsons” or, yes, “The McLaughlin Group.”

As a litmus test for visitors, I tacked David Brooks articles on the walls of my dorm room. It was a joke, like all the shows I liked. What if a guy who was into politics had looked over, and kept looking over? Would I introduce myself, liking that he laughed? I had all the faith in the world that I could suc-

ceed on my terms, but I never got the guy, although I got Chris Matthews—a.k.a. John McLaughlin II.

I interviewed for a summer internship at “The Chris Matthews Show” on St. Patrick’s Day and then worried that I got the position solely because of what my skin looked like (freckled) and where I went to school (not Notre Dame). Between elevator rides to the editing floor, I pulled life insurance spots from the shelves and called the local Blockbuster for ’60s movies like “Advise and Consent.” The grunt work wasn’t a big deal. The best part of the job was seeing the studios, which included those of “The McLaughlin Group.”

At some point Matthews told me to get as far away as I can, for as long as I can, from D.C., maybe go to Swaziland, as he did as a Peace Corps volunteer—not because I wasn’t good, but because he wanted me and everybody else to stay good. I never forgot.

As graduation approached, something in me snapped. By the time I got back to school, Hurricane Katrina footage was on TV 24/7. I had just been in London after the public transit bombings. Such events made shows like “The McLaughlin Group” seem inconsequential. I experienced a spiritual crisis, then floundered into inner-city teaching and, eventually, medicine. The political fantasy lost its potency.


Entry-level careers in the “helping professions” are very hard on people, in ways it is only now fashionable to come out about. I am brought low every day. My career is a mixed bag: a decade of low pay for punishing hours, extended stints in public health infrastructure that should embarrass every American—with the added awareness that the people for whom I work have it far worse. The work radicalizes the witness, yet I didn’t think about vocation at all, and still don’t, except in the context of the show. A “pivot” from political media to the helping professions is a cultural misfit, akin to that of en-

tering religious life from the corporate world.

In some weird way, “The McLaughlin Group” highlights that shift for viewers. The severity and rigor is simply foreign. I thought of it when I watched Rudy Giuliani’s Republican National Convention speech, the priestly theatricality. (There was a recurring theme of Catholic suffering at the R.N.C., a passion play including a cover of David Bowie’s “Station to Station.”) McLaughlin would have recognized Giuliani as a phony from a mile away yet delighted in his flamboyant act as the monsignor out for the second collection. Had the Hillary Clinton campaign needed information on how to interview Donald Trump, they needn’t have looked any further than John McLaughlin.

Whatever one’s feelings about McLaughlin’s politics or rectitude, it is hard to deny his righteous star power. People are into the McLaughlin persona, but also into what he conveys as a celebrity Jesuit: truth-seeking, confronting doubt, sustained engagement with the world. He insisted on decorum and never fell for pious appeals to “civility.” He was energized by a secular mission rather than moved to despair.

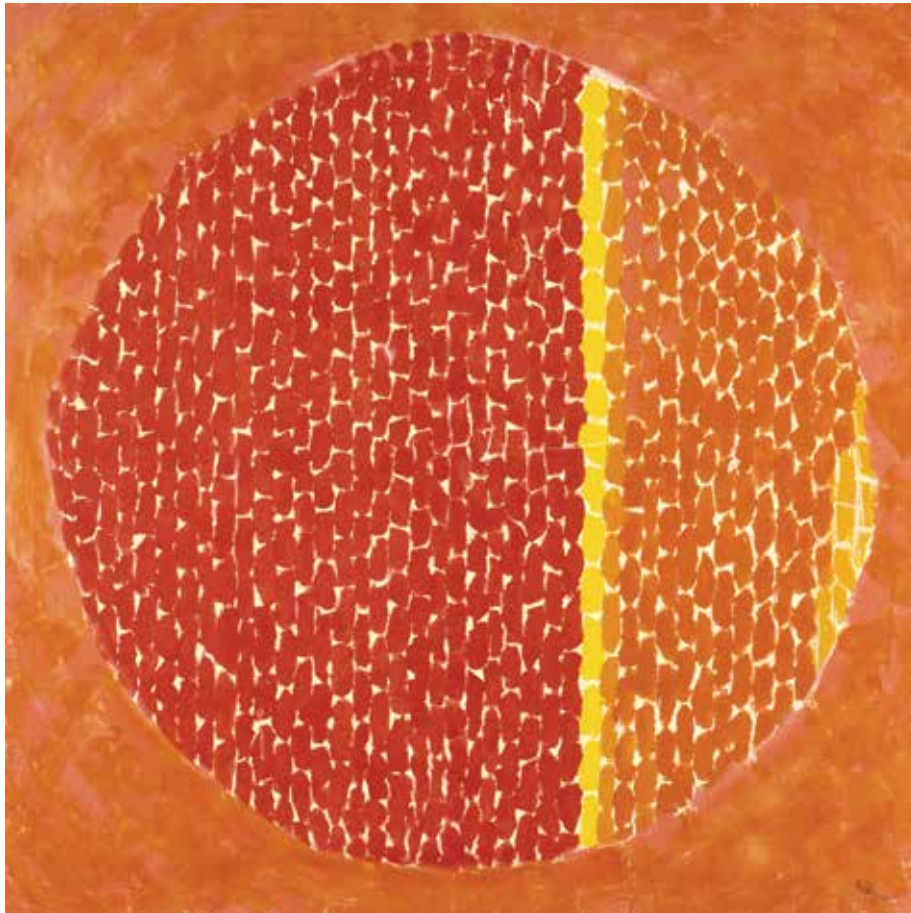
Was John McLaughlin a “happy warrior”? He hadn’t had the fire for quite some time. There was something beatific about him in his prime. It wasn’t radiant calm, it was heat, right out of his eyebrow. *Ite inflammate omnia*. When I get bored reading prostate biopsies at work and want to talk about politics, I will have to remind myself all of them are his group. John McLaughlin has always complicated my thinking like that. In my professional role as a pathologist, I am often distracted by the news cycle’s oncologic imagery: cancers, viral memes, foreign bodies, transplant rejection, autopsy reports. Prediction: John McLaughlin will outlive prostate cancer and create a new hormonal therapy.

Bye-bye, you magnificent beast. 

ART | LEO J. O'DONOVAN

## IN LIVING COLOR

*Alma Thomas at the Studio Museum in Harlem*



**“Snoopy Sees Earth Wrapped in Sunset,” 1970**

In an interview the African-American artist Alma Thomas gave in the last year of her life, she described light sifting through a holly tree outside the bay window of her home in Washington, D.C., as the inspiration for her commitment to abstraction. Her color harmonies, she explained, were based on her flower beds—especially as imagined from above. In a late-blooming career, she had moved beyond polemics about the “mainstream” of art for art’s sake

and the “blackstream” art concerned with civil rights in the era. “Through color,” said this resolute artist, “I have sought to concentrate on beauty and happiness, rather than on man’s inhumanity to man.” Now a dazzling if relatively modest exhibition at the Studio Museum in Harlem—more than 50 paintings and works on paper—offers a celebration both for those who already love her and those who soon will.

The eldest of four sisters, Thomas

was born in 1891 in Columbus, Ga. Her father was a businessman, her mother a dressmaker. In 1907, Jim Crow racism led the family to move to Washington and to the home in which Thomas lived for the rest of her life. During high school she concentrated on math and science but in 1924 became Howard University’s first graduate in fine arts. Ten years later she earned a master’s degree in arts education from Columbia University Teachers College and then between 1950 and 1960 worked on a master’s in fine arts in painting from American University.

Thomas taught at Shaw Junior High School to support herself, and only after retiring in 1960 could she work entirely on her art. During her teaching years, she built patiently on the influences of James V. Herring at Howard and Jacob Kainen at American University. In the late 1940s she frequented the “little Paris salon” that Lois Mailou Jones organized for black artists. Kainen introduced her to the Washington Color School painters, Kenneth Noland, Morris Louis, Gene Davis and Sam Gilliam. (Thomas’s work came to be associated with this school, as well as with other abstract expressionists, but she herself resisted labels, including “black artist,” and remained determinedly independent.) During her summers at Columbia she discovered the modernist artists shown at Alfred Stieglitz’s An American Place. And in Washington she helped to found the Barnett-Aden Gallery, at the time one of the country’s few private galleries showing the work of African-American artists.

The Studio Museum’s exhibition, the first overview of her work in almost 20 years, is divided into four sections: one briefly on the artist’s move to





abstraction, the next on imagery based on abstractions drawn from nature, then a gallery presenting work inspired by her interest in space technology and finally some splendid large pieces from her later years. A generous selection of works on paper, largely from the Columbus Museum of Art in Georgia, and mostly undated, also shows the artist working experimentally and honing her skills.

While the show does include two semifigurative sketches for her painting of the 1963 March on Washington (in which she participated), "Yellow and Blue," from 1959, signals her real direction, with daubs of yellow tinged with char- treuse and turquoise blue structured by black linear elements and floating not on but in an earthy red. With another abstraction hang- ing nearby it exudes a sense of aspiration, a rising of the spirit, which continues in the "Earth" series from 1968-69.

**Above: "Yellow and Blue," 1959. Right: "Scarlet Sage Dancing a Whirling Dervish," 1976.**

These large, acrylic-on-canvas pic- es seem at first to be stippled verti- cal, and sometimes circular, stripes of shimmering bright colors, harmonized so musically that your eye will dance back and forth over their surface.



Closer inspection quickly reveals that the stripes are composed of daubs or patches of color over a white ground and that you might as well be looking down on them from above rather than directly at them in front of you. A fur- ther organizational refinement occurs in the largest and best of these paint- ings, "Wind, Sunshine, and Flowers" (1968), in which slight separation be- tween the patches of color creates del- icate white arcs that loop rhythmically, as if in the wind, across the painting. Our aspiration begins with and re- turns to experience of the earth.

Thomas had begun "to think about what I would see if I were in an air- plane," and became enthusiastic about NASA's space program, news of which she followed eagerly on her radio. The resultant cosmic scenes, in structure and color, resemble her other work of the period but convey still, after almost 50 years, the thrill of early space exploration. "Snoopy Sees Earth

Wrapped in Sunset" (1970) is a glowing red, yellow and orange globe set on a smudgy rose background. It might seem whimsical except that "Snoopy" is what the astro- nauts called their wheeled vehicle on the moon. A new optical effect appears here, as the white spaces between the daubs of red can appear to be just that or like glyphs on a red ground. The same optical effect appears in the impos- ing "Starry Night and the Astronauts" (1972), which takes us out into the great darkness of space with a flash of sunset seen from a great distance.

The year 1972 was Thomas's "banner year," as she said, with a solo exhibi- tion at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the first ever given to an African- American woman (she was



80), and later that year another show at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington. At the Whitney she remarked: "One of the things we couldn't do was go into museums, let alone think of hanging our pictures there. My, times have changed. Just look at me now."

And look at her indeed. Despite severe arthritis and deteriorating eyesight, she continued in her 80s to paint large, jubilant paintings that moved on from the "Alma stripes" to a more purely abstract, mosaic-like, loosely structured work in a simplified, sometimes almost monochromatic palette. The wonderfully free "Hydrangeas Spring Song" of 1976 carries you into the midst of the bursting blue forms of the hydrangeas. In "Cherry Blossom Symphony" (1973), one of a trio of paintings on that evanescent theme, pink daubs of paint are painted over faint underlayers of blues, greens and reds, and you are either walking under the trees or floating above them. Best of all is the surging "Scarlet Sage Dancing a Whirling Dervish" (1976), with its brilliant scarlet patches subtly organized in 11 whirling, round clusters, its energy gently echoed by "White Roses Sing and Sing," also 1976, with white daubs (and a few yellow) on a green ground.

When Thomas died in 1978, her reputation was established. But like many other women associated with Abstract Expressionism, she suffered in comparison with "the men." Yet her art was as timeless as she claimed all creative art is, and it is a balm for us all that she is now receiving new recognition. She is in fact a life-saver. "A world without color would seem dead," she said in a 1972 interview. "Color, for me, is life." See her at the Studio Museum through Oct. 30, or at one of the major museums that include her work—and come newly alive.

**LEO J. O'DONOVAN, S.J.**, is *president emeritus of Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., and director of mission for Jesuit Refugee Service.*

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*Healing of Naaman the Leper and the 10 Lepers Cured by Jesus*

### OCTOBER 23

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time: Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18  
*Whoever Humbles Himself will be Exalted*



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## ST. FRANCIS IN FULL

Many people are familiar with the popular stories and legends about St. Francis of Assisi. If pressed, a fair number of Christians could rattle off such classics as the story about him taming the wolf of Gubbio, hearing Christ at the crucifix of San Damiano, encountering Sultan Malek al-Kamil in Egypt and recreating the Christmas crèche in Greccio, as well as any number of his interactions with animals, lepers or others.

But now that the Feast of St. Francis is quickly approaching, I have been thinking about the stories that are not typically known, the narratives most people have never heard. Many of these lesser-known stories come from the early Franciscan friars and sisters who knew Francis personally and who recorded them for posterity.

What is striking about these stories is that they do not always portray Francis in the best light. At times, he even comes across as not very saint-like. Whereas the earliest biographies sought to portray Francis as holy for the sake of a quick canonization, which was the request of Pope Gregory IX, these other stories by “those who were with him” (as the texts were often credited) were meant to present a more multidimensional person: a holy man for sure, but also a complex and fully human one, too.

Take, for example, the story of Francis and Brother James. James was responsible for the physical care of some lepers and served as a kind of nurse for many people with terrible sores and wounds. One day, Francis returned home after being away to find

that James had brought a leper into the chapel from the leper hospice. When Francis saw this, he snapped at James and reprimanded him for bringing the leper around the friars’ place of prayer. The text explains that Francis reproved James because he did not want to see lepers with “severe sores outside the hospital” left alone in the chapel where other people often came because “people usually abhorred lepers who had severe sores.”

This is certainly not the open-armed, warm and embracing Francis of Assisi we are used to imagining.

Or how about the time when the kitchen in a friary caught fire. Sound familiar? Don’t worry; it wouldn’t be to many people. The story goes that Francis and a companion went into the kitchen after prayer. The text of the *Assisi Compilation* continues:

When blessed Francis came to eat in the cell where the fire was lit, the flames had already reached the roof of the cell and were burning it. His companion tried his best to extinguish it, but could not do it by himself. But Blessed Francis did not want to help him: he took the hide that he used to cover himself at night, and went into the forest.

Rather than help his brother put out the fire, Francis puts on a blanket and goes outside by himself, leaving his brother to fight the growing fire alone.

This is certainly not the considerate, helpful and generous Francis of Assisi we are used to imagining.

Why tell these stories?

First, it is important that we remember not only the good works and extraordinary acts of the women and men we venerate as saints but also their weaknesses, failings and imperfections. This helps provide us with a fuller and more honest picture of what makes these figures so venerable in the first place. They were just like you and me, sinful and struggling at times. But they also had the chance, as we do, to respond to God’s grace in this world and make a positive difference despite inevitable stumbling and failures.

Second, we tell these stories to see what the saints did afterward, for it gives

us a clue to how we might live. After Francis publicly shamed James and the leper out of his own insecurity and fear, the would-be saint went to both men and apologized, asked forgiveness and made amends. After Francis wandered into the forest without helping his brother fight the fire, he later returned to confess that he did not want his favorite blanket to be destroyed and again sought reconciliation and gave his blanket away as penance.

Like Francis, we will struggle and sin. But also like Francis, we have the opportunity to surrender our egos, be vulnerable and seek reconciliation. Being a saint isn’t being without sin; it’s about not letting sin have the last word.

Saints were  
just like you  
and me, sinful  
and struggling  
at times.



DANIEL P. HORAN, O.F.M., a Franciscan friar and author, teaches theology at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. Twitter: @DanHoranOFM.



# A TOUCH OF HOPE

## A BODY BROKEN FOR A BROKEN PEOPLE Divorce, Remarriage, and the Eucharist (third edition)

By Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B.  
Paulist Press. 320 p. \$29.95

Each time I attend Mass at my parish church, I struggle to discern: Am I about to encounter my risen Lord, who welcomes and loves me as I am, or am I about to commit a serious sin?

My fellow divorced and remarried Catholics will recognize this quandary. Our circumstances vary, but we share the knowledge that according to church law, many of us are no longer welcome at the eucharistic table.

Two new publications bring fresh insight, even hope, to those struggling with this issue. The first, of course, is Pope Francis' "The Joy of Love" (April 8). The second is the subject of this review: *A Body Broken for a Broken People: Divorce, Remarriage and the Eucharist*, by Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B.

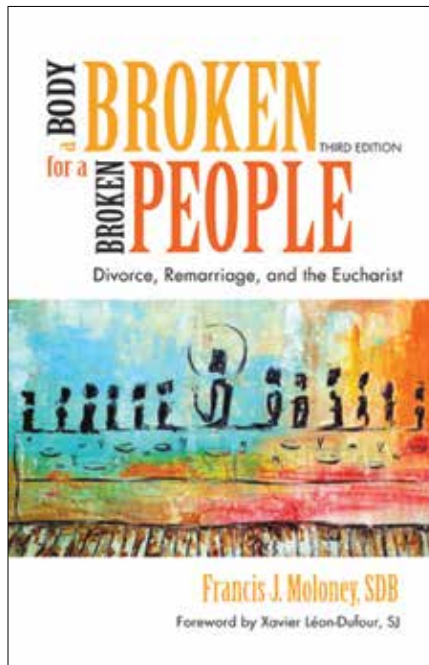
"The Joy of Love," Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation, does not change the church's teachings on marriage and family life. However, the pope asks pastors to "avoid judgments which do not take into account the complexity of various situations." He emphasizes the importance of individual conscience in moral life, and he urges that divorced and remarried couples be encouraged to participate in the church. He warns pastors against applying moral laws as if they were "stones to throw at people's lives."

"The Joy of Love" deserves first claim on Catholics' reading time, but the 2016 edition of Moloney's *A Body Broken* makes an excellent companion piece.

Moloney, a prolific author and well-traveled scholar, revised and expanded an earlier work in response to

Francis' call for research on biblical and theological traditions regarding marriage and family.

Francis issued that challenge after the October 2014 meeting of the Synod of Bishops on the family. Moloney obliged in hopes that his research would assist the bishops when the synod reconvened in October 2015.



However, the new edition of *A Body Broken* deserves readership well beyond bishops and cardinals. It is a valuable resource for all Christians who grapple with divorce and other examples of the "broken body" that is Christ's church.

Moloney carefully guides readers through the biblical texts and early Christian traditions that shaped today's understanding of the Eucharist. He writes clearly and concisely, saying what he plans to tell, telling it and recapping what he has told.

He opens with the earliest description of the eucharistic ritual and who can participate: Paul's admonitions to his fractious flock in 1 Corinthians 10 and 11. Moloney argues that these

texts have been incorrectly used to justify reserving the Eucharist for only the "worthy."

Moloney continues with chapters on the Gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke, examining in detail how each relates to stories of the "feeding miracles" and the Last Supper.

The Fourth Gospel (John's) has no explicit description of Christ changing bread and wine into his body and blood. Instead, Moloney probes the eucharistic themes in Jesus' sharing of a "morsel" with the traitor Judas and in the risen Lord's appearance to two disheartened disciples bound for Emmaus.

Moloney examines the context of each community being addressed, from the recent Corinthian converts of the 50s C.E. to a new generation reading John in about 100 C.E. He raises points that these first audiences perhaps took for granted but that elude us two millennia later.

Again and again, Moloney notes the brokenness of those Jesus embraced: tax collectors, prostitutes, gentiles, the poor, the self-satisfied, the disabled, the troubled in mind. Jesus' own disciples quarreled about who would be first in the kingdom. Peter denied the Lord three times, and Judas betrayed him.

Yet Jesus loved each with a love passing all understanding. He shared his final meal with his fallible disciples, knowing that they would flee his crucifixion a few hours later.

Current church law limits the Eucharist to those judged worthy—in this case, those who enjoy sacramental marriages. But these laws may be based on a "distorted tradition," Moloney notes, quoting no less an authority than Joseph Ratzinger (then a professor, later Pope Benedict XVI).

Moloney concludes, "Our legislation on marriage, divorce and admission to the eucharistic table should accept the overwhelming evidence of the Eucharistic teaching of the New Testament: The eucharist is Jesus Christ's presence among us in his body,

broken for a broken people. Members of the community who have married and subsequently divorced, but who retain their commitment to Christ and his Church belong to those broken people” (Moloney’s italics).

This is a controversial thesis, but Moloney brings impressive credentials to this discussion. An Australian Salesian priest, he earned advanced degrees in Rome and at the University of Oxford. He has published many books and studies, especially on the Gospel of John. He has taught in Europe, Israel, Australia, East Asia and the United States. In recent years he was professor of New Testament and dean of the School of Theology and Religious Studies at The Catholic University of America, then provincial superior of the Salesians of Don Bosco in Australia and the Pacific.

Scholars will appreciate that the chapters are heavily footnoted, inviting them to plunge deeper into the matter. The notes are so readable that even casual readers may accept that invitation. A 27-page bibliography demonstrates

the depth of the author’s research.

Some may dismiss Pope Francis’ “The Joy of Love” as an act of expediency—a ploy to make church teachings more palatable so the institution can survive. However, *A Body Broken* makes a case for change based on biblical scholarship and the church’s authentic traditions. It offers reassurance that the pope and many bishops are on solid ground.

It may be years before the bishops’ discussions and “The Joy of Love” can be translated into changes in church law. However, I personally rejoice at the prospect of a more welcoming, less judgmental church.

I would like to return to confession—a solace I have avoided for fear that I won’t receive absolution. I’m hopeful that my loving, prayerful second marriage (to a divorced Lutheran) can be blessed in some way.

*A Body Broken* offers reason for hope among all God’s broken people.

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BARBARA CURTIN MILES is a retired journalist in Oregon.

off may be salutary. If the leaders and citizens of the United States are to achieve any understanding of why the only remaining superpower, the “indispensable nation,” has been so stymied in our military interventions through six administrations in this world-historical crucible, Bacevich’s book may itself prove indispensable.

Bacevich’s Greater Middle East includes 15 nations and three regions from the west coast of Africa to Pakistan in the east, from Bosnia in the north to Somalia in the south, and most notably Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan. Thirty-eight campaigns and operations are identified by scope and type. He counts 17 punitive attacks, of which six were major and two were followed by occupation, and fewer instances of peacekeeping, humanitarian interventions, raids or rescues and recoveries, deterrent actions, demonstrations/trainings and general force projection.

On the other hand, Bacevich repeatedly refers to four Gulf Wars, not only to the war to liberate Kuwait from Saddam Hussein and the war to liberate Iraq itself from the dictator, but also to the war between Iraq and Iran, 1980-88, in which the United States supported Hussein (“thereby emboldening him”), and finally the Fourth Gulf War, dating from 2013, when “the new Iraqi order proved itself unable to stand on its own.” There does seem to be a narrative here, with many twists and turns, but what drives it?

In 1980, our “least bellicose” president observed that “the region which is now threatened by Soviet troops in Afghanistan is of great strategic importance: It contains more than two-thirds of the world’s exportable oil... An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and...will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.” This was the Carter Doctrine.

ROGER BERGMAN

## GRIEF AND GLORY

### AMERICA’S WAR FOR THE GREATER MIDDLE EAST A Military History

By Andrew J. Bacevich  
Random House. 453p \$30

Andrew Bacevich is clear about what he hopes to accomplish in *America’s War for the Greater Middle East: A Military History*. He will link “aims to actions to consequences” regarding the role of the U.S. military from 1980 to the present. Bacevich, a 1969 graduate of West Point who served 23 years before retiring as a colonel, and who recently retired from teaching diplomatic history at Boston University, does not shy away from expressing his own con-

clusions about this war in the Islamic world, now in its fourth decade. “We have not won it. We are not winning it. Simply trying harder is unlikely to produce a different outcome.”

Readers may wonder why Bacevich’s title puts “war” in the singular and yokes together seemingly disparate presidential actions, like Carter’s attempt to rescue the hostages in Iran, Reagan’s intervention in Lebanon, G. H. W. Bush’s intervention in Kuwait, Clinton’s peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Kosovo, G. W. Bush’s invasion of Iraq and Obama’s return of troops to Afghanistan last year. Surely this claim would test any author’s powers of comprehensiveness. But the pay-



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In 2002, George W. Bush carved out an exception to the 1946 Nuremberg Tribunal's condemnation of preventive war. "If we wait for threats to fully materialize," Bush warned, "we will have waited too long." According to Bacevich, "this defined the essence of what now became known as the Bush Doctrine...[which]...traced its lineage back to Carter's declaration of 1980 that had initiated the War for the Greater Middle East by tying the American way of life to control of the Persian Gulf."

How did freedom, the quintessential American value, become identified with unfettered access to cheap and abundant oil from halfway around the world? Bacevich points out that in 1948, George Kennan, an influential architect of postwar policy, "noted that the United States then possessed 'about 50 percent of the world's wealth but only 6.3 percent of its population.' The challenge...was to 'devise a pattern of relationships which permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security.'" What Kennan went on to say, but which Bacevich doesn't recount, is that we "need not deceive ourselves that we can afford today the luxury of altruism and world-benefaction.... We should cease to talk about vague and...unreal objectives such as human rights and the raising of living standards, and democratization.... The less we are hampered by idealistic slogans, the better."

This comment is much to Bacevich's own point because the Bush Doctrine was about more than preventive war. After his re-election, the president made explicit the larger vision of the 2003 invasion. "From the day of our Founding, we have proclaimed that every man and woman on this earth has rights, and dignity, and matchless value, because they bear the image of the Maker of Heaven and earth.... Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation.... Now it

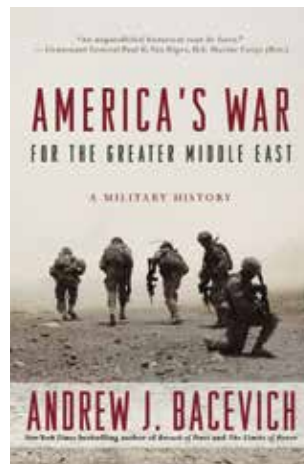
is the urgent requirement of our nation's security, and the calling of our time."

Bacevich's comment on this globalization of American ideals as a matter of American security is withering. "In reality, as the course of the festering war in Iraq had amply demonstrated, indulging the conceit that America is history's chosen instrument of liberation is more likely to produce grief than glory." But even more daringly, Bacevich argues that Bush's "expectations of ending tyranny by spreading American ideals mirrored Osama bin Laden's dream of establishing a new caliphate based on Islamic principles. When put to the test, the president's vision of peace gained by waging preventive war had proven to be just as fanciful as bin Laden's and hardly less pernicious."

Bacevich mentions only one theologian. "Decades before...Reinhold Niebuhr had chided Americans about entertaining 'dreams of managing history,' a temptation to which he deemed

his countrymen peculiarly susceptible." In his introduction to the 2008 republication of *The Irony of American History*, "the most important book ever written about U.S. foreign policy," Bacevich asserts that Niebuhr "provides the master key...to understanding the myths and delusions that underpin this new American view of statecraft."

"Niebuhr once observed," continues Bacevich, "that the wealth and power of the United States presented 'special temptations to vanity and arrogance which militate against our moral prestige and authority.'" That is indeed the irony of American history, nowhere more tragically embodied than in America's War for the Greater Middle East, as so comprehensively demonstrated in this epochal book.



**ROGER BERGMAN** is director of the Justice & Peace Studies Program at Creighton University in Omaha, Neb. He is the author of *Catholic Social Learning: Educating the Faith That Does Justice* (Fordham, 2011) and is working on a book on selective conscientious objection.

STEPHEN J. POPE

## HELP THEM HELP THEMSELVES

### DOING GOOD...SAYS WHO? Stories From Volunteers, Nonprofits, Donors, and Those They Want to Help

By Connie Newton and Fran Early  
Two Harbors Press. 178p \$14.99

Service has become more and more important to Catholic parishes, schools and universities. Many people take it for granted that service is a matter of good people helping the needy. This paternalistic understanding of charity is reinforced by stereotypes perpetuat-

ed by the mass media but also by philanthropic organizations and churches. It reinforces rather than resists the division of the world into "haves" and "have nots." It tacitly justifies the arrogance of the former and the disempowerment of the latter.

Connie Newton and Fran Early's *Doing Good...Says Who?* addresses precisely this problem. Newton organized immersion trips to Latin America, established an experiential educational program for a microcredit organization and worked as a partner with

indigenous women in the highlands of Guatemala. In addition to having a successful career in human resources for a major American corporation, Early dedicated herself for more than two decades to the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization and to intercultural education and community organizing in Guatemala.

*Doing Good...Says Who?* is based on its authors' decades of concrete experience with well-meaning volunteers who have tried to "do good" for people in marginalized communities in Central America. This book distills the extensive qualitative research and extensive personal experience of two highly involved,



down-to-earth and practically idealistic activists. Their "roadmap" for doing good is based on observing five key guiding principles or imperatives: Respect people and value their agency, build trust through relationships, do "with" rather than "for," ensure feedback and accountability and evaluate every step of the way. After a helpful introductory overview, the book dedicates one chapter to each of these imperatives.

The key points of each chapter are illustrated through narratives. The chapter on respecting and valuing people begins by recalling an American volunteer who, moved by encountering hungry children, wants to "just feed people." More experienced observers, however, let her know that this move can be perceived as potentially insulting the very people whom it intends to help. An alternative, more respectful model sketches the work of local women who form teams and cook hot meals for their community every day. People are invited to contribute whatever they can—food, energy, time—and their agency is acknowledged rather than re-

placed by top-down charity.

The second chapter tells the story of "Lucy," a volunteer who is given responsibility for organizing a church-sponsored clinic in the rural highlands of Guatemala. Rather than live in more comfortable surroundings, she decides to live in the village where the clinic will be located so that she can really know the people she intends to serve. Lucy's immersion enables her to give useful advice to short-term volunteer doctors and nurses: Listen first, dress conservatively and "No giveaways. No coins. No candy. Nothing. What you do here will affect the climate of our work and the expectations of the town for every team of volunteers who come after you." Lucy gradually learns how to get the clinic built, maintained and patronized by community members who were origi-

nally leery of outsiders. She is successful because she has been informed by her friendship with local people.

Newton and Early provide an especially strong depiction of what it means to work "with" rather than "for" people. Some well-meaning Americans thought they would help some villagers by giving them a one-time gift of sewing machines and materials so that they could make and sell handbags. The villagers produced inexpensive bags that put previously successful local artisans out of business. Once they had used the materials they had been given, the new producers stopped producing and went out of business. American philanthropists thought they were "doing good," but in fact their generosity had unforeseen destructive effects. If gifts represent doing "for" people, loans are a better mechanism for doing "with" people because they involve shared decision-making, payment schedules, personal or group investment and planning.

The second half of the book stresses

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### Positions

**2017-18 CORCORAN VISITING CHAIR** in Christian-Jewish Relations. Boston College and its Center for Christian-Jewish Learning invite applications for a one-year visiting appointment (renewable for a second year) as the 2017-18 Corcoran Visiting Chair in Christian-Jewish Relations, specializing in some aspect of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. Candidates must hold a Ph.D. or its earned equivalent, have published in the field and hold (or have retired from) a tenured position (or its equivalent) in a university or seminary. Applications from all relevant disciplines are welcome. The Corcoran Chair will agree to take on specific responsibilities related to the mission of the Center. Stipend: \$73,544/academic year plus travel and research expenses. The full description is available at [www.bc.edu/cjl](http://www.bc.edu/cjl). A list of previous Chairs, and their conferences and courses during their tenures, is also available online. Electronic submission of the following are requested: letter of application, C.V. and a proposal for the research and writing to be done while holding the Chair, including an indication of how these fit into the guidelines above. Two letters of recommendation should be submitted directly.

Applications are due by Nov. 11, 2016. Decisions will be made by Feb. 17, 2017. Communications should be addressed to Prof. James Bernauer, S.J. ([cjlearning@bc.edu](mailto:cjlearning@bc.edu)), Director, Center for Christian-Jewish Learning, Stokes Hall N405, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467 USA.

### Translator

**LUIS BAUDRY-SIMÓN, TRANSLATOR** (from English into Spanish): newsletters, articles, essays, websites, pastoral letters, ministry resources, motivational conferences, spirituality material, etc. Contact: [luisbaudrysimon@gmail.com](mailto:luisbaudrysimon@gmail.com) (815) 694-0713.

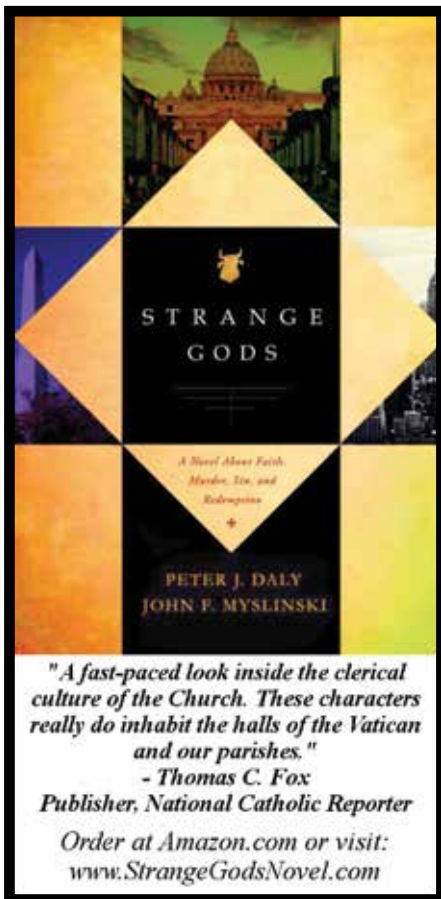
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the local context of decision-making and accountability. Newton and Early report on the usefulness of microfinance, the “penny capitalism” of small businesses and “trust banks” based on a group’s social capital. While it is necessary to evaluate every project at every step of the way, “doing good” is most effectively accomplished when it is driven by the particular needs, aspirations and values of local communities. When a women’s co-op wanted a loan to raise chickens and sell eggs, the non-governmental organization they approached wanted to fund a project that involved producing and selling scented soap to tourists. The women saw the value of chickens but had no interest in travelling to the city to sell expensive soap that they never saw anyone use. The impasse was overcome when the women realized they might be able to sell soap at a tourist stop near their village. They learned how to make scented soap, and their business began to

take off. This case shows how dialogue between an N.G.O. and a local co-op led to a win-win situation: a successful innovation made possible by external funding but acted upon by an energized women’s group.

This short book is packed with valuable insights for anyone engaged in service. It is a must-read for students or adults seeking to “do good” either locally or overseas. Newton and Early do not discuss religious convictions, but their guidelines are completely consistent with what one finds in the Jesuit Refugee Service’s practice of accompaniment and the ethic of “kinship” of Greg Boyle, S.J. This book would be especially valuable for service learning courses in high schools and colleges, parish and campus ministry retreats and workshops for volunteer organizations.

**STEPHEN J. POPE** is a professor of theological ethics at Boston College.

# America

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# Along the Road

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C), OCT. 9, 2016

Readings: 2 Kgs 5:14-17; Ps 98:1-4; 2 Tm 2: 8-13; Lk 17:5-10

*“Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well” (Lk 17:19)*

The story of 10 lepers being healed is found only in Luke’s Gospel and represents an event that takes place as Jesus and his apostles are travelling toward Jerusalem. Though short, the account is full of salvific meaning. Numerous scholars have pointed to the geographical difficulty in the description of Jesus “going through the region between Samaria and Galilee,” since no such geographical region exists, but Joseph Fitzmyer, S.J., must be correct when he says the geographical reference, whatever its difficulties on a map, “alerts the reader once again...to the evangelist’s theological concern to move Jesus to the city of destiny, where salvation is to be definitively achieved for human beings” (*Luke*, Vol. 2).

This unique account also alerts us once again that the salvation that Jesus is traveling toward Jerusalem to accomplish is intended for all people. The 10 lepers, after all, comprise a group of people excluded from community life because of their medical condition, and one leper was considered to have been doubly excluded because of his ethnicity. He was a Samaritan.

The lepers, “keeping their distance,” call out to Jesus, not specifically to heal them but to “have mercy on us!” Their call for mercy, though, must indicate a

desire to be healed of their afflictions. And since the lepers call out to Jesus by name, they seem to have some previous knowledge of him. They also call him “Master” (*epistata*), a word that occurs only in Luke’s Gospel and, except for this passage, is used only by Jesus’ disciples. This calling after Jesus already indicates a modicum of faith.

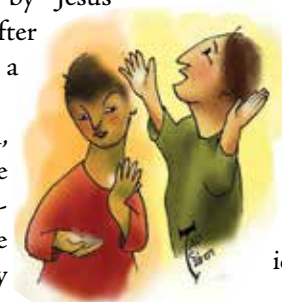
When Jesus sees them, he sends them to the priests, who will determine according to the law of Moses, specifically Leviticus 14, whether they have been healed of leprosy. The lepers immediately demonstrate their faith by following Jesus’ instruction even though they still have their disease. Only as they are on their way, do we find out that “they were made clean.” Jesus responds to their cries for mercy by drawing from them an act of faith that results in their physical healing.

But only the Samaritan turns back to praise God and (literally translated) “fell before his feet” and thanks Jesus. Jesus asks rhetorically, “Were not 10 made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” This questioning is designed not for the missing nine or the Samaritan, but for the consideration of Jesus’ disciples and curious onlookers. What does it mean that only “this foreigner” returned to thank God?

Jesus then addresses the healed Samaritan: “Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well.”

But was not the Samaritan already well even before he came back praising God and giving thanks to Jesus? Jesus had healed him as well as the nine others who had leprosy. It was only the Samaritan who returned to thank Jesus for his healing.

But how is that evidence of faithfulness instead of thankfulness? Faithfulness is demonstrated in two ways. One, the Samaritan recognizes that mercy has come from Jesus, and returning to thank Jesus is a form of faithfulness to the mercy of God that has been made manifest; and two, the Samaritan’s thankfulness for his physical healing shows evidence of deeper, spiritual healing, which is our true salvation. It is here that the odd geographical phrase “between Samaria



## PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Consider the 10 lepers. All were healed physically, but only one returned to thank Jesus. Have you given thanks for God’s mercy in your life? How have you shown your faithfulness to God? Have you reached out to those people today who might be considered beyond God’s mercy and salvation?

ART: TAD DUNNE

and Galilee” makes sense. The boundary lines between who might be saved, leper or clean, Samaritan or Jew, have been breached. The Samaritan’s return allows Jesus to demonstrate that no one, not a leper, nor a Samaritan, is beyond God’s mercy. Anyone can experience God’s salvation, shout with joy for it, praise God for it and walk along the same road Jesus is travelling. Between Samaria and Galilee, there is only the kingdom of God, in which salvation is available to all who call out for mercy and respond to God’s call with thankfulness and praise.

**JOHN W. MARTENS**

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



**CATHOLIC INITIATIVES**

# Reading the Scriptures with the Mind, Eyes, and Heart of a Woman



Presented by

Barbara E. Reid, OP

Professor of New Testament Studies,  
Catholic Theological Union

This lecture will explore feminist biblical interpretation—what it is, when it began, how to do it, and why it matters for both women and men. An exercise in interpreting the death and resurrection of Jesus in the Gospel of John will be used to show the importance of how one reads and interprets the Scriptures.

**Tuesday, October 4, 2016 | 6 p.m.**

Tognino Hall | Duane Library | Rose Hill Campus | Fordham University | Bronx, N.Y.  
Reception to Follow | For questions or to RSVP, email [cacs@fordham.edu](mailto:cacs@fordham.edu).

## About the Presenter

Barbara E. Reid, OP, holds a master's degree from Aquinas College in religious studies and a doctorate in biblical studies from the Catholic University of America. She is the author of the books *Abiding Word: Sunday Reflections for Year B*; *Taking Up the Cross: New Testament Interpretations Through Latina and Feminist Eyes*; *The Gospel According to Matthew* (New Collegeville Bible Commentary series); *Choosing the Better Part? Women in the Gospel of Luke*; and numerous articles. Her forthcoming book is titled *Wisdom's Feast: An Introduction to Feminist Interpretation of the Scriptures*.



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