

America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REVIEW

DEC. 8-15, 2014 \$3.50

Zero Tolerance

CELSO PEREZ: WHY CATHOLICS MUST CONDEMN
ANTI-GAY VIOLENCE

Following up
On the Family

ROBERT P. IMBELLI

OF MANY THINGS

As they have done for more than 800 years, Parisians crossed the narrow bridges leading to the eastern half of the Île de la Cité last month. They were en route to Sunday Mass at Notre Dame, the 12th-century cathedral that is the pride of Paris, the most magnificent building in a city with a surplus of splendor. The skies were lipping rain, turning the cobblestoned streets into a slippery hazard for the many tourists who filled the plaza in front of the church.

The scene inside was at once familiar and entirely foreign to me. The cornerstone of Notre Dame was laid more than 300 years before Columbus sailed for the Americas. There is no church in the new world that evinces a similar sense of connection with our forebears in faith across so many generations. Like every Catholic church, however, Notre Dame is home to me, the place where there are no strangers, only brothers and sisters, where there is no ultimate division but only the unity-in-diversity of a eucharistic people.

As the procession wended its way across the ancient stones, images from long-ago high school history classes came to mind, scenes from a drama in which I did not feature but is nevertheless my story as well as yours. I thought especially of the role that hubris played in that story, the toxic pride that the Greeks believed was the besetting sin of every classic protagonist. How else to explain the prideful idolatry of the French revolutionaries who rededicated Notre Dame to the Cult of Reason. As the choir intoned the Kyrie, I could not help but think that while the French Revolution was the result of multiple social and political forces, the very best account of its principal cause can be found in the first four chapters of the Book of Genesis.

The lights and shadows of this musty Gothic mammoth reveal the lights and shadows of human history. At Communion, the capacity crowd

traversed the same center aisle that Napoleon used en route to his self-crowning in the sanctuary, the very same aisle that some German Catholic soldiers no doubt used during the occupation. All thought their worldly empires would last 1,000 years, yet the church alone can claim that longevity, as well as the hope that we will survive yet another 1,000 years of inhumanity.

Over the next year the church in the United States will enter into a difficult conversation about the work of the Synod on the Family. We will discuss and disagree, no doubt, about the best way for the church to meet the temper of the times. "A particularly delicate question," writes the Rev. Robert Imbelli in this issue, "is whether, besides the usual criteria bearing upon validity, one ought, in a highly secularized society, take into account the Christian faith (or lack thereof) of those who entered into the marriage covenant" when assessing the grounds for an annulment. We will also discuss whether to modify the present discipline regarding the admission of the civilly divorced and remarried to the Eucharist.

Throughout that discussion, we would do well to remember our own history. The forces of contemporary secularism are strong, but it is unlikely that Richard Dawkins and his colleagues are going to storm St. Patrick's Cathedral and rededicate it to the Cult of Reason, or that a change in pastoral practice is going to bring down the only institution to have survived antiquity, not to mention the French Revolution and two world wars. Some argue that the proposed changes are too dangerous to contemplate, that they are, in effect, a slippery slope more treacherous than an unscuffed sole on a wet Parisian sidewalk. While that is a legitimate concern, let us remember that the challenge before us is not nearly as great as those we have already met and, by the grace of God, we have always overcome.

MATT MALONE, S.J.

America | **MEDIA**
A JESUIT MINISTRY

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

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

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

MANAGING EDITOR Kerry Weber

LITERARY EDITOR Raymond A. Schroth, S.J.

SENIOR EDITOR AND CHIEF CORRESPONDENT
Kevin Clarke

EDITOR AT LARGE James Martin, S.J.

POETRY EDITOR Joseph Hoover, S.J.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR AND VATICAN CORRESPONDENT
Gerard O'Connell

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY EDITOR
Elizabeth Tenety

ASSOCIATE EDITORS Ashley McKinless, Edward W. Schmidt

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

ART DIRECTOR Sonja Kodiak Wilder

COLUMNISTS Helen Alvaré, John J. Conley, S.J., Daniel P. Horan, O.F.M., James T. Keane, John W. Martens, Bill McGarvey, Angela Alaimo O'Donnell, Margot Patterson, Nathan Schneider, Robert David Sullivan

CORRESPONDENTS
John Carr (Washington), Anthony Egan, S.J. (Johannesburg), Jim McDermott, S.J. (Los Angeles), Timothy Padgett (Miami), Steven Schwankert (Beijing), David Stewart, S.J. (London), Judith Valente (Chicago), Mary Ann Walsh, R.S.M. (U.S. Church)

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

EDITORIAL E-MAIL
america@americamagazine.org

PUBLISHER AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
Edward Spallone

DEPUTY PUBLISHER
Rosa Del Saz

VICE PRESIDENT/ADVANCEMENT
Daniel Pawlus

DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
Kerty Goleski

OPERATIONS STAFF
Chris Keller, Glenda Castro

ADVERTISING CONTACT
ads@americamagazine.org; 212-515-0102

SUBSCRIPTION CONTACT/ADDITIONAL COPIES
subscriptions@americamagazine.org;
1-800-627-9533

© 2014 America Press, Inc.

Cover: Anti-gay rights activists stand on a rainbow flag during a protest by gay rights activists in Moscow, June 11, 2013. Reuters/Maxim Shemetov

CONTENTS



ARTICLES

16 ZERO TOLERANCE

Why Catholics must condemn anti-gay violence
Celso Perez

21 FAMILY IN FOCUS

How do we continue the conversation started by the synod?
Robert P. Imbelli

COLUMNS & DEPARTMENTS

4 Current Comment

5 Editorial Impunity in Honduras

6 Reply All

9 Signs of the Times

14 Column Life's Second Half *James Martin*

26 Vatican Dispatch Call to Conversion *Gerard O'Connell*

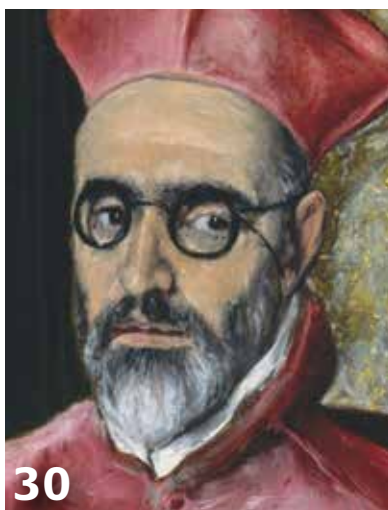
27 Faith in Focus Everyday Sacraments *Angela Alaimo O'Donnell*

37 The Word Waiting on Hope; Fulfillment of Hope *John W. Martens*



BOOKS & CULTURE

30 ART Celebrating El Greco **OF OTHER THINGS** Love and Death in New Jersey **BOOKS** *Pope Francis; The Great Reformer;* *Pope Francis: Life and Revolution; The Narrow Road to the Deep North*



ON THE WEB

James Martin, S.J., and **Ross Douthat** discuss Pope Francis, the Synod on the Family and the demands of law and mercy. Plus, Rob Weinert-Kendt reviews the play "**Our Lady of Kibaho.**" All at americamagazine.org.



Faithful Condemnation

Delegates at the Catholic-Muslim Forum, which met from Nov. 11 to 13 at the Vatican, condemned all use of violence to pursue ideological or religious ends. A joint statement from the meeting stressed that “it is never acceptable to use religion to justify such acts or to conflate such acts with religion” and held up ways to build mutual understanding and respect: educate people on the incompatibility of faith and violence; engage in interreligious dialogue; and, most important, discover how both faith traditions can together serve the wider community.

Founded in 2008, the forum meets every three years to assess relations between the two faiths and look for ways to improve cooperation. Pope Francis urged members to continue on the path of mutual understanding, especially during this time of heightened religious tension. Recognizing that there are many examples of fruitful Catholic-Muslim collaboration, the forum pointed out that it is of “utmost importance” to foster respect and that much work is required to “overcome prejudice, distortions, suspicions and inappropriate generalizations, all of which damage the peaceful relationships we all seek.”

America’s editors recently joined the pope in calling on Catholics to “elevate the conversation” around the Muslim faith and culture (“Encountering Islam,” 11/17). True engagement across religious divides is no easy task; a nuanced reciprocity is required. But, as the editorial stated, we live in a world “where senseless terror threatens Muslims and Christians alike.” Frank and open dialogues like the Vatican forum can be a positive step in firmly repudiating violence carried out in the name of religion as we seek to remove this scourge from our midst.

The Hidden Homeless

The homeless people we encounter—or avoid—are usually on the streets, men and women sprawled on a park bench or huddled in a doorway behind a cardboard sign identifying themselves as veterans, pregnant or unemployed. But according to a recent report from the National Center on Family Homelessness, there has been startling growth in the number of children among the nation’s homeless population. Nearly 2.5 million children were homeless at some time during 2013. In 2006, 1 in 50 children were homeless; today the number is 1 in 30.

The term *homeless* covers those who lack a fixed nighttime residence. That includes people sleeping in a park, car, abandoned building or temporary shelter, as well as those who share a hotel room, face eviction or are fleeing violence

against or within their family. Despite the economy’s recent resurgence, families on the cusp of poverty remain vulnerable. The gap between rich and poor continues to widen, and racial minorities have for the most part not benefited from the recovery. The typical homeless family is an unmarried mother and two children with no means of support. Children living in such unstable circumstances often miss school, fail courses and drop out. Up to 25 percent of pre-school and 40 percent of school-age children experiencing homelessness have mental health problems and are at risk of growing up without the cognitive and social skills needed for future employment and parenting.

The report concludes that we could end child homelessness within a decade if funds at the local, state and federal levels were reallocated, making children a top priority. But first, all of us would have to care.

Catholics Behind the Curtain

Twenty-five years after Eastern Europe began to emerge slowly, and then almost all at once, from behind the veil of the Iron Curtain, how well is the church’s role in Cold War-era resistance remembered? The contributions of St. John Paul II were justly noted during the commemoration of the fall of the Berlin Wall on Nov. 9. His 26-year pontificate and elevation to sainthood ensure that we will not soon forget the role Karol Wojtyla played in supporting the Solidarity movement at crucial junctures in Poland’s history. But what about Bishop Vaclav Maly in Prague, who was jailed along with Vaclav Havel and later helped negotiate with the Communist leadership of Czechoslovakia? Or the Jesuits Josef Zverina and Frantisek Lizna, who contributed to that country’s Charter 77 human rights movement?

These names are not exactly lost to history, but they are not as well known as they should be. As Jonathan Luxmoore reports for Catholic News Service, priests and religious also played a role in dissident movements in East Germany, Romania and Lithuania. In a symposium to mark the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, Cardinal Reinhard Marx of Munich-Freising said, “We who have enjoyed the fruits of this harvest remain in their debt, and I regret the legacy of civil rights activists occupies such a small place in our memories today.”

The accomplishments of these individuals should be honored, not for nostalgic reasons, but as a reminder that religious movements can and often do help turn the pivots of history. As Cardinal Marx said, we need to “build a culture of memory oriented toward the future” in order that the church can continue to play a robust role in our pluralistic societies.

Impunity in Honduras

In a small Central American country, *campesinos* agitating for land rights, journalists challenging the status quo and attorneys and advocates working for social justice face continual threats or acts of violence and intimidation. Scores have been murdered, driven into exile or “disappeared” in the night. Catholic priests and deacons speaking out in defense of the vulnerable are rewarded with death threats; a Jesuit-sponsored radio station has been threatened with destruction; and a civilian government has proven itself unable—or unwilling—to rein in public and private security forces acting in the shadows for the powerful.

This description is not, sadly, an exercise in historical memory, 25 years after the savagery of the Jesuit murders at the University of Central America in 1989, nor a recollection of the dreary prelude to the full-blown civil war in El Salvador in the late 1970s. This is a brief précis on contemporary Honduras.

The high-profile murders of María José Alvarado, Miss Honduras 2014, and her sister, Sofia, at the hands of the former’s jealous boyfriend in November briefly trained the U.S. media spotlight on the senseless violence that afflicts the country. But even astute news consumers probably did not read of another murder in Honduras that same week. On Nov. 11, Juan Ángel López Miralda, a Colón-based agrarian leader, was gunned down in the street by two men, who escaped on a motorcycle. Mr. López was a leader of the Movimiento Unificado Campesino del Aguán, a fighter for the land rights of *campesinos* in that troubled region.

Honduras endures the world’s highest rate of homicide, driven by gang and drug-cartel violence. But that awful volume is not the only reason the murders of people like Mr. López typically remain unsolved, even barely investigated. More than 70 human rights lawyers and 30 journalists have died since 2010. According to a report from Human Rights Watch in February, there have been dozens of homicides, abductions and human rights violations related to land ownership disputes in Bajo Aguán, “none of which has led to a conviction” as “prosecutors and police consistently failed to carry out prompt and thorough investigations into these crimes.” These deaths reflect the strong-arm tactics of commercial and landed interests in Honduras, and the impunity with which their enforcers act suggests indifference, even collusion, among security and police forces.

Since the ouster of former President Manuel Zelaya in 2009, Jesuit-sponsored Radio Progreso has been among the voices most critical of the state. The life of its director Ismael

Moreno, S.J., has been repeatedly threatened. The murder on April 11 of the station’s marketing director, Carlos Mejía Orellana, remains unsolved, as does the shooting death in 2011 of Nery Jeremias Orellana, a correspondent for Radio Progreso.



Like other Jesuits before him in this troubled region, Father Moreno seems heroically at peace with the danger. Father Moreno spoke in November just outside Washington, D.C., at the annual Ignatian Family Teach-in for Justice, a gathering of 1,600 students from Jesuit schools from across the country. Gunshots in the night are “normal” in Honduras, he told the students, and “that’s probably how I’ll die.” That calm courage is perhaps laudable, even inspiring, but Father Moreno’s resignation cannot be adopted by those of us in the North who have the power to prevent the disintegration of another Central American society.

Aid to Honduras for economic development could create opportunities for young people to have real alternatives to the gangs, the drug cartels or the lonely, perilous sojourn northward. A recent announcement by the Obama administration of new investments in the regional economy is welcome news, but the administration cannot limit itself merely to economic assistance. Just as important in Honduras are social and political development, nurturing a civic society that embraces human rights, just land reform and the authentic development of people so that their full social and civil expression is protected, even welcomed.

Toward that goal, the United States should reassess the social and economic outcomes of the Central American Free Trade Agreement and recalibrate that deal as necessary in order to reduce social inequities and stabilize Honduran society. A U.S. State Department report in 2013 offered a stark depiction of official misconduct and human rights violations in Honduras. The Obama administration should heighten pressure on President Juan Orlando Hernández to end impunity for political violence and acts of intimidation, whether committed by malevolent platoons of “private security” in disputed regions or by members of the Honduran police or military.

Central America has emerged tentatively from the bloody nightmare of its late 20th-century civil conflicts. Surely this is historical territory that we must do our utmost not to revisit.

REPLY ALL

Giving Thanks

Re “Retiring With Dignity,” Mary Ann Walsh, R.S.M. (10/17): Sister Mary Ann couldn’t be more correct in her description of complex decisions facing congregations of men and women religious today. The National Religious Retirement Office provides significant financial assistance and professional consultation to help religious orders discern appropriate solutions to their retirement challenges.

The group Support Our Aging Religious! was founded two years before the Retirement Fund for Religious, and 28 years later it is still making a difference in the lives of elderly religious. SOAR! is a grassroots charitable organization that connects its donors to sisters, brothers and priests of religious orders in a power-

ful and personal way to meet the daily challenges associated with the care of retired religious. Thank you, Sister Mary Ann, for highlighting the great work that is being done to say thank you to American religious.

KATHLEEN LUNSMANN, I.H.M.

Online Comment

The writer is president of SOAR!

Sister Support

Thank you to Sister Mary Ann, not only for helping to raise awareness about the ongoing needs of senior religious, but also for highlighting the fact that Catholics across the nation stand shoulder to shoulder with religious communities in helping to address these needs. Through donations to the annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection, our office is able to distribute an average of \$23 million each year to help support the day-to-day care of senior religious at more than 400 re-

ligious communities. An additional \$2 million to \$5 million is allocated annually for communities with the greatest needs and for retirement planning and educational resources. We are grateful, too, that organizations like SOAR! and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation share the vision to ensure that all elder religious receive the care and security they so richly deserve. Ultimately, we know that the good we are able to do is in direct measure to the good we have been given, and we thank God daily for all those who support senior religious through generosity, advocacy and prayers.

JANICE BADER, C.P.P.S.

Washington, D.C.

The writer is the executive director of the Retirement Fund for Religious.

Love Denied

“Family on Hold” (Current Comment, 11/10) seems to ignore the fact that many women’s reason for freezing their eggs is love. Two of the women I know who have had this procedure do not yet have a spouse, but are holding out hope that they will meet that person; they do not want to become pregnant or raise a child on their own. Another woman is undergoing cancer treatment, which could damage her eggs, so she is freezing them until she has recovered. Technology, in the case of freezing eggs, now allows for people to have families who otherwise couldn’t, and there is no reason to deny them love.

In “Go in Peace,” the editorial in this same issue, the editors write, “church leaders, like all of us, need to speak with marginalized families themselves.” This made me wonder: how many women who have frozen their eggs did they consult to prepare this commentary?

ELIZABETH DE VELASCO

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Defining Marriage

Re “Go In Peace” (Editorial, 11/10): The entire discussion of marriage seems to fail to make any distinction between

f STATUS UPDATE

Readers respond to an extended online conversation between James Martin, S.J., and the New York Times columnist Ross Douthat on Pope Francis, the synod and the demands of law and mercy.

There is a lot to learn from a conversation such as this, where both sides of the discussion carefully and thoughtfully lay out their case and clearly make the point of working towards mutual understanding, even if agreement isn’t reached. This is seen far too infrequently in the “now, now, now” environment of Facebook, Twitter and blogging, but it is the kind of conversation that reminds us that our opinions are based on a love for God and the church, and this fact, above all, aligns us.

MIKE POLLASTRI

It still seems the essential question is this: Is the church’s mission to impose God’s law on believers or lead followers to Jesus Christ and their unique relationship to him? Perhaps I am missing much, but when the church decides divorced and remarried Catholics can’t receive sacraments, or suggests that Catholics supporting a woman’s right to choose also can’t receive sacraments or a Catholic funeral, or banishes gays from church choirs and parish functions, or removes priests and bishops from all pastoral functions for even discussing the possibility of woman priesthood, it seems that the magisterial church is imposing laws versus leading through thoughtful listening and prayerful discussion.

BILL O’NEILL

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

civil marriage and the sacramental covenant. Given the late date at which Rome applied the definition of sacrament to all marriages between baptized men and women, perhaps the entire theological history of marriage needs to be revisited. We may need to face the reality that despite any brief instructions engaged couples receive, many understand their marriage in terms of contemporary culture and civil law, not theology.

If the church wants to maintain its present treatment of sacramental marriage and not increase its flexibility about either annulments or communion for the divorced, then maybe it needs to be more accepting of what couples actually intend. The church could perhaps return to the practice of blessing couples who are entering civil marriages.

If couples, while engaged or after long years of marriage, explicitly seek to join in a sacramental union, then a thorough and possibly lengthy period of preparation analogous to the preparation for vowed religious life would be appropriate. Under these circumstances, great rigidity from the Roman Curia in cases of divorce and remarriage would be much more appropriate.

TOM POELKER
Online Comment

Domestic Redux

“Go In Peace” (Editorial, 11/10) rightly calls attention to the need of the bishops in preparing for the 2015 synod to pay attention to the circumstances of marginalized families, but I question the value of the repetition, no matter how broadly it is conceptualized or how deeply it may be explored. Holding two synods on the family seems excessive. There are many broader topics to be considered if the gathering of bishops is to guide the whole church in its relationship to the modern world. Some themes, like consumerism, economic justice and the call to nonviolence affect the family, but they need to be reflected

upon in themselves and not viewed as aspects of domestic life.

CORNELLIUS F. MURPHY JR.
Valencia, Pa.

Questioning ‘The Poor’

Thanks to *America* for publishing “On the Way to Healing” (11/10), by Jon Sobrino, S.J., in honor of the martyrs of El Salvador. It is brilliant both in form and in content. For many years I have wanted to ask a question of those of us who refer to “the poor.” Given the references to both language and poverty in Father Sobrino’s speech, it seems apropos currently. Why do we, in our evolution of person-first language, still say “the poor”? If humanity is to be a deeper experience than any categorizing we can give it, especially that of economic classification, why do we persist in using something so totalizing such as “the poor” in a label for human persons? And further, does this label give civilizations of both wealth and poverty more power than either should have? I do not know the answer to these questions, but it feels it should be asked of the brilliant readers of *America*, especially now.

SOLVITUR AMBULANDO
Online Comment

Why We Work

In “Market Assumptions” (10/3), Bishop McElroy falls into the trap that most writers do in writing about the markets by failing to consider the human factor. Ludwig von Mises writes that economic events occur when “man is eager to substitute a more satisfactory state of affairs for a less satisfactory.” We want to improve our lives.

Redistribution of income is a grand idea, but it has been shown over and over again not to work. The dignity of work is a lofty idea, but ask anyone why they work and dignity won’t be anywhere on the list. We work to care for our families and ourselves. Bishop McElroy quotes Pope Francis: “The problem is not being able to bring bread to the table and this takes away one’s

dignity.” But when bread is already on the table, there is no incentive to go out and earn any more.

He states that structural economic reforms need to be undertaken to remedy existing obstacles to greater employment. What better way to greater employment can there be than to allow entrepreneurs the freedom to create new products and services and to hire people to bring them to fruition? When a person is denied profit from the fruit of his or her own labor, that person will stop laboring.

What is the answer? Dorothy Day believed that government handouts remove the personal responsibility of each of us to care for each other. We need to encourage that responsibility and I see it happening. Ads encourage us: “Every day, care”; “Stop domestic violence”; “No means no.” It’s a slow road but one that stands a better chance than wealth redistribution.

MARY DAHL
Prescott, Ariz.



The Wisdom of the Beguines

The Forgotten Story of a Medieval Women's Movement

LAURA SWAN New!

Beguines were medieval laywomen defined by their visionary spirituality, unusual business acumen, and strong commitment to the poor and marginalized. The beguines invite us to seek out their wisdom and to discover them anew.

“...a sympathetic look at the Beguines that will intrigue anyone interested in women's spirituality.” — *Publishers Weekly*

9781933346977 208 pages Hardcover \$16.95



Herzl's Vision

Theodor Herzl and the Foundation of the Jewish State

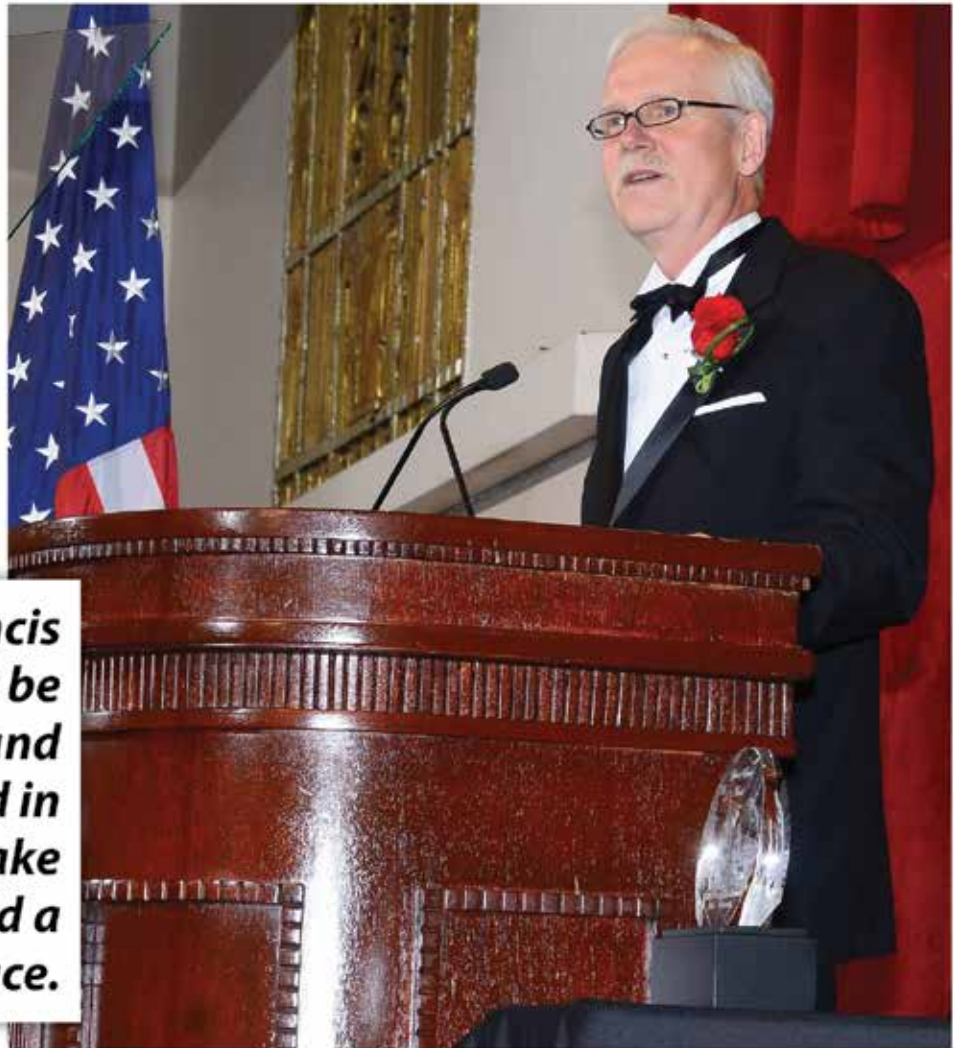
SHLOMO AVINERI New!

In 1896, Theodor Herzl published *The Jewish State*. The following year he convened a Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. This is the story of how Herzl fashioned the policies and institutions that paved the way for the Jewish state.

“...[an] immensely readable biography...this is the most chewily cogent account yet of Herzl the political thinker and doer.” — *Financial Times*

9781933346984 304 pages Hardcover \$22.95

BlueBridge bluebridgebooks.com



***Pope Francis
said we must be
courageous and
never timid in
order to make
the world a
better place.***

Anthony Butler, Executive Director
St. John's Bread and Life
2014 Spirit of Service Award Honoree

The St. John's University "Spirit of Service Award" acclaims individuals whose vision, accomplishments and good works embody the essence of St. Vincent de Paul and reflect the mission of the University.

St. John's Bread and Life, Brooklyn's largest emergency food provider, located in Bedford-Stuyvesant, has been feeding poor people in Brooklyn and Queens since 1982. Inspired by the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, Bread and Life's mission is to bring food to the poor and accompany them on their journey to wholeness by providing necessary services.

Bread and Life, a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) is the face of Catholic Social Teaching in Bedford-Stuyvesant and in the other poverty-stricken communities that we serve. *Be brave, join us to make the world a better place.*

This year, put Bread and Life on your priority list for end of year giving. Your tax-deductible gift will help us feed thousands of hungry people.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

RACE IN AMERICA

Working for Peace in Ferguson As Violence Erupts Anew



PRAYERS FOR FERGUSON. The Rev. Robert Rosebrough, pastor of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Parish, at the site of the death of Michael Brown in August.

As a young seminarian in the 1960s, the Rev. Robert Rosebrough marched for civil rights. For most of his 46 years as a priest, he has worked in inner-city parishes. His parish, Blessed Teresa of Calcutta is in Ferguson, Mo., a short distance from where a white police officer shot an unarmed African American teenager last August.

The shooting sparked weeks of sometimes violent protests and exposed a wide divide between the community, which is largely African American, and its police force, which is overwhelmingly white. Violence erupted once again in Ferguson as the city learned of the grand jury decision not to indict Officer Darren Wilson in the killing of Michael Brown. Many were anticipating the worst. Governor Jay Nixon declared a state of emergency and activated the National Guard on Nov. 17.

Since Brown's death, "Father Rosy," as he is known, has been a prominent pastoral voice in that troubled city.

"It's time to complete what the civil rights movement started," Father Rosebrough says. The protests that rocked Ferguson do not reflect just one city's problems, he says. Nor were they about a single shooting. "Ferguson's problems are about changing a culture of violence in America," Father Rosebrough says.

In the time since Brown died, there have been more than a hundred shootings in St. Louis County, including an incident in which a 19-year-old was gunned down

outside the day care center his mother operates. Some of the violence was gang-related. Some of it was random, according to Father Rosebrough.

"People have said to me, 'I feel sorry for you dealing with all that's happening in Ferguson.' And I say, 'Feel sorry for yourself. If you see this as only a Ferguson problem, you're in denial.'" Beneath the surface of the Ferguson unrest, he believes, is a "national call for justice and a change of heart against racism in our society."

Father Rosebrough, who is 71, began that call with prayer. His parish of 950 families is a few miles from where Brown was killed. After public protests turned violent, he and his parishioners started praying the rosary daily at a grotto dedicated to the Virgin Mary outside the church. He says they prayed for Ferguson's police, protestors and public officials—in short, for healing.

Singing, "It's me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer," Father

Rosebrough led a prayer procession earlier this month from Blessed Teresa of Calcutta parish to Ferguson's City Hall. It drew 250 people, including the mayor. "It was a peaceful protest, so the only coverage we received was in the Archdiocese of St. Louis magazine," he laments.

He says action now needs to follow prayer. That's why he has begun an effort called "Lean In." He describes its mission as "lean forward and listen."

"Lean In" will provide a structure for blacks and whites, police and community members, to meet, socialize and discuss issues together on a regular basis, Father Rosebrough says. "It's a way of inviting people to have their stories told.

"One of our parishioners said, 'Why did it take Michael Brown's death to

make this happen?’ All of us are guilty of not seeing things sooner,” he says.

Some of Father Rosebrough’s white parishioners have complained about his public actions since the shooting. They say his efforts could be construed as being “anti-police.”

“I’ve had people say things to me, like, ‘Those protesters, if they would just get jobs they wouldn’t be doing these things,’” Father Rosebrough recalls. He says he listens politely to the comments, then asks, “What is Jesus

doing right now in our community?”

He remains a realist, however, and believes it will take years, not months for change to be felt and is taking the long view. He says it will probably take a generation for the city to reap the benefits of efforts like “Lean In” to create dialogue. “The children now in school, they are the ones who are watching history being formed.”

JUDY VALENTE

The author is America’s Chicago correspondent.

IMMIGRATION

Obama Proposal Protects Millions

President Obama’s plan to essentially freeze most deportations of people without documentation in the United States would protect as many as 4.4 million people and their families. “Mass amnesty would be unfair,” the president said in a televised speech to the nation on Nov. 20. “Mass deportation would be both impossible and contrary to our character,” he said. “What I’m describing is accountability—a commonsense, middle ground approach: If you meet the criteria, you can come out of the shadows and get right with the law. If you’re a criminal, you’ll be deported. If you plan to enter the U.S. illegally, your chances of getting caught and sent back just went up.”

The president’s proposals were warmly received by major Catholic bodies, with the consistent caution that this latest effort to rationalize the nation’s immigration policies remains far from complete and still leaves too many undocumented people out. Generous family reunification policies have been a consistent demand by the U.S. bish-

ops and other Catholic agencies concerned with immigration.

Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, M.Sp.S., auxiliary bishop of Seattle and chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Migration, welcomed the Obama administration proposals in a statement released on Nov. 21. “Each day,



EYES ON THE PRIZE. Outside the Arizona Capitol in Phoenix, Abel and Idalia Rodríguez watch a live broadcast as President Obama describes his plan for immigration reform on Nov. 20.

the Catholic Church in the United States, in her social service agencies, hospitals, schools and parishes, witnesses the human consequences of the separation of families, when par-

ents are deported from their children or spouses from each other,” Bishop Elizondo said. “We’ve been on record asking the administration to do everything within its legitimate authority to bring relief and justice to our immigrant brothers and sisters. As pastors, we welcome any efforts within these limits that protect individuals and protect and reunite families and vulnerable children.”

Bill O’Keefe, vice president of advocacy and government relations for Catholic Relief Services, called the president’s plan “a temporary solution to problems in our outdated and unjust immigration system; and a ray of hope to the hopelessness in much of Mexico and Central America.” He added, “Ultimately, however, unless the conditions in migrants’ countries of origin are addressed on a larger scale, children and families will continue to leave.”

Asked to comment on the allegation that the president’s proposal is little more than a hidden amnesty program for people who have broken U.S. law, O’Keefe responded, “We are not rewarding people who broke the law, but admitting the truth that we drove people here through our own need for low-wage labor, our own trade policies that made it harder for people to live a decent life in their home country, our own support to unjust regimes and destabilizing conflicts.” He added, “If a two- to three-year reprieve from deportation is a reward for people who have been here working, raising families and paying taxes for years, what is punishment?”

Critics charge that the administration’s proposals go too far, but O’Keefe only wishes it would go a lit-

tle further. No package put together in Washington is going to have much of an impact on migration from the south if it does not include wise investments aimed squarely at the conditions that push people across borders, he has concluded. "There are successful, scalable violence-prevention, education, agricultural-rural programs that could make a difference" in improving economic opportunity and living standards in Central America, where many contemporary migrants to the United States originate, he told **America**.

"We all know what could be done there in order to help people make the decision to stay," he said. Why don't people in Washington who say they want to deter undocumented migration back those plans? "Because we have defined the problem as one of border security," said O'Keefe. "But building fences has ultimately never worked in human history.

"Rather than building fences, we need to address our indifference to life in Central America, and we can do that and that would be the smart thing to do."

O'Keefe marvels at the vast sums many in Washington remain eager to spend in the relentless pursuit of better border control. "If the tens of billions we have spent on drones; on fences, walls; on militarizing our border had been spent on helping people in Central America support their families, we would not have this problem now," he said. **KEVIN CLARKE**

Pope Francis: Create Jobs, Not Weapons

The Catholic Church calls for the creation of job opportunities and the recognition of the dignity of the poor, not simply for more handouts or expanded government welfare programs, Pope Francis said in a video message played

NEWS BRIEFS

Church officials in Goa, India, were expecting more than **five million pilgrims** for the once-a-decade exposition of the body of St Francis Xavier on Nov. 22. + While officials from the Kenyan government and bishops' conference met on Nov. 19, Kenya's Catholic bishops continued to urge people to avoid receiving a **tetanus vaccine**, which they say contains a hormone linked to birth control. + "The **struggle against hunger** and malnutrition is hindered by 'market priorities' and the 'primacy of profit,'" Pope Francis lamented on Nov. 20 at the Second International Conference on Nutrition in Rome. + More than **650 experts from 57 countries** met at the Vatican on Nov. 20 for a conference on autism. + Over 1,600 representatives from Jesuit institutions and other Catholic organizations joined together for the 17th annual **Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice** on Nov. 15-17, marking the 25th anniversary of the murders of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter in El Salvador on Nov. 16, 1989. + At his installation Mass at Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral on Nov. 18, **Archbishop Blase Cupich** urged the congregation to share their faith fearlessly, recognizing that God calls them "to more" and "to greater things."



Blase Cupich

on Nov. 20 at the Italian church's Festival of Catholic Social Teaching. As the global economic crisis continues, he said, there is a "great temptation to stop and lick one's wounds, seeing them as an excuse not to hear the cry of the poor and see the suffering of those who have lost the dignity of bringing bread home because they have lost their jobs." But Christians are called to look beyond their own needs and trust that by working with others, including with governments, they can "unleash goodness and enjoy its fruits." The pope said, "Today it is said that many things cannot be done because there is no money," yet "the money for weapons can be found, the money to make war, money for unscrupulous financial transactions." At the same time, he said, there seems to be no money "to create jobs, to invest in learning, in people's talents, to plan new welfare programs or to safeguard the environment."

Holy Land Violence

After an early morning attack on a synagogue left four Israelis dead and eight injured on Nov. 18, the Latin Patriarch, Fouad Twal, called for an end to all violence in the Holy Land. "We are praying and waiting. We are sad," said Patriarch Twal. "We must, all people of responsibility, politicians and religious leaders, do our best in our positions to condemn this violence and avoid as much as possible the causes which lead other people to violence.... Violence leads to more violence." Patriarch Twal said he sent condolences to the families of all the victims of the recent wave of violence that has rocked Jerusalem as Israel moves toward expanding Jewish settlements in the area and Palestinians fear a Jewish presence on the shared holy site of the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif, in Jerusalem's Old City.

From CNS, RNS and other sources.

DISPATCH | MIAMI

An Abortion Ban Challenged

Fifteen years ago, El Salvador criminalized any and all abortions. Now, after years of legally dubious arrests, draconian prison sentences and a controversial case involving a fetus with no brain, critics of the law call El Salvador a cautionary tale that raises the question: Is this really what a blanket ban on abortion should look like?

“Whether you’re pro-life or pro-choice, this is an issue of due process and human rights,” says Caroline Bettinger-Lopez, a University of Miami law school professor who follows El Salvador’s judiciary. She notes, for example, that while the law’s maximum prison sentence is supposed to be eight years, prosecutors often elevate the charges to aggravated murder, and judges in turn have meted out terms as long as 40 years.

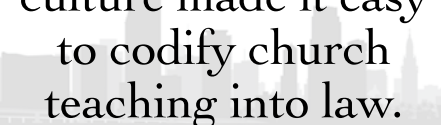
Given the usually poor, uneducated and frightened state of the women involved, she argues, that constitutes abuse.

Mauricio Carballo, a spokesman for El Salvador’s federal prosecutor, denies the government has misused the abortion law. Given the innocence of the unborn, he says, the law dictates that abortion be addressed “with the gravity of homicide” and that certain cases—especially those involving late-term abortions—merit punishment.

The United Nations is calling on El Salvador to revise, if not repeal the law. This fall the London-based, pro-choice human rights group Amnesty International called the situation “institutionalized violence against wom-

en.” And Las Diez y Siete—the 17 women currently behind bars for abortion, some for sentences of 30 years or more—have become a cause célèbre among abortion rights supporters.

El Salvador has become part of the discussion about abortion in Miami. Salvadoran doctors and lawyers have recently acknowledged that women who can afford it are increasingly trav-



El Salvador’s pro-life culture made it easy to codify church teaching into law.

eling to Florida to have legal abortions.

El Salvador is a small Central American republic scarred by civil war and drug-gang violence. But it is also heavily Catholic and increasingly evangelical. That pro-life culture made it easier in 1999 to codify church teaching into a national law that prohibits abortion under any circumstance.

The nation’s leading prelate at that time, Archbishop Fernando Sáenz Lacalle of San Salvador, said abortion-ban legislation like El Salvador’s should be considered “a societal norm.”

“If our agenda is humanitarian,” said Sáenz, “if we oppose drug-trafficking and prostitution and racial discrimination, then we must also oppose impunity for this crime.”

But the law’s detractors say it has all too often degenerated into a societal witch hunt. They point to cases like that of Cristina Quintanilla. She was rushed to a hospital where an anonymous staff member accused her of in-

ducing an abortion. She was arrested and handcuffed to her bed.

Salvadoran authorities insist many women falsely claim they’ve miscarried when in fact they have had abortions. But at Quintanilla’s trial, according to court records, neither doctors nor prosecutors ever presented physical evidence or witness testimony to that effect, nor did the coroner determine a cause of death. Even so, the charge was raised to aggravated murder, and Quintanilla was sentenced to 30 years.

In 2009 an appellate court called the sentence excessive and ordered Quintanilla released. But her record kept her from being hired, and she emigrated a few months ago to Chicago.

Last year the government refused to let a pregnant woman known as “Beatriz” have a therapeutic abortion. Her baby had no brain and no chance of survival.

Because Beatriz suffers serious conditions including kidney failure and lupus, doctors said carrying that anencephalic fetus endangered her own life.

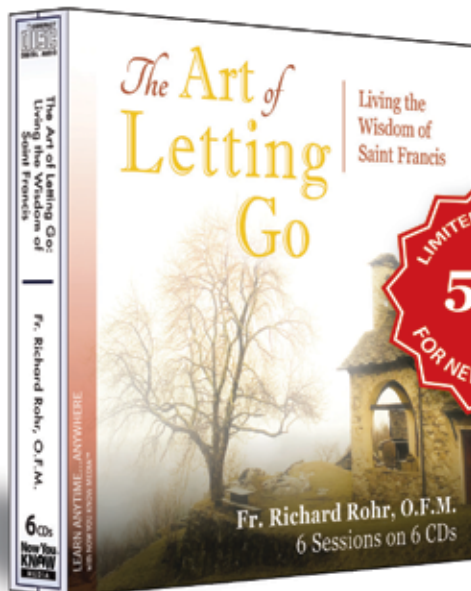
San Salvador’s new archbishop, José Luis Escobar, stirred controversy by insisting the mother’s health was not threatened by the pregnancy. But after calls from the Inter-American Court on Human Rights to end the pregnancy, El Salvador’s Supreme Court permitted a C-section delivery. (The baby died hours later.)

Meanwhile, a growing number of Salvadoran medical and legal professionals, including the head of the National Women’s Hospital, are urging more flexibility in the law. The Catholic Episcopal Conference of El Salvador opposes any relaxation.

The discussion is being monitored around Latin America, which is home to five of the seven countries in the world that ban abortion outright.

TIM PADGETT

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



Enter the Depths of Joy and Spiritual Unfolding in the Spirit of Saint Francis

“To reach the heights, we must first descend. To gain our freedom, we must let go.”

A single insight from Saint Francis—that to rise, we must fall—may be his most powerful and relevant gift to ordinary people today. In *The Art of Letting Go*, Fr. Richard Rohr illuminates the rich layers of wisdom revealed through this simple friar’s words and life to show how we can find greater connection, purpose, and joy.

In this six-CD course, you will learn to identify and let go of the possessions, beliefs, and biases. You will explore how to dwell in presence amidst chaos or calm and how to embrace your inner wounds and imperfections with compassion. Discover how to “descend the tower” of the ego to commune with others as spiritual equals.

The Franciscan vow of poverty is at heart a commitment to simplicity that all of us can make. *The Art of Letting Go* is a guide for shedding the ambitions, certitudes, and fears that grip us so that we may be pulled toward greater freedom, joy, and spiritual unfolding.

Must order within 30 days of issue date

1-800-955-3904

<https://www.NowYouKnowMedia.com/Rohr>

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

The Art of Letting Go: Living the Wisdom of Saint Francis

6-CD Audio Program

Presented by

Fr. Richard Rohr, O.F.M.

Lecture Titles

1. Inner Liberation from Ourselves
2. Cultural Liberation from Our Biases
3. Dogmatic Liberation from our Certitudes
4. Personal Liberation from the System
5. Spiritual Liberation from the Divine
6. Liberation into Mystery

*The Art of Letting Go:
Living the Wisdom of Saint Francis*

6 Lectures on 6 CDs

5 hours, 45 minutes of content

SAVE \$55

6-CD Set ~~\$99.95~~ **SALE \$44.95**

+ \$8.95 Shipping & Handling
100% Satisfaction Guarantee

Coupon Code: A1815

Now You Know Media’s mission is to bring you the best Catholic professors and retreat leaders in America. Carefully selected for their scholarship, faithful insight, and teaching excellence, our speakers will touch your heart and engage your intellect. Visit our website to browse our growing catalogue of over 250 courses and retreats available in CD, DVD, and MP3 formats.



Life's Second Half

During my retreat this year, I broke a longstanding rule. Many years ago, when I was a Jesuit novice, my first spiritual director counseled that the only books one should read during a retreat (other than those in the Bible) are lives of the saints. Other spiritual reading, he felt—particularly books on prayer—may tempt you from actually praying. There is great wisdom in that: reading about prayer is usually easier than praying.

Since then, I've adhered to this rule and always looked forward to reading a new saint's life during my annual eight-day retreat. This year, however, I thought I might treat myself and enjoy some more general spiritual reading. And I was grateful that I did.

The book I brought along was the superb *Sacred Fire*, by Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I., which focuses on "Christian maturity." It's a follow-up to his wildly popular book *The Holy Longing*, an introduction to the spiritual life that I've recommended to more people than I can recall. In essence, his new book is designed for those who have moved past the "introductory" stages of Christianity and have settled down for the long haul. It is crammed with wonderful insights.

Reading *Sacred Fire* led me to two other fine books on the same topic, which I read after my retreat: *Falling Upwards: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*, by Richard Rohr, O.F.M.; and *The Gift of Years: Growing Old Gracefully*, by Joan Chittister, O.S.B.

JAMES MARTIN, S.J., is editor at large of *America* and author of *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*.
Twitter: @JamesMartinSJ.

Some of our more superannuated readers might smile at the idea that someone at my age, 53, is reading about aging. But some of our younger readers might think it's completely appropriate! After all, when I look around our editorial table, I see mainly editors who are younger than I—two are in their 20s. And with the normal aches and pains that come with moving past 50, and also the sadness of seeing more than a few friends grow ill and die, mortality is on my mind.

But there's another reason for reading these books. While all three can be fairly described as books on aging, they are nonetheless appropriate to readers at any stage of life. Because what they're really about is not growing old, but growing up, something we all try to do.

The three authors—all religious men and women well known to Catholic audiences—approach the topic from three different angles. Each writes with a highly distinctive voice and emphasizes different points, somewhat like the writers of the Gospels. Father Rolheiser offers a systematic overview of what it means to move into Christian maturity, with an emphasis on letting go of some of the passions and problems of youth. Father Rohr's book makes ample and creative use of both psychology and classic literary patterns (for example, the story of Odysseus). And Sister Chittister's book is a more general overview of the joys and struggles of aging, which could be used profitably by anyone—religious or not. Let me just highlight my three favorite insights.

Father Rolheiser reminds us that an essential element in growing older is recognizing that while the passion and excitement of our youth may have waned, and "boredom, the longing for a second honeymoon, midlife crisis, misunderstanding, disillusionment" and other struggles may weigh upon us heavily, there is a deep place within us that knows that "real life depends upon staying the course." I dog-eared that page and underlined that passage.

What these books are really about is not growing old, but growing up.

Father Rohr notes several times in *Falling Upwards* that we are often invited to move ahead without fully understanding what is happening to us, trusting in what Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., called the "slow work of God." Besides, if we did fully know what God was

asking of us (which is usually to let go of something that keeps us unfree), we would "either try to take charge or stop the whole process."

For me, the best aspect of Sister Chittister's book is the series of inventive dyads she uses to address the various aspects of aging, each of which brings "blessings" and "burdens." In the chapter entitled "Freedom," for example, she notes that a burden of growing older is allowing stereotypes of aging to hold one back from real growth. A blessing is that aging can give one the chance to "break the bounds of a past life, and to create for myself a life more suited to what I now want to be."

I'm sure I'll be returning to each book frequently. Because, as hard as it is sometimes, I hope that I grow old.

THE ILLUMINATED THOMAS KINKADE
"Hometown Chapel" CANVAS PRINT

Previously Unpublished Springtime Scene Twinkles with
 the Light of Hope and Faith



The luminous chapel artistry of Thomas Kinkade resonates with a sense of hope and serenity. Today a previously unpublished composition of his art is presented in the "Hometown Chapel" Illuminated Canvas Print. This never-before-seen image is accentuated by concealed LED lights and bright fiber optics to present a Thomas Kinkade classic in a whole new light.

Measuring an impressive 20 inches wide in its cherry-toned frame, this masterpiece faithfully recreates an enchanting Spring scene basked in the signature radiance of the *Painter of Light*™. At the flip of a switch, the sunny radiance of the artwork is enriched by lights enhancing the chapel windows, sky, stream and expanse of lush grass.

An exceptional value

Strong demand is likely, so act now to acquire yours for only \$99.99*, payable in three installments of \$33.33, the first due before shipment, backed by our 365-day money-back guarantee. Send no money now. Just mail the Reservation Application today!



The signature Thomas Kinkade gas lamps gently twinkle thanks to the brilliance of fiber-optic lighting.

Genuine canvas print recreates the look and feel of an original Thomas Kinkade painting

Illuminates with LED lights, bright fiber optics and hand-applied glitter

Previously unpublished scene expands upon the beloved "Hometown Chapel"

Custom cherry-toned frame features a golden metal title plaque

www.bradfordexchange.com/19434

Hometown Chapel ©1995 Thomas Kinkade

RESERVATION APPLICATION

SEND NO MONEY NOW

THE BRADFORD EXCHANGE

9345 Milwaukee Avenue · Niles, IL 60714-1393

YES. Please reserve the Thomas Kinkade "Hometown Chapel" Illuminated Canvas Print for me as described in this announcement. *Limit: one per order.*

Please Respond Promptly

Mrs. Mr. Ms. _____

Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

01-19434-001-E39411

*Plus \$14.99 shipping and service. Limited-edition presentation restricted to 120 crafting days. Please allow 4-6 weeks after initial payment for shipment. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.

Zero Tolerance

WHY CATHOLICS MUST CONDEMN ANTI-GAY VIOLENCE

BY CELSO PEREZ

The recent assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the Family has brought renewed attention to Catholic approaches to gay and lesbian persons. During the synod, church leaders discussed pastoral and theological perspectives regarding the place of homosexual persons in the church, and church teaching vis-à-vis homosexuality. Given the text of the midterm report and the final report, called a *relatio*, much of the conversation focused on the extent to which homosexual persons were welcome within the church and in local parishes.

Despite a significant opening in dialogue, the synod discussions made relatively little mention of the violence that sexual and gender minorities regularly face in communities around the world. (In this essay I use the term sexual and gender minorities as a shorthand to refer to all individuals who identify as something other than heterosexual or cis-gender.) Sadly, violence is still a lived reality for Catholics and non-Catholics who fail to conform to certain expressions of sexuality or gender. International entities like the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights have noted alarming rates of physical aggression against these individuals. Additionally, in at least 76 countries, laws still criminalize particular expressions of sexuality and gender. These laws often make people vulnerable to prosecution by the state, as well as to attack and persecution by members of the public. Governments often use sexual and gender minority groups as convenient scapegoats for social, political and economic ills, thus increasing their vulnerability.

Growing awareness of such discriminatory practices underscores the importance of having Catholics reiterate a message of care and nonviolence toward these individuals when discussing issues of sexuality and gender. As church leaders have noted, these calls are consistent with Catholic doctrine on the dignity of all human beings. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls on Catholics to treat “homosexual persons” with “respect, compassion and sensitivity.” The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s letter “On the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons” (1986) mandates respect for the intrinsic dignity of each person in word, in ac-

tion and in law and condemns violence against homosexual people. While some church leaders and faith communities have stressed a message of dignity and respect, many others have not. In recent years, both religious and lay Catholics, through their actions and words, have promoted policies and practices that seem to contribute to a climate of indifference or even hostility, in which violence against members of sexual and gender minorities can occur.

Positive Shifts

Since his election in March of 2013, Pope Francis has repeatedly voiced his concern for the most vulnerable people in society. In his first apostolic exhortation, “The Joy of the Gospel,” the pope emphasized the need to “draw near to new forms of poverty and vulnerability, in which we are called to recognize the suffering Christ.” The pope cited Jesus’ example in Matthew 25, explaining the need to identify with the downtrodden. In less formal public statements, Pope Francis has frequently repeated this message as central to the Christian life.

Pope Francis seems to have been applying this concern for the vulnerable to his treatment of sexual and gender minorities. In summer 2013, when asked about gay priests in the church, the pope famously replied, “If someone is gay and seeks the Lord with good will, who am I to judge?” In a subsequent interview published in *America*, he elaborated on these remarks, emphasizing the need to love and accompany gay people, not categorically reject and condemn them.

Other church leaders have more explicitly spoken out against the physical violence and harassment experienced by sexual and gender minorities. Last summer, for instance, the Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya, Archbishop Charles Daniel Balvo, stressed that while the church does not approve of homosexual conduct, it recognizes and respects everyone’s individual dignity. In the wake of growing reports of anti-gay violence in parts of Africa, the archbishop said that “homosexuals should be defended against violation of their dignity and human rights; they are human beings like any one of us.” In Brazil, the Peace and Justice Commission of the Archdiocese of São Paulo, a group composed of both lay people and clergy, strongly condemned the alarming number of attacks against sexual and gender minorities reported in the country.

Others have spoken out against laws criminalizing sexu-

CELSO PEREZ is a Gruber Fellow at Human Rights Watch. He received a J.D. from Yale Law School, and an M.A. and B.A. in theological ethics from Boston College.

LAW MEN. Men in Kampala, Uganda, Feb. 24, celebrate a new anti-homosexuality law, which imposed a harsh punishment for homosexual acts. The law was struck down in August, but a similar new bill is being considered.



al acts. Cardinal Oswaldo Gracias, archbishop of Mumbai, has openly criticized India's anti-sodomy law. After India's Supreme Court reinstated the law, the archbishop was quoted as saying that the church "is opposed to the legalization of gay marriage, but teaches that homosexuals have the same dignity as every human being, and condemns all forms of unjust discrimination, harassment or abuse." According to the archbishop, this includes the criminalization of consenting sexual acts between people of the same sex, because the church "has never considered gay people criminals."

Bishop Gabriel Malzaire of Roseau, Dominica, and Cardinal Peter Turkson, head of the Pontifical Council on Peace and Justice, have made similar comments regarding the criminalization of sodomy in Dominica and Uganda, respectively. Bishops in South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland and Ghana have called on Catholics this year to stand with the powerless in the face of draconian legislation being passed around the African continent.

Numerous Catholic communities have also embraced sexual and gender minorities, creating a safe space for them in the church and in society at large. In the United States, for

instance, an unofficial survey by Catholic groups found over 200 "gay-friendly" parishes across the country. U.S. priests have reported growing acceptance of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (often grouped together under the acronym LGBT)—particularly among younger parishioners. Even church leaders who have publicly opposed same-sex relationships on moral grounds have called for respect and compassion toward LGBT people. In New York, Cardinal Timothy Dolan welcomed the move to allow LGBT groups to march in the St. Patrick's Day parade in New York City. Cardinal Dolan, who has publicly opposed same-sex marriage, will be the parade's grand marshal next year.

Similar trends have also been observed in Europe. Earlier this year, the bishops' conferences in Germany and Switzerland published reports on the beliefs and practices of parishioners. The reports were based on extensive surveys of German and Swiss parishes and were put together in preparation for the Synod of Bishops on the Family. In both cases, parishioners voiced considerable support for homosexuals. Cardinal Reinhard Marx, head of the German

CNS PHOTO/EDWARD ECHWALU, REUTERS

bishops' conference, has said that the church "has not always adopted the right tone" toward homosexuals, and he has promoted a more welcoming approach.

Keeping Consistent

The meaning and scope of unjust discrimination against homosexual persons is still subject to debate in Catholic circles. But church teaching suggests that, at a minimum, this includes a need to refrain from and condemn violence against people on account of their perceived or actual sexual orientation or gender expression. As Catholic leaders have noted, this includes the criminalization of consenting sexual behavior among adults.

In 1986, then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger wrote: "It is deplorable that homosexual persons have been and are the object of violent malice in speech or action. Such treatment deserves condemnation from the church's pastors wherever it occurs." Subsequent teachings by local bishops' conferences, including a letter by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, reiterated this message of condemning violence.

While this message is not official teaching, the Holy See has also publicly opposed unjust criminal penalties for homosexual people. In 2008, at the U.N. General Assembly, the Vatican representative publicly stated that it "continues to advocate that every sign of unjust discrimination towards homosexual persons should be avoided and urges states to do away with criminal penalties against them. Governments should do away with unjust criminal penalties."

Although the statement did not give examples of these unjust criminal penalties, the Vatican spokesperson pointed out that they include "not only the death penalty, but all violent or discriminatory penal legislation in relation to homosexuals." At a United Nations side event in New York in 2009, the Holy See reiterated its opposition to all forms of violence and unjust discrimination against homosexual people, including discriminatory penal legislation that undermines the inherent dignity of the human person.

Church Failures

Despite these positive examples, many Catholic leaders and communities have ignored or seemingly contravened the church's stated position toward sexual and gender minorities. Instead of upholding church teaching on sexual ethics while decrying violence and a respect for human dignity, many have remained silent in the face of terrible atrocities committed against vulnerable minorities.

In Cameroon, for example, human rights organizations have routinely reported on citizens who are arrested and prosecuted simply for "being gay"—ostensibly determined by their dress, mannerisms or personal tastes. Organizations that work to defend the rights of sexual and gender minorities face horrific attacks. Last year, a well-known human rights activist, Eric Lembembe, was brutally tortured and murdered.

Archbishop Samuel Kleda of Cameroon has not only failed to denounce these deplorable acts; he has actively contributed to an environment of hostility toward sexual and gender minorities. In February 2013 Archbishop Kleda joined a group of Catholic legal professionals to publicly endorse the government's criminalization of homosexuality. During a panel discussion with jurists, the archbishop cited a passage from Lv 20:13 that calls for

Church leaders need to distinguish between morally condemning certain acts and relationships and implicitly or explicitly condoning violence and persecution.

the death penalty for sexual relations between two men. In Cameroon's penal code, a person who engages in "sexual relations with a person of the same sex" can already face a prison term of up to five years.

Since 2006 politicians in Nigeria have debated a series of statutory measures that would criminalize same-sex civil marriage, impose harsh penalties on same-sex couples and even criminalize participation in a group that advocates the rights of sexual and gender minorities. Earlier this year, in a letter to President Goodluck Jonathan on behalf of the Nigerian Catholic Church, Nigerian clergy praised a new law that imposes severe criminal penalties on public displays of affection between people of the same sex as "courageous and wise." Nigerian church leaders have made no effort to condemn violent attacks against sexual and gender minorities after the law was passed earlier this year.

In Uganda the Catholic Church has wavered in its position on a similar bill. In December 2009 Archbishop Cyprian Lwanga opposed Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill, which initially proposed the death penalty for same-sex sexual acts. Archbishop Lwanga called the bill "at odds with Christian values" like "respect, compassion and sensitivity." At the time the Holy See also condemned the bill as unjust discrimination. In June 2012, however, a coalition of Anglican, Catholic and Orthodox churches asked the Ugandan parliament to speed up the process of enacting a version of this same bill.

The Ugandan bill was passed in early 2014. It contained provisions calling for more severe sanctions against people who engage in homosexual acts, including life in prison. The

bill also criminalized related offenses like the promotion of homosexuality and the “attempt to commit homosexuality.” Human rights groups reported an escalation in evictions, violence and discrimination against sexual and gender minorities after the bill became law.

Rather than condemn these attacks, several Ugandan bishops categorically supported the legislation during their Easter homilies. Some came close to tacitly endorsing—or at least excusing—acts of violence. Archbishop Lwanga has more recently published a manuscript noting the need to respect and care for homosexual people, yet as of this writing, the Ugandan church as a whole has done little to condemn the abuses that sexual and gender minorities face. While the 2014 law was struck down by Uganda’s Constitutional Court in August, Ugandan lawmakers have proposed a similar bill, which they intend to pass before the end of the year.

In the Caribbean, the archbishop of Kingston, Jamaica, Charles Dufour, has also refused to condemn both the endemic violence sexual and gender minorities face in Jamaica and the Jamaican government’s criminalization of private sexual acts between consenting adults. In recent years, human rights organizations, the Organization of American States, the U.S. State Department and other governments and organizations have criticized this violence. Beatings, police brutality, torture and murder of people in sexual and gender minorities are commonplace.

As in other parts of the Caribbean, local advocacy groups are challenging Jamaica’s anti-sodomy law. When asked by advocates to clarify the Catholic Church’s position on the criminalization of consensual acts between same-sex partners, Archbishop Dufour said he felt no “need to make any special declaration” regarding the debate in Jamaica. Archbishop Dufour, however, did call attention to the vilification and persecution of religious groups that oppose rights for sexual and gender minorities. Such statements are disheartening. Archbishop Dufour and other leaders in the Jamaican church missed an important opportunity to give substance to the Holy See’s position.

The statements and actions of church leaders have a profound impact on the social environment in which people belonging to sexual and gender minorities live. Church leaders need to distinguish between morally condemning certain acts and relationships and implicitly or explicitly condoning violence and persecution. The failure to do so not only contravenes church teaching, but contributes to a climate of hostility that threatens lives. In the upcoming year, the Synod of Bishops will continue to discuss the church’s family pastoral practices. As church leaders continue to discuss the morality of same-sex unions and whether homosexuals are to be welcomed into the church, they would also do well to condemn clearly and categorically the violence that sexual and gender minorities face in communities around the world. **A**

FORDHAM | CENTER ON RELIGION & CULTURE

Beyond Extremism: Reclaiming Religion’s Peacebuilding Capacity in an Unstable World

Tuesday, January 27, 2015 | 6 p.m.

Costantino Room | Fordham Law School | 150 W. 62nd St. | New York, NY 10023

In the post-9/11 world, where boundaries between faith and global politics are fluid, religion is often criticized for stoking extremism and underwriting violence.

But can the enmeshed relationship between faith and politics also be the starting point for a new era in peacebuilding and conflict resolution?

Join us for a forum on how religious leaders and foreign policy makers can collaborate to lay the foundations for peace in hotspots around the globe.

R. Scott Appleby, Marilyn Keough Dean of the Keough School of Global Affairs, University of Notre Dame

Shaun Casey, Special Advisor for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, U.S. State Department

Robin Wright, journalist, foreign policy analyst, and author of *Rock the Casbah: Rage and Rebellion across the Islamic World*

Eliza Griswold, author of *The Tenth Parallel: Dispatches from the Fault Line between Islam and Christianity*

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

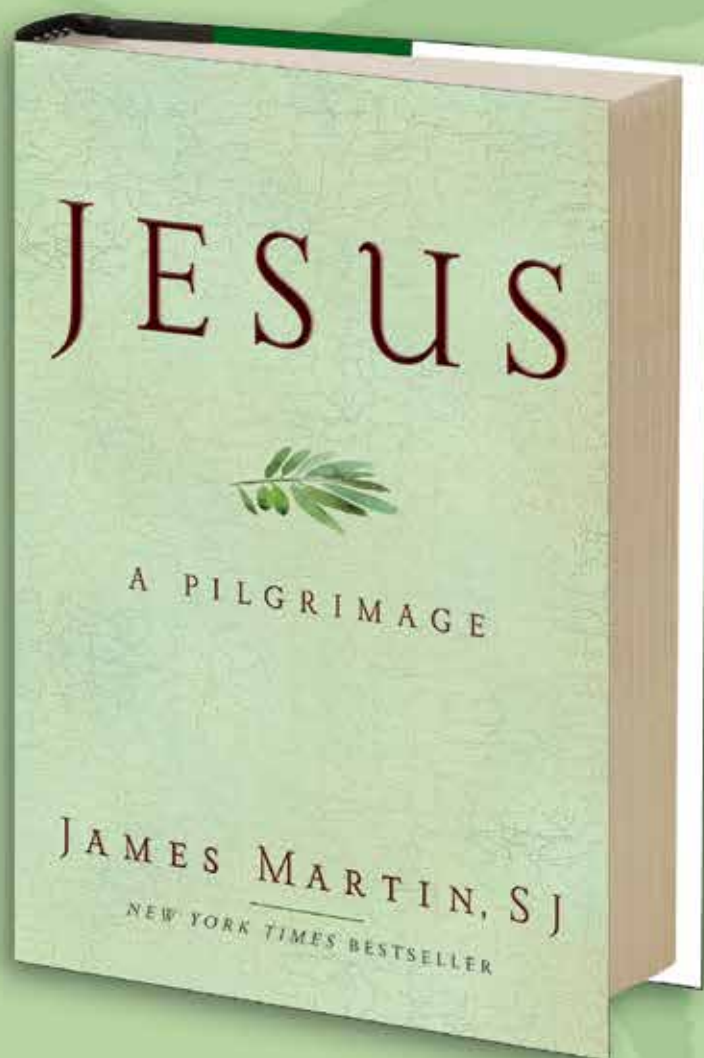
RSVP: crcevent@fordham.edu | 212-636-7347 | fordham.edu/crc



esv/za Image © MANU BRASO/epa/Corbis

FORDHAM
THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

THIS CHRISTMAS, INVITE A LOVED ONE TO WALK WITH JESUS.



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

—Mary Karr, author of *Lit*

“Remarkable.”

—Daniel J. Harrington, SJ

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

—Archbishop Desmond Tutu

“Complex, compelling spiritual
testimony.”

—*Publishers Weekly*
starred review

“A masterpiece.”

—Salt & Light TV

Available Wherever Books and Ebooks Are Sold

 HarperOne

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers

www.harperone.com

Family in Focus

How do we continue the conversation started by the synod?

BY ROBERT P. IMBELLI

America's editorial on the recently concluded Synod of Bishops on the Family rightly speaks of "a remarkable two-week period" ("Go in Peace," 11/10). Anyone who followed the synod knows that it was characterized by passionate debate and even, in some instances, disagreement (which the final "Relatio Synodi," or synod report, did not conceal). However, less noted than the more contentious issues was the common ground evident in confessing and celebrating the sacred nature and sanctifying gift of Christian marriage, as well as the acute awareness that it stands under growing threat in contemporary society.

After noting the drama that gave birth to the relatio, America's editors rightly focus upon the task ahead. They write, "After this October opening, the time for the real work has come" and ask, "How shall that work be conducted?" Let

me offer a preliminary response by saying that the work before us should transpire in a climate of profound prayer, respectful discussion and disinterested discernment. If that characterization of the climate needed for spiritual efficacy is given only notional assent or dismissed as merely pious rhetoric, then the likelihood of fruitful ecclesial discernment will be seriously diminished.

St. Ignatius Loyola places at the very beginning of his Spiritual Exercises a demanding "Presupposition." He writes: "It should be presupposed that every good Christian ought to be more eager to put a good interpretation on a neighbor's statement than to condemn it. Further, if one cannot interpret it favorably, one should ask how the other means it. If that meaning is wrong, one should correct the person with love."

Nothing could be more enervating to the task of discernment than attaching facile labels of "legalist" or "liberal" and using them as excuses for not engaging the considered perspectives and arguments of others. In the spirit

REV. ROBERT P. IMBELLI, a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, is emeritus associate professor of theology at Boston College.

CANONICAL QUESTION. Barbara Anne Cusack, chancellor of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, asks a question about marriage on Oct. 16 during the 76th annual Canon Law Society of America convention in St. Louis.



CNS PHOTO/LISA JOHNSTON. ST. LOUIS REVIEW

of St. Ignatius, the following presumptions should govern the deliberations of the year ahead. All parties concerned should seek to read the contemporary ecclesial and cultural context guided by the light of Christ, the light of the Gospel, as the synod report reiterates time and again. All parties should be committed to a common pastoral concern: to preserve and strengthen the sacred gift of marriage in Christ that has been entrusted to the church. Sobriquets like “conservative Catholic” or “progressive Catholic” (even as a self-designation) should be placed in mothballs. As Pope Benedict XV said in the days of the Modernist crisis, “Catholic Christian” should suffice to express our common heritage and commitment. These presuppositions will not eliminate debate and disagreement, but they can make them productive and bearers of spiritual fruit.

Facing Challenges

There is legitimate concern about several issues that have monopolized the attention of the media. One is access to the Eucharist for Catholics who have divorced and remarried. Another is the welcome extended by the church to persons of homosexual tendencies. Clearly these are grave matters that require prayerful and careful discernment. But the synod report, which should form the basis of our ongoing discernment, treats much more. It would be a serious error to abstract from the whole to focus exclusively on one or another of the parts.

Thus, it is critical that we do justice to the overriding theme of the synod. It has been summoned to deliberate upon “The Pastoral Challenges of the Family *in the Context of Evangelization*” (emphasis added). In the introduction to the relatio, the bishops declare, “the family takes on a particular importance for the church in the present time when all the faithful are urged to venture forth from self. The family needs to see itself as an essential agent in the task of evangelization” (No. 2). (I am amending at times, for the sake of greater accuracy, the English translation that was posted on the Vatican website shortly after the synod meeting concluded.) Then, at the beginning of Part III, which considers “Pastoral Perspectives,” the synod teaches, “Proclaiming the Gospel of the family constitutes an urgent need for the new evangelization” (No. 29).

What is at stake in this discernment is nothing less than the Christian family’s involvement in that new (or renewed) evangelization that the Second Vatican Council inaugurated,

that St. John Paul II articulated so powerfully, that Benedict XVI promoted and that has received its most recent magisterial expression in Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation “The Joy of the Gospel.” The synod has been summoned to explore the Christian family’s indispensable role in witnessing to and proclaiming the joy of the Gospel, which is the joy of Jesus Christ.

In pondering this overarching theme, the synod report organizes its reflections into three major parts. It first gives its attention to the contemporary context in which Christian marriage and family life must be lived. It turns second to the beauty of the church’s proclamation of the mystery of marriage and family life in Christ. Finally, it addresses urgent pastoral concerns in living out that mystery. I would like to

highlight briefly some points from each part.

The relatio admits with sober realism that there are aspects of contemporary society and culture that are not favorable to, or supportive of, committed Christian marriage. Economic factors like unemployment and poverty adversely affect family life, leading at times to family breakup and even emigration. The synod report also considers psychological factors, like rampant individualism and reluctance to enter into binding commitments, especially in the Western world. The synod laments the threats to affective maturity represented by a growing indulgence in Internet pornography and denounces the sexual exploitation of women and children.

In such a brief document, the synod can do no more than signal some of these negative signs of the times that need to be read and addressed by local communities in the light of the Gospel. But it is important to note that the synod’s recognition of these signs derives from an integral evangelical vision of man and woman created in the image and likeness of God, and that threats to that dignity arise from multiple social, cultural, political and individual factors. A comprehensive and catholic discernment must attend to all that frays and unravels the bonds of families and communities.

Beyond these pressing issues, the bishops raise another concern that must be faced and taken to heart. They speak of “the crisis of faith that has touched many Catholics, and that often lies at the origin of the crises of marriage and family” (Nos. 5 and 32). One can suggest numerous reasons for the precipitous decline, in the 50 years since Vatican II, in Mass attendance, sacramental marriages and infant baptisms, especially in North America and Europe. Revulsion at the sexual abuse scandals and the lack of accountability among some church leaders, along with disagreements over specif-

If our discernment regarding marriage and family is not deeply rooted in the mystery of Christ, pastoral accommodation risks becoming merely cultural capitulation.

ic church teaching or discipline, doubtless played a role. Yet the bishops' perception of a profound crisis of faith cannot be dismissed. Indeed, it corresponds to a haunting word of Jesus himself: "But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (Lk 18:8).

The Measure of the Fullness of Christ

Part II of the synod report is titled "Gazing upon Christ: The Gospel of the Family." It is significant that the very first paragraph of this section quotes the talk that Pope Francis gave on Oct. 4, during the prayer vigil, in preparation for the opening of the synod: "In order to navigate our way among these contemporary challenges, the essential condition is to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, to linger in contemplation and adoration of his face.... Indeed, every time we return to the source of Christian experience, new paths and possibilities open." The text of Scripture evoked here is the striking passage in the Letter to the Hebrews where the author exhorts the Christian community: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a cloud of witnesses, let us put away every burden of sin that holds us tightly and run with patient endurance the race that lies before us, our gaze fixed on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith" (Heb 12:1-2).

Thus, both pope and synod urge the Christian community to renewed contemplation and adoration of him who is our only Savior. I believe the practice of eucharistic adoration to be integral to the process of discernment we will undertake in the course of the next year. Indeed, where but at the Eucharist did Ignatius himself draw insight for his ongoing discernment, with regard to both his own spiritual state and his guidance of others?

Developing further its teaching on the mystery of Christian marriage, the synod situates it within the history of salvation culminating in Christ. For Christian faith, the order of creation, with its climax in the creation of man and woman in the image of God, is oriented from the beginning to its fulfillment in and through Jesus Christ. The "divine pedagogy," which the synod report extols, builds upon the primordial relation of man and woman and leads it to its consummation in Christian marriage, wherein it sacramentalizes the spousal covenant between Christ and his beloved, the church.

Such is the radical newness of Christian marriage that the church's doctrinal tradition celebrates and serves. Hence, it would be a grave error to dissociate "doctrine" and "pastoral practice." The latter must be rooted in the former and find its meaning and justification there. Of course, Christian doctrine is not reducible to propositions, since doctrine only seeks to illumine the mystery of Christ. Doctrines are, of their very nature, "mystagogic": leading into the mystery of Christ "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:3).

It is instructive here to consider two of the writings of

the New Testament most explicitly concerned with pondering the intimate and indissoluble union of Christ and the church: the letters to the Colossians and the Ephesians. They can serve well as *lectio divina* for this year of discernment. Each sets forth a wonder-filled vision of God's plan of salvation that has been realized in Christ Jesus. The Letter to the Ephesians celebrates the full revelation of God's will: "to recapitulate all things in Christ" (Eph 1:10). And the Letter to the Colossians, in its great Christological hymn, confesses God's purpose: "to reconcile to himself all things through Christ, making peace by the blood of his cross" (Col 1:20).

Each epistle meditates upon the mystery of Christ and then explores the consequences that flow from faith-filled appropriation of Christ's mystery. Christ's paschal mystery gives rise to a new order of relationships for all is now being transformed in Christ. Thus Ephesians exhorts Christians to put off the old self, corrupted by deceitful desires, and to put on the new self recreated in righteousness and holiness (Eph 4:22-24). Colossians, too, insists that the old self of impurity and covetousness must yield to the new Christic self, for Christ is all and in all (Col 3:9-11).

At the heart of the good news, the joyful newness of the Gospel, is this passover from the old self to the new self that Christ's paschal mystery makes possible, whether lived out in married or celibate life. This is the de-centering and re-centering so often referred to by Pope Francis since his homily to the cardinals the day after his election: Unless Christ and his cross stands at the center, the church becomes only "a charitable N.G.O." In the context of the journey of discernment that lies ahead, let me parse the pope's words. If our discernment regarding marriage and family is not deeply rooted in the mystery of Christ and the new life he inaugurates, pastoral accommodation risks becoming merely cultural capitulation.

Accompanying on the Journey

The theme of "accompaniment" on the Christian journey surfaced often in the deliberations of the synod. It is indeed a pastoral imperative, as the New Testament letters make abundantly clear. But, as they also insist, authentic accompaniment on the spiritual journey requires that the goal, the *telos*, of the journey be luminous: our eyes fixed on Christ. In a memorable passage in the Letter to the Philippians, Paul, having been "laid hold of by Christ Jesus," strives to achieve the goal, "the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:12-14). And Ephesians, in a verse cited in the synod report, urges Christians to "speak the truth in love and thus grow in every way into him who is our Head, Christ" (Eph 4:15). The true growth of the body is always measured by the standard of Christ and the new life that flows from the Head to the members.

In this light, I conclude with a brief reference to two of the issues raised in the third section, "Pastoral Perspectives." The synod report recognizes the urgent pastoral need both to

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN PASTORAL
COUNSELING AND SPIRITUAL CARE



ANDREA NOEL
current M.A. Student

“ I AM ON AN ENDLESS QUEST
TO CULTIVATE
COMPASSION
WITH WISDOM, AND LOVE
WITH TRUTH
AND JUSTICE.”

HOW WILL YOU
ANSWER THE CALL?

Offering the M.A. in Spiritual and Pastoral Care
program with tracks in ministry, chaplaincy, faith
and social justice, and spiritual direction.

Also check out our M.S. and Ph.D. CACREP-accredited
mental health counseling programs in Pastoral Counseling.

Preview Week: Feb. 17-19, 2015

LOYOLA.EDU/ANSWERTHECALL

410-617-5020



LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY MARYLAND

prepare couples for the vocation of marriage and to support young couples in the early years of their marriage. It calls for “a greater effort on the part of the whole Christian community” in this regard (Nos. 39 and 40). It will require generosity and creativity on the part of the whole community to meet this challenge. Yet it is a clear imperative if the family is to fulfill its role in the task of evangelization.

An example of one creative initiative is the attractive catechetical aid for the World Meeting of Families that will take place in Philadelphia in September 2015. This 120-page booklet, prepared by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Pontifical Council for the Family, is titled *Love Is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive*. Its 10 chapters, each enhanced by a work of art, offer a succinct but comprehensive and captivating overview of the Catholic understanding of marriage and family. It can serve well in marriage preparation sessions and parish discussion groups.

A second area calling for careful discernment concerns the process and grounds for annulment. Pope Francis, in a recent address to the Roman Rota, echoed the concerns in the synod report (No. 48) for a more expedited and less expensive process to discern the validity of a marriage of two baptized persons. A particularly delicate question is whether, besides the usual criteria bearing upon validity, one ought, in a highly secularized society, take into account the Christian faith (or lack thereof) of those who entered into the marriage covenant. Even though baptized, was one of the parties, in effect, a nonbeliever, lacking even implicit faith? Does this affect the marriage’s validity, and how can faith’s presence or absence be ascertained?

We embark, then, upon a year of concrete discernment concerning the great mystery and vocation of marriage and family, revealed fully in the experience of Christ’s spousal love for his church (Eph 5:31-32). As we seek to appropriate anew the beauty of God’s purpose for the human race, prayer and the Eucharist, as the synod insists in its “Message to Families,” must provide the indispensable setting and sustenance for our journey.

In the Missal, besides the familiar four eucharistic prayers, there are four additional “Eucharistic Prayers for Various Needs” that are less known and used. The third of these bears the title “Jesus, the Way to the Father.” In it, we offer petitions that might well accompany us through this year of discernment:

O Lord, grant that all the faithful of the Church, looking into the signs of the times by the light of faith, may constantly devote themselves to the service of the Gospel. Keep us attentive to the needs of all that, sharing their grief and pain, their joy and hope, we may faithfully bring them the good news of salvation and go forward with them along the way of your Kingdom.



In the
SERVICE
of the
WORD

2014/15
CATHOLIC
PERSPECTIVES
EVENT SERIES

The Catholic
Media &
The New
Evangelization
Symposium

DECEMBER
13th
2014

PROGRAM FOR THE DAY:

- 9:15AM **Registration and Coffee Social**
- 10:00 **Mass – Feast of St. John of the Cross**
Most Rev. John O'Hara, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of New York
- 11:15 **Opening Session – The Mission of the Catholic Journalist Today**
Welcome: Rev. Msgr. Peter Vaccari, Rector, St. Joseph's Seminary and College
Opening Remarks: Matt Malone, S.J., Editor in Chief, *America*
Perspective on Mission:
Jeanette Demelo – Editor in Chief, *National Catholic Register*
Meinrad Scherer-Emunds – Executive Editor, *U.S. Catholic*
Paul Baumann – Editor, *Commonweal*
R.R. Reno – Editor, *First Things*
- 1:00PM **Lunch** – Courtesy of Saint Joseph's Seminary and College
- 2:00 **Panel Discussion – Reflections on Morning Presentations**
Panelists:
Jeanette Demelo – Editor in Chief, *National Catholic Register*
Meinrad Scherer-Emunds – Executive Editor, *U.S. Catholic*
Paul Baumann – Editor, *Commonweal*
R.R. Reno – Editor, *First Things*
Matt Malone, S.J. – Editor in Chief, *America*
Moderator: James Martin, S.J., Editor at Large, *America*
- 3:00 **Coffee Break**
- 3:15 **Plenary Session with Audience Participants**
- 4:30 **Closing Reception** – Courtesy of Saint Joseph's Seminary and College

THE CATHOLIC MEDIA HAS
A VITAL ROLE TO PLAY IN
RE-PROPOSING THE GOSPEL
IN THE CONTEMPORARY
UNITED STATES.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES
AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR
CATHOLIC JOURNALISTS IN
THE UNITED STATES TODAY?

St. Joseph's Seminary and
College in Dunwoodie,
201 Seminary Ave, Yonkers,
NY 10704

Please register with
Kerry Goleski at 212-515-0153
or events@americamagazine.org.

Seating is limited.

*Suggested donation:
\$25 taken at the door.*



Call to Conversion

Pope Francis is calling everyone in the church to conversion, especially cardinals, bishops and priests. He is doing so first by example and then by words. And he is disturbing not a few in the process.

His call to conversion by example is visible for all to see. He shuns pomp and circumstance; his lifestyle is simple. He lives in a small apartment, moves around in an economy car, refuses honors and never puts himself above the other person. Humility is his hallmark. He is truly concerned for the poor and the excluded, and wants “a church that is poor and for the poor.”

He has spelled out the call to conversion in his daily homilies and especially in “The Joy of the Gospel”—the programmatic document of his pontificate. He invites all local churches “to undertake a resolute process of discernment, purification and reform” (No. 30) so as to be more “mission-oriented.” He acknowledges the need for “a conversion of the papacy” too (No. 31) and is working on that. He encourages everyone “to be bold and creative” in “rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization” (No. 33).

While Francis’ call has energized and inspired many in the church, and indeed far beyond its boundaries, it has clearly disturbed some cardinals and a number of bishops in such countries as Italy, Poland and the United States, as well as in the Roman Curia.

The pope’s call and insistence that this is the time (*kairos*) for mercy makes some uncomfortable, because they feel the substantive truth of Catholic faith

is being contradicted, or is in danger of that, by the course he is steering. Their discomfort arises from a perception that the new pathway abandons some authentic articles of faith. This is especially the case when his call for conversion is a call “to concentrate on the essentials, on what is most beautiful, most grand, most appealing, and at the same time most necessary,” and “not to be obsessed with the disjointed transmission of a multitude of doctrines to be insistently imposed” (No. 33) and to avoid preaching a message that “seems identified with those secondary aspects [of the church’s moral teaching] that, important as they are, do not in and of themselves convey the heart of Christ’s message” (No. 35).

As we have seen in the wake of the meeting of the Synod of Bishops, some are disturbed by the shift in ecclesial culture from one of clarity, ideas and logic to one of induction and real life as the foundation for theological reflection and pastoral practice—a discomfort that arises from a shift in first principles and theological method.

Francis’ call also disturbs those pastors and lay intellectuals who feel that the Catholics who have tried to live by the clear standards of the catechism are being placed second to those on the periphery of the faith. The Argentine priest-theologian Carlos Galli calls this “the elder brother syndrome.” Francis’ call to conversion is hard for them; especially if they see no need for conversion.

I have heard such concerns over the past year in Rome, and from prelates visiting the Vatican, and when I visited

other countries, including the United States. I note, however, that the concerns are not only of a doctrinal, theological kind. They are also of a more practical nature, because Francis’ call is having an impact on their daily lives. A Polish bishop, for example, told me that he and his fellow bishops are “unhappy” because Francis’ emphasis on “a church that is poor and for the poor” has led many Polish Catholics not only to reduce their offerings to the church

but also to ask why their bishops and priests cannot have simpler lifestyles like the pope. In a similar vein, the 40-year-old pastor of a rich parish near Modena, in central Italy, told me, “Francis is robbing us of our ministry; people are now expecting us to act like him.” I have heard

Francis’ call has clearly disturbed some cardinals and bishops.

the very same criticism from bishops.

Francis’ denunciation of clericalism and careerism in the church, and his call to abandon such ways has upset not a few bishops and priests; they lament that the hierarchical order and rules for success that have prevailed in recent decades are being jettisoned. The same is true of his criteria for the selection of bishops and cardinals.

His call to conversion is first and foremost a call for a change in attitudes among cardinals, bishops and priests. It is a call to be humble, welcoming, open, nonjudgmental and merciful. It is a call to reach out to those who are on the peripheries of life and society and to promote a culture of encounter and inclusion, not one of confrontation and exclusion.

GERARD O’CONNELL

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

Everyday Sacraments

Final lessons of love

BY ANGELA ALAIMO O'DONNELL

In late December 2009, on a sunny Florida afternoon, my 81-year-old mother stepped across my sister's kitchen, caught her foot on the hem of her pink bathrobe and fell onto the ceramic tile floor. She landed with sufficient force to break her right hip instantly, the hip opposite the one she had broken 10 years earlier and that had been successfully repaired.

This second break was much worse than the first. The intervening decade had weakened my mother's body and, truth be told, her mind. A lifelong habit of smoking had led to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and a similarly long habit of excessive drinking had rendered her major organs vulnerable. (My mother was a functioning alcoholic for 40 years.) This accident, as well as the surgery that might have saved a healthier person, would prove catastrophic in her weak condition. So began the steady, inexorable disintegration of my mother's living body that would conclude with her death exactly 48 days later on Feb. 1, 2010.

In the course of those 48 days, my four siblings and I were drawn repeatedly from the far-flung places we lived to my mother's side, iron filings to her magnetic field. Each time our planes

landed and we rushed to her bedside, we entered a new stage in what we would eventually understand to be her dying. And each time we arrived, we were newly clueless as to how to deal



with the current round of medical complications and the increasingly volatile emotional firestorms at whose center we had been placed.

Looking back on those days, I am struck by the many moment-by-moment decisions we were forced to consider. While I believe that many of the choices we made were preceded by a process of careful thought and reasoning, I am also aware of the fact that many were made by heart, rather than by mind. We were wandering through strange terrain, and while there were occasional signposts suggesting the right direction to take, there were also signposts pointing in precisely the opposite direction.

We knew we were not in control of the large-scale medical events that

were befalling our mother, so perhaps it seems natural that we found ourselves trying to exercise control in smaller ways. As the doctors and nurses made their regular rounds, introducing new pieces of alarming information, we went about the business of caring for our mother—activities that ranged from feeding, grooming and amusing her to simply sitting by her side—always trying to keep her mind off her pain and her terror. Quite unconsciously, we devised rituals, methods of dealing with disaster that were rooted in the sacramental practice we had learned as children in a working class, Italian-American Catholic family.

My Epiphany

In his essay, "Sacraments," the Catholic fiction writer Andre Dubus describes in loving detail the ordinary process of making sandwiches for his school-age daughters. Dubus was wheelchair bound—the result of a roadside accident—and his limited range of motion required him to develop elaborate methods for accomplishing simple tasks. These ordinary actions, performed slowly and deliberately, took on the quality of ritual, providing him the opportunity to ponder both the practical ends they accomplished and the greater meaning that lay beyond them.

It strikes us as both wonderful and true when we discover, along with Dubus, that this daily task of feeding his children is a kind of sacrament: "A

ANGELA ALAIMO O'DONNELL *a columnist for America, is a writer, professor and associate director of the Curran Center for American Catholic Studies at Fordham University in New York. This article is condensed and reprinted from the author's book Mortal Blessings: A Sacramental Farewell, used by permission of Ave Maria Press.*

COMPOSITE PHOTO: THE AUTHOR'S MOTHER, COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR; SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; EXOPIXEL

sacrament is an outward sign of God's love, they taught me when I was a boy, and in the Catholic Church there are seven. But, no, I say, for the Church is catholic, the world is catholic, and there are seven times seventy sacraments, to infinity."

As an English professor and long-time admirer of Dubus's writing, I had read and shared these words with my students for years. But during the course of those 48 days, engaged in the work of daily, ritual care for a dependent parent, I was able to feel the truth of what had been an intellectual understanding.

The Catholic Imagination

Most of us live our daily lives immersed in the ordinary. Beset by tasks and responsibilities, we accomplish what we can, often by rote and without much thought or deliberation. These habits of daily-ness enable us to function, practically speaking, but they can also blind us to the extraordinary nature of our own lives. In his book *The Catholic Imagination*, the Rev. Andrew Greeley reminds us that Catholic tradition offers human beings both a deeper and a more expansive vision of life:

Catholics live in an enchanted world, a world of statues and holy water, stained glass and votive candles, saints and religious medals, rosary beads and holy pictures. But these Catholic paraphernalia are mere hints of a deeper and more pervasive religious sensibility which inclines Catholics to see the Holy lurking in creation. As Catholics, we find our houses and our world haunted by a sense that the objects, events, and persons of daily life are revelations of grace.

The world in any given moment is, in fact, a sacrament—a revelation of the presence of God—made manifest in the humblest objects. What seems

ordinary in our day-to-day living is not ordinary at all: everything is "enchanted." Seen in the light of the sacramental imagination, the stories of our lives become invested with meaning and importance, from our first breath to our last.

The Latin word *sacramentum* is often translated as a sign of the sacred. In the church, sacraments are ceremonies that direct our attention toward the sacred by means of the mundane. During the consecration, bread and wine signify (and, through the mystery of transubstantiation, somehow *become*) the body and blood of Christ. Similarly, in baptism the pouring of water over the infant's head signifies a ritual cleansing, bathing the child in the waters of life, and also the drowning of the old self and the emergence of the new, a process further signified by the new name the child receives. The words, the actions and the material substances are all signs of the invisible gift of grace. In addition, sacraments are communal in nature. They require participants and witnesses, effectively drawing us into communion with one another wherein all are sanctified.

These elements of ritual, mundane matter and communion were all present in the sacraments we shared with our mother. The rites we devised as we cared for her served a practical function, but they also served a transcendent one. They were, indeed, outward signs of invisible grace, as well as mute testaments to the love we shared with one another—a human, familial love that is, ultimately, an expression of divine love. I was struck by this, even as we were performing these rituals in the intensive care unit at the hospital, in the nursing home and, finally, in her hospice room. At the same time, I was touched by the humble nature of the materials we employed—not bread and wine, but pie and milk—not chrism oil, but make-up and nail polish. Even so, the ordinariness of these substances seemed to intensify

the deep significance of the actions in which we were engaged.

The Sacrament of Pie

A few weeks after her fall, my mother had rallied enough to undergo surgery and was moved to a nursing facility. This was a brief reprieve, days of *kairos* rather than *chronos* time, during which we hoped for her recovery. Each day and hour had its attendant rituals, but the one she enjoyed most was the evening visit. Nightfall occasioned the bringing of an offering, most often in the form of a store-bought key lime pie.

We would process into the room, announce the flavor of the pie, ceremoniously remove the clear plastic cover, cut a generous slice and feed it to my mother. She, in turn, would savor each bite, chewing the crust with some difficulty (as her dentures had been removed), uttering small, childish cries of delight, and then pronouncing how "Dee-LISH-ous" it was. She would wash it down with a sip from the pint-sized carton of Ensure, the fortified milk she was given to drink. We would repeat the feeding, receiving exactly the same response from her, and repeat the sip, until the first piece was consumed. Then we would cut another slice.

I was astonished, both then and now, by the force with which it hit me: this ritual was Eucharist by another name. Here I was, a child feeding my mother, our role reversal reminding me of the innumerable meals she had fed me, beginning with my hidden life *in utero* and continuing into my adulthood. We had come full circle in the round of life we had led, and this ritual served to circumscribe the sacred relationship between mother and child, embracing our shared past even as it unfolded in the present moment. It also pointed to the future, as I realized that I would likely be in her position one day, having my own children feed me. This simple meal was rooted in time, but it also transcended time,

enabling me to see it—and us—in the context of eternity.

It was all this and more. This action indicated our common humanity (we all need to eat to live), but it also gestured toward a greater, spiritual hunger that needs filling in the here-and-now. Our ordinary communion seemed a version of the divine communion we celebrate at Mass, food for the body and the soul that originates in the infinite generosity of a God who came to live among us and who continually gives himself to us in order that we might have life.


There is something about the nearness of death that offers unexpected glimpses into the nature of existence. Actions seen as rote, repetitive and numbingly boring can suddenly become charged with mystery, freighted with history and full of meaning we feel but lack the language to express. These epiphanies redeem the actions themselves, but, more important, they redeem the often fraught and fractured relationships between the people enacting these ordinary sacraments.

Here, through the agency of pie, I was offering my mother everything I had unconsciously withheld from her for years: understanding, compassion, forgiveness and, yes, even love. In response to my offerings, her mantra of “Delicious” served as her “Amen” and sounded to me like a series of acknowledgments: *I know; thank you; I forgive you; and, most moving of all, I’ve always loved you.*

Our spontaneous Eucharist served another sacramental function—an enacting of confession, bestowing on us both forgiveness and mutual absolution. My forgiveness of my mother (she had not been the best) entailed my forgiveness of myself for my own short-comings as a daughter (I had not been the best). As for my mother, in her new-found simplicity of mind and heart, enjoying pie received at the hands of her child, she was mercifully relieved of guilt, resentment or anger.

In the face of extremity, all was forgiven. As it turned out, these sacramental meals were among the last she would eat—a series of last suppers. And so I’ve come to think of them as “mortal blessings”: *mortal* in the sense that they do not—cannot—last; *blessings* in the sense that they impart benediction on giver and receiver.

As Andre Dubus points out in another essay, “On Charon’s Wharf,” “we

are all terminally ill.” All of us are engaged in the inevitable march towards our own mortality. But these sacramental moments enable us to pause in that march, to offer a gesture wherein we give ourselves away and thereby acquiesce to our common fragility and humanity. These are the sacraments of love, not seven in number, but 70 times seven. And each is cause for both sadness and joy. 

Give the Gift of Yourself

**“The life of Jesus is a life for others.
It is a life of service.”** Pope Francis

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps can help you use the gifts that you’ve been blessed with to help others.

We match the skills and experience of adults 50 and better with the needs of nonprofit agencies serving people in need in your community.

To learn more, visit
www.ivcusa.org

 Ignatian
Volunteer Corps
Experience Making a Difference

A RETREAT WITH Rev. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

*Living with Less Fear In Our Lives:
Trusting in a Wise, Prodigal, and
Fully Empathic God*

February 22-26, 2015 • Oblate Renewal Center
5700 Blanco Rd., San Antonio, Texas 78216

Registration fee: \$590 (includes all meals) ~\$550 by Dec. 5, 2014
Lodging also available: single \$60 per night or double \$38 per night per person



For Information: visit www.ost.edu or
contact Brenda at 210-341-1366, ext. 212

ART | LEO J. O'DONOVAN

A SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE

Celebrating El Greco

In honor of the 400th anniversary of the death of the great Spanish master El Greco, significant exhibitions have been held over the past year in Spain, London and the United States. In August, the Frick Collection mounted a stunning, two-painting mini-exhibition, "Men in Armor," that paired the Frick's "Vincenzo Anastagi" and Scipione Pulzone's "Portrait of Jacopo Boncompagni." The National Gallery of Art in Washington, which owns seven significant El Grecos, has joined them with three others from various Washington-area collections.

Now the Metropolitan Museum of Art is showing "El Greco in New York," with 10 works from its own collection and six more from the Hispanic Society of America. Meanwhile, the Frick is presenting its own three El Grecos together on the same wall for the first time. (Seeing "Saint Jerome" at eye level is the special treat here.) The Met's show—on view through Feb. 1—is installed in one long gallery, but it can easily enthrall as well as educate you for several hours.

Born in 1541 in Candia, the capital of the Venetian colony of Crete, Domenikos Theotokopoulos came from a prosperous family and trained as an icon painter in the post-Byzantine style that influenced him throughout his life. In 1567 he sailed for Venice to study the late Renaissance masters, Tintoretto and Veronese in particular, reveling in their rich use of color but struggling to learn anatomy and the placement of figures in space.

In 1570 he left for Rome, where

Michelangelo's muscular form complemented the free brush work and color he had learned in Venice. Known as El Greco ("the Greek"), he still labored with his figures, as is evident in the Hispanic Society's "Pietà" (ca. 1575).



"Cardinal Fernando Niño de Guevara," by El Greco, ca. 1600

Slightly earlier, and more effective, is "Christ Healing the Blind" (ca. 1570), a frequent theme suggesting personal enlightenment and serving also as an early exercise in deep perspective.

The artist's effort to join *colore* and *disegno* was resolved only when, moving to Spain in 1576 in an unsuccessful ef-

fort to win the patronage of Philip II, he more or less accidentally settled in Toledo, where he remained until his death in 1614. Thirteen of the show's paintings come from these years, ranging from the still largely realistic work of the 1580s to the more visionary paintings from the late 1590s on, with their elongated forms, intensified colors, flattened space and almost complete elimination of temporal and spatial details.

The spiritual effect of this consciously chosen style is more important still, however, offering the viewer a painterly equivalent of what St. Ignatius Loyola has in mind when he encourages retreatants to place themselves in the scene they mean to meditate, so that they may draw from it a deeper understanding of what they desire in prayer.

Saints Luke, Francis and Jerome (as a penitent) are all at prayer in touching paintings (each dated about 1600) from the Hispanic Society. Ecstatic prayer and union with God, rather than the anguished suffering typical in the period, radiate from the Met's "Christ Carrying the Cross" (ca. 1580-85). Here Christ caresses rather than carries the cross, his enraptured face looking to heaven in sublime acceptance. There is a startling serenity to the image, as though the Savior were remembering as much as bearing the instrument of salvation. Looking across the room to "The Holy Family" from the same period, you fairly feel the loveliness of grace.

Several paintings well-known to visitors to the Met work to particularly marvelous effect in the show. (You meet them again, rather than looking at them.) This is surely the case with the almost frightening portrait of "Cardinal Fernando Niño de Guevara" (ca. 1600),

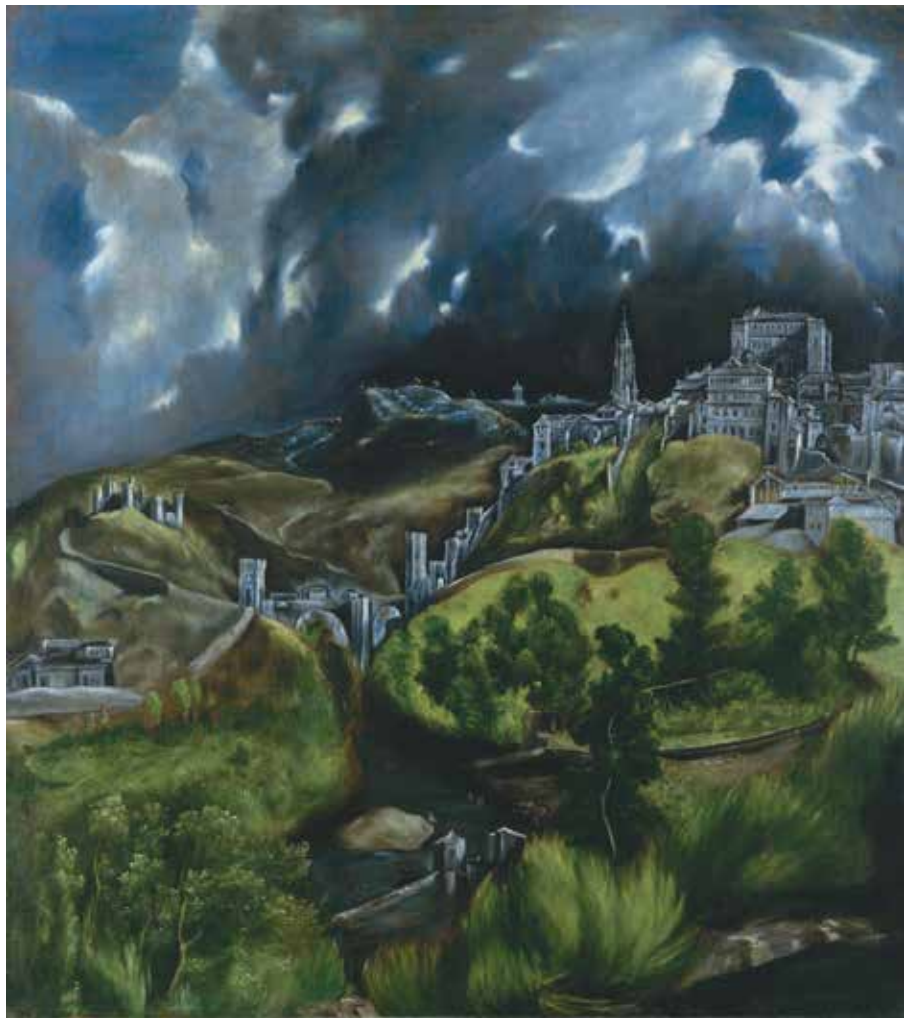
who was named a cardinal in 1596 and then inquisitor general of Spain by Philip III in 1599.

Seated before a wooden door to the left and yellow damask to the right, the cardinal wears prominent dark glasses through which he looks arrestingly but warily at you. His scarlet cardinal's robes are imposing but not overly luxurious. Your attention moves between the hard eyes and the very different hands, the right relaxed, the left strangely clenched. The tiled floor seems to fall away to the left, heightening the overall effect of powerful uncertainty.

The cardinal's portrait was owned (and perhaps commissioned) by his nephew, Pedro Lasso de la Vega, who also owned the Met's celebrated "A View of Toledo" (ca. 1598-99). Less a conventional cityscape than an ideal vision or hymn, "Toledo" is given an olive-green wall of its own and looks more splendid than ever. Seen from the north (whether by night or day is hard to say), the eastern side of the city high and for the most part to the right on the horizon, the Tagus plunging down to the left under the Alcántara Roman bridge, Toledo is identified as imperial by the Alcázar (the royal palace) and as holy by the cathedral and its soaring tower.

And who is this old man portrayed in the corner between the fierce cardinal and the emblematic city? On a small canvas, with his searching, wistful eyes, bald head and gray beard, wearing a high white ruff and fur-trimmed jacket, he addresses you across the centuries, holding your gaze as long as you stand before him. Very likely it is El Greco himself, presented as modestly here as he will be later, unforgettably, as a worshipping shepherd in the Prado Museum's magnificent "Adoration of the Shepherds," of which the Met shows a much smaller version. (El Greco painted the Prado version, between 1612-14, to hang over his own tomb.)

After the "rediscovery" of El Greco



"A View of Toledo," by El Greco, ca. 1598-99

in the 19th century, many great artists became enthusiastic about him. Delacroix owned a small version of "The Disrobing." John Singer Sargent bought a version of "Saint Martin and the Beggar." Cézanne copied "A Lady in a Fur Wrap" (who may have been El Greco's mistress and the mother of his son). Manet found him in general "bizarre" but prized his portraits—as had Velázquez two centuries earlier. Pollock did detailed sketches of his paintings at the Met and in particular of "The Vision of Saint John" (ca. 1609-14), the fabulous fragment (the top third has been cut off) that is the largest piece in the current show. Picasso said the work was "Cubist in construction," and it strongly influenced his brothel scene "Les Femmes d'Alger." "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon."

Seeing this exhibition is first of all

like meeting an old friend—and realizing that the person now means more to you than you ever imagined. Almost all of the work here is religious, and much of it takes your breath away as it strains to reveal the transcendent destiny of our material world, not its end but its transformation into spiritual reality—"the redemption of our bodies," in Paul's phrase (Rom 8:23). We are not entirely sure about El Greco's own personal beliefs, though he lived in the Spain of Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross and Ignatius Loyola, a time of theological renewal and spiritual reform. But clearly he had a passion for interpreting creation, not copying it, in a way that was itself redemptive.

LEO J. O'DONOVAN, S.J., is president emeritus of Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

LOVE AND DEATH IN NEW JERSEY

Richard Ford has never written a frivolous word. So the title of his latest four related novellas, *Let Me Be Frank With You* (Harper Collins), should not be dismissed. It is the fourth of the Frank Bascombe series, about a sportswriter turned real estate agent. Beginning with *The Sportswriter* (1986), Frank leads us through the dissolution of his first marriage following the death of their son, Ralph, of Reyes disease at age 9 to today, when at 68 he prepares for death. At the end of *The Lay of the Land* (2006), he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer and shot twice in the chest by a crazy 14-year-old on a bike.

If the voice in the title is the author's, Ford alerts the readers that he will speak frankly. Or, perhaps, Ford suggests he himself is becoming like Frank; when we read Frank's voice we are reading his.

Each story is an encounter between Frank and characters from his past, each of which tests his values. He says he has been reducing his character to its "default" status in preparation for his final days. That is his essence, free of distractions and failings. Most of his friends are already dead, and losing them has made death mean less to him and life mean a great deal more. Yet for reasons he does not fully understand, other people find they can tell him things they cannot share with anyone else.

Throughout the four Bascombe volumes, Ford has staged these revelations around religious feasts and national holidays that call into play values like human dignity and God's presence: Christmas (twice), Thanksgiving and

the Fourth of July. In Frank's first story he returns to the Sandy-strewn ruins of his own house in Sea Clift, N.J.—washed off its foundation, spread over the grass and asphalt, chimney gone, fireplace standing alone in what was a living room, "a basement once full of bicycles, old uniforms and ancestors' boxes sucked up and blown away." Add images of America where families are torn apart, aimless wars drag on, traditions are shattered. Arnie, to whom he sold his house 10 years before, appears, wealthy but changed, remade by plastic surgery, with a third wife and hair transplant. Put off, Frank tries to escape Arnie's hug, but fails.

At his home in Haddam, N.J., a visitor, Mrs. Pine, tells him that his house was her family home in the 1960s, then stuns him with the revelation that her father killed her mother, brother and himself in their living room. The reader too is stunned, except that we read this every day. "Many times I thought of killing myself," she adds. "I wasn't brave enough."

Every month Frank drives to visit his first wife, Ann Dykstra, who has moved into a "state of the art staged-care facility" called Community Carnage Hill, whose goal is to "re-brand aging as a to-be-looked-forward-to phenomenon" and describes it as a "multidisciplinary experience." So four days before Christmas he delivers his present, a yogi-approved orthopedic pillow recommended to homeo-

pathically "treat" her Parkinson's disease. A spark of their love remains. She tells him she wants to be buried near their son, Ralph. Frank has told Mrs. Pine that he hopes to die before his wife does. The reader wonders where Frank wishes to be buried.

Two days before Christmas, Frank visits Eddie Medley, a rich old acquaintance from the Divorced Men's Club, whom he does not really like but who—with parchment skin, zombie eyes and sunken temples—has summoned him to make a deathbed apology calculated to hurt him. Coughing continually, Eddie asks him about his writing: when you write a book, "how do you know when you have finished it?" Frank confesses he was never good at endings. Eddie gasps "Oh-oh-oh-oh oh!" A smell

escapes from under the covers. Frank, who has no desire to touch him, offers to help him in anything, including an enema. I thought of Jesus, who was willing to touch a leper, or today a victim of Ebola.

Outside Frank meets an old friend, Ezekiel, a 39-year-old black teacher, coach and humanitarian who is collecting food for his church to deliver to the "people sufferin' on the Shore." Streets away, the bells of St. Leo gong out carols.

Ford told me, about 30 years ago in New Orleans, that his one ambition is the same as William Dean Howell's: "to create a literature worthy of America." That he has done, and more.

Frank had
been
diagnosed
with prostate
cancer
and shot
twice.



FROM ARGENTINA WITH LOVE

POPE FRANCIS Untying the Knots

By Paul Valley
Bloomsbury. 288p \$26

THE GREAT REFORMER Francis and the Making of a Radical Pope

By Austen Ivereigh
Henry Holt & Co. 464p \$30

POPE FRANCIS: LIFE AND REVOLUTION A Biography of Jorge Bergoglio

By Elisabetta Piqué
Loyola Press. 328p \$22.95

After endless news articles, interviews, and collections of the pope's own words, is there anything new to learn about Pope Francis? The answer, as demonstrated by the sharply conflicting interpretations of his role in the Synod on the Family, is clearly yes.

For one thing, the last two papacies taught us the importance of national background. John Paul II was unmistakably the child of Poland's struggle against two totalitarianisms. Benedict XVI was shaped by Bavarian Catholicism, the trauma of the Third Reich and the secularism of contemporary German intellectual life.

Poland and Germany, of course, were at the nerve centers of modern history. But Argentina?

Argentina entered the 20th century as one of the world's fastest growing nations. It ended the century the under-achieving victim of five military coups, the false promises of Peronist populism, a murderous campaign of kidnappings by revolution-intoxicated young people and a vastly more murderous "Dirty War" of repression by a right-wing military. Plus constant official corruption and fiscal irresponsibility.

Austen Ivereigh's *The Great Reformer* fills in this Argentine background in extraordinary detail. He distinguishes, for instance, the many flavors of Peronism, a volatile mixture of nationalism, populism, demagoguery and authoritarianism that won support from Argentina's working-class and labor unions, as well as from military personnel and Catholic social activists like the future pope.

For Elisabetta Piqué, in *Pope Francis, Life and Revolution*, much of this background hardly needs elaboration. Raised in Argentina and a veteran foreign correspondent for Buenos Aires's leading newspaper, *La Nación*, she has known the pope since 2001. He baptized her two children. [Ed. note: She is the wife of Gerard O'Connell, *America's* Rome correspondent.]

The Pope Francis she and Ivereigh portray is pretty much the one the world has come to know: spontaneous, plain-spoken, impatient with protocol and privilege, dedicated to the poor and burdened, insistent on mercy rather than inflexible judgment. Both authors underline Francis' determination to change the church. Ivereigh in

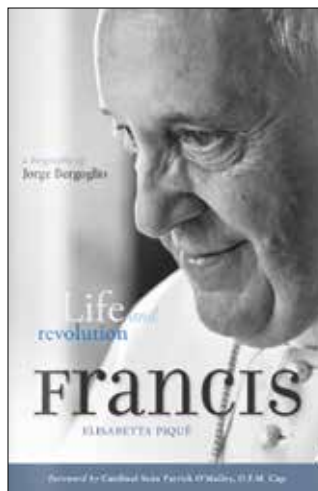
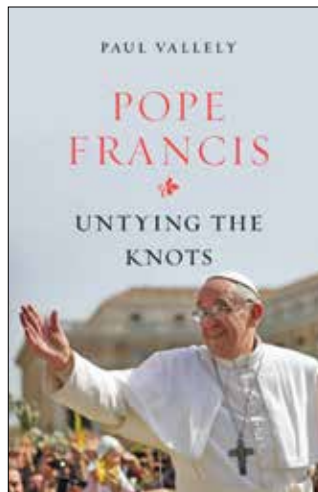
particular makes clear that Francis is no warm-hearted naïf but a politically savvy operator. His election, as Ivereigh chronicles it, did not just happen.

But make no mistake. In the crucial matter of tracing how Jorge Mario Bergoglio, S.J., became Francis, Ivereigh, backed by Piqué, tells a different story

than the other major biography written in English, Paul Valley's *Pope Francis: Untying the Knots*.

There are two controversial chapters in Bergoglio's life. The most publicized focused on his conduct during the "Dirty War." As provincial of the Argentine Jesuits, Bergoglio ordered two left-wing Jesuits to leave their high-risk shantytown post. Did his orders (ratified by Pedro Arrupe, the Jesuits' superior general in Rome) give the military a green light for the arrest and torture of the two priests? More broadly, was Bergoglio complicit in the Argentine church's failure to speak out against the regime's "disappearances," including those of pregnant women whose babies, born in prison, were handed over to military families?

The second controversy was less morally dramatic but may have much greater implications for a Francis papacy: Bergoglio's role at the center of bitter divisions among Argentine Jesuits. Had he led a faction that resisted the



reforms of the Second Vatican Council, ignored the call of the Jesuits' 32nd General Congregation for "action on behalf of social justice" and attacked liberation theology?

Vallely, Ivereigh and Piqué clear Bergoglio of the gravest charges of misconduct during the Dirty War. All agree that he risked himself in heroic efforts to hide and rescue people targeted by the military. But Vallely leaves an impression of some degree of moral failure, whereas Ivereigh finds the Jesuit leader's decisions, under trying conditions, reasonable and blameless. Piqué barely has the time of day for Bergoglio's accusers.

Regarding Bergoglio's stance toward Vatican II and the Jesuits' commitment to social justice, the contrast is starker. Vallely paints the future pope as a determined traditionalist. Ivereigh paints him as a proponent of "true reform" rather than "false reform," using categories borrowed from Yves Congar, O.P., the great theologian of Vatican II. Ivereigh's Bergoglio was deeply committed to the council and to the "preferen-

tial option for the poor"; but in overseeing the formation and education of young Jesuits, he also wanted to maintain Catholic identity and continuity with the past.

Both authors agree that Bergoglio opposed Jesuit proponents of liberation theology, but Ivereigh judges Bergoglio's opposition as a sound rejection of an ideological current at odds with both the church and Argentine reality. When Bergoglio's critics gained the upper hand in the see-sawing among Jesuit factions in Argentina, he was effectively exiled from influence, a break that became definitive when, to the distress of Jesuit opponents, he was appointed an auxiliary bishop of Buenos Aires.

All three authors stress how painful and humiliating Bergoglio found this rejection—he was even peremptorily and formally ordered out of Jesuit quarters while his rooms as auxiliary bishop were being prepared. Ivereigh sees this as the culmination of antagonism from Jesuit liberationists. Vallely treats it as the consequence of

Bergoglio's divisive "meddling."

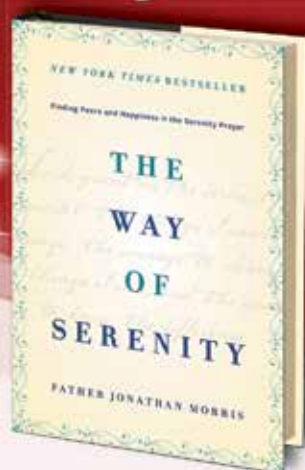
These are not small points. They add up to sharply contrasting narratives. One, Vallely's, is essentially a story of conversion from youthful political and ecclesiastical conservatism. The other, Ivereigh's, is essentially a story of perseverance and ultimate vindication in the pursuit of moderate "true reform."

So, whom to believe? Francis has of course confessed that his governing "style" as a young Jesuit "had many faults." "I made decisions abruptly and by myself"; and this "authoritarian" manner "led me...to be accused of being ultraconservative." But "I have never been a right-winger," he insists. This confession about "style" hardly indicates, as Vallely seems to assume, a change of heart about the substantive issues that separated Bergoglio from his adversaries.

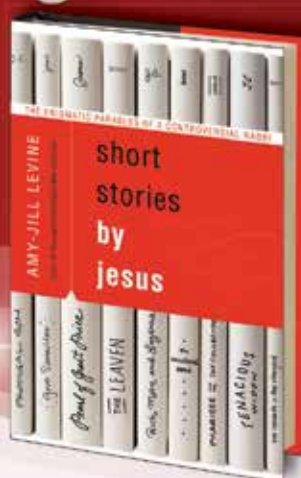
Although these two authors cite many of the same sources, Vallely clearly gives credence to Bergoglio's liberationist opponents within the Jesuits and to crusading Argentinians

This year, give Christmas gifts with meaning.

Prayer




Reflection



Service



 HarperOne

An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers

www.harperone.com

bent upon bringing to justice anyone possibly tainted by the Dirty War. Ivereigh, by contrast, gives much more credence to Bergoglio's close associates and intimates.

If one were to judge on the basis of fuller detail and documentation, Ivereigh would win hands down. He provides footnotes; Valley doesn't. Ivereigh often notes political and ideological agendas of Bergoglio's critics, of which Valley appears unaware. Ivereigh registers the very real support Bergoglio had among younger Jesuits and the resentment this stirred among their seniors.

Personally, I find Valley's thesis that Bergoglio used to be one of those pre-conciliar hold-outs but now is one of us a little too self-congratulatory. On the other hand, at moments Ivereigh seems driven by the apologetic impulse (cf. George Weigel) to portray our popes (even in their pre-papal lives) as paragons of continuity and never seriously in error.

Piqué's account falls solidly on Ivereigh's side. In fact, it is a different sort of book, although it touches on most of the same events. A friend and enthusiastic admirer of Bergoglio from the start, Piqué is interested in illuminating his character rather than hearing out criticism. She sets scenes vividly, using the historical present tense. She makes her points with long quotations. To Valley's and Ivereigh's more distanced accounts, these "insider" voices are a valuable addition. And though my life on deadline does not compare to Piqué's, her every glimpse of writing under pressure, solidarity with fellow journalists and squeezed-in moments with husband and children made the adrenaline surge again in my chest.

Both Valley and Ivereigh warn that Pope Francis' pastoral compassion does not necessarily mean doctrinal flexibility; but if the arc of his life is one primarily of perseverance rather than self-transformation, that is all the more

significant. Ivereigh outlines Francis' guiding principles—his rejection of "ideology" and "elite" theorizing, for example; his emphasis on unity over conflict; his appeals to popular religiosity, as well as his critique of the Enlightenment and his hewing to established positions on contraception and other questions of gender and sexuality. Many are potentially ambiguous in regard to what John Courtney Murray, S.J., declared to be the great unresolved question of Vatican II, how to understand the development of doctrine.

DIANE SCHARPER

THE DEATH RAILROAD

THE NARROW ROAD TO THE DEEP NORTH

By Richard Flanagan
Knopf. 352p \$26.95

The Pacific theater of World War II is often thought of as a forgotten war. But anyone who reads Richard Flanagan's sixth novel, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, will not soon forget it.

Set in a Japanese prisoner of war camp, the story expertly blends fact and fiction as it brings to life a gut-wrenching and soul-changing experience. That is not an exaggeration, and this book is not for the faint of heart.

This novel, which won the 2014 Man Booker Prize, takes the perspective of Australian prisoners who are charged with building the Thai-Burma railway. The title alludes to a travel diary with a similar title by Matsuo Basho, published in 1702, which blends prose and poetry and is sometimes called Basho's death

What happens if some of these principles collide with conclusions emerging from a genuinely collegial church—to which Pope Francis is also deeply committed? And at what point does pastoral compassion demand a reexamination or development of doctrine?

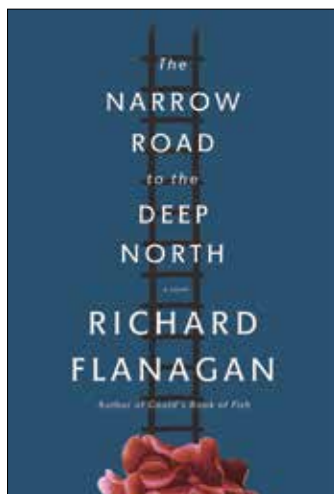
Those are the next unavoidable challenges facing "the great reformer."

PETER STEINFELS, a former editor of *Commonweal* and professor at Fordham University, was the senior religion correspondent at *The New York Times* from 1988 to 1997 and a religion columnist there until 2010.

poem. Flanagan calls Basho's diary the high point of Japanese culture, as opposed to the Death Railroad—the low point.

The plot is loosely based on the memoir of Weary Dunlop, an Australian surgeon who survived the abhorrent conditions as a P.O.W. Dunlop was the voice of compassion and hope to the approximately 1,000 Australian P.O.W.'s. Among them was Flanagan's father, prisoner #335, to whom Flanagan dedicates this novel, which, he said in an interview, took him 12 years to write.

Flanagan filters his novel with poetry, which appears on almost every page and floats into and out of the consciousness of several characters. There are so many literary allusions here—as well as smatterings of poetry and metaphor—that the story could also be called a death poem. Every section of the book begins with a haiku that contains in condensed form the contents



of the chapters that follow. The poetry not only gives the story a universality, but also a dreamlike quality. This works well as Flanagan takes readers into the dreams Dorrigo Evans experiences during his last days.

Dorrigo Evans is a sergeant, surgeon and the story's hero—of sorts. The novel moves from his boyhood in an Australian backwater town to his war years, middle age and old age, when he becomes a national hero, although he feels that he doesn't deserve the accolades. The story ends with Dorrigo, in his late 70s, lying on his death bed. His life replays in frenzied bursts of memory, which can make the story seem incoherent and difficult to follow. The novel, like Flanagan's first, *Death of a River Guide*, is a flashback or, as Flanagan calls it here, a death dream.

One significant moment occurs when Dorrigo falls passionately in love with Amy just before being called up to join his regiment. She, who wears the red flower on the book's cover, which is referred to several times in the story, also happens to be his uncle's much younger wife. Ridden with guilt but unable to contain his feelings, Dorrigo promises Amy that they will be reunited when the war ends. Whether and how this will happen becomes a subplot.

After Dorrigo is taken prisoner,

finding Amy serves as his one hope amid what he calls the terrifying force of evil. Flanagan's numerous allusions to this force give the novel the added resonance of a morality tale. On many levels, this book resembles Dante's "Inferno." Dorrigo even refers to Dante's first circle. This evil force plays out in Dorrigo's own life as he attempts to stand up for his men, even though he has not until this time had the courage to stand up for anything but his own selfish interests.

One also sees the force in the lives of the men he ministers to as their physician as well as those who brutalize Dorrigo and his troops. Colonel Kota, for example, has "no fear or conscience." He feels himself to be in the power of "something demented, inhuman, that had left a trail of endings through Asia." He kills casually, joyfully and brutally. Yet he has an immense love for poetry and recites haiku as he kills.

Another is Sergeant Nakamura, who murmurs a haiku by Basho as he instructs the guards to kick the helpless, emaciated body of an already dying prisoner. Although the Japanese are the villains, Flanagan balances his portrayal by showing the captors as victims of the same evil force. When the two soldiers return home, they become loving fathers and seem little connected to their past.

This "terrifying force," Dorrigo writes, "takes hold of individuals, groups, nations, and bends and warps them against their natures, against their judgements, and destroys all before it with a careless fatalism." One especially wrenching scene occurs as a prisoner is beaten nearly to death and, as Flanagan puts it in an clear reference to the passion of Christ, he "falls for the second time."

The Aussie prisoners are ravaged by cholera, beri-beri, dysentery, tropical diseases, ulcers, gangrene and a starvation diet consisting of a daily serving of a rancid rice ball. They work 15-hour days trudging narrow paths that snake beside steep gorges. They carry shovels, axes, surveyors' pegs, ties, spikes, rails and other equipment necessary to build the Burma Railroad, or, as history calls it, the Death Railroad.

Worse yet are the beatings. The slow, the sick, the starving—and anyone else within range—must be beaten into submission with guns, poles, whips, hands and any weapon available. Sometimes the men fall into churning mud of earth and excrement.

Ultimately, Flanagan's prizewinning novel proves the adage that war is hell. But it takes the horror of that hell to unexpected depths.

DIANE SCHARPER, who teaches English at Towson University, is the author of several books, including *Radiant*, *Prayer Poems*.

CLASSIFIED

Books

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

Positions

Seeking an **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**. The Religious Formation Conference (R.F.C.), which fosters and serves initial and lifelong formation for members of religious congregations of women and men, is seeking a new Executive Director for the national office located in Washington, D.C. The successful candidate must be a member of a Roman Catholic religious congregation and have experience with formation or leadership. Qualifications include a master's degree in theology or equivalent. Applications will be received until March 10, 2015. Go to www.RelForCon.org/EDSearch for more de-

tailed information and application process for the Executive Director position.

UNIVERSITY OF PORTLAND seeks a teacher and scholar for a tenure-track position in sacramental theology. Please visit our website at www.up.edu for more information about this position and the University.

Retreat

Late winter retreat with Ron Rolheiser, O.M.I., "Living With Less Fear in Our Lives: Trusting in a Wise, Prodigal, and Fully Empathic God." Feb. 22–26. Oblate Renewal Center, San Antonio, TX 78216. Information: Brenda at (210) 341-1366 ext. 212.

Rosaries

ROSARIES. Beautiful hand-crafted and Italian rosaries are available at The Rosary Beads Company. Visit <http://rosarybeadscompany.com>.

Sabbatical

THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED THEOLOGY has several spaces still available for its Winter/Spring Sabbatical Program beginning Jan. 19. Presenters include Michael Fish, Gerald Coleman, Carolyn Foster, Jim Zullo, Joann Heinritz and Michael Crosby. Come to our San Francisco Bay location to relax with God and minister to yourself. For more information, go to www.satgu.org or contact Celeste Crine, O.S.F., Associate Director, at (510) 652-1651. Scholarships available.

Translator

I will translate into Spanish your books, articles, essays, pastoral letters, ministry resources, websites and newsletters. Luis Baudry-Simon. E-mail: luisbaudrysimon@gmail.com; Ph.: (815) 694-0713.

To place an ad, visit americamagazine.org.

Waiting on Hope

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B), DEC. 14, 2014

Readings: Is 61:1–11; Lk 1:46–54; 1 Thes 5:16–24; Jn 1:6–28

“Who are you?” (Jn 1:19)

Christians read the Old Testament today, understandably, in light of Christ’s fulfillment of the promises and prophecies found there. It is a simple thing to do, since the early church read the Old Testament in the context of Jesus’ incarnation and teaching and the experience of Easter and then formalized these readings and understandings in the texts of the New Testament.

But what if you were a Jew in the first century, eagerly hoping for the Messiah, a successor to David? These hopes, shared with the whole nation, had been growing since the return from Babylonian exile. As you searched through the panoply of prophecies, you began to wonder: when will these hopes be fulfilled? Who do you look for and where do you start looking? It would be like reading a mystery novel, knowing every clue, studying every sign, but seeing only in retrospect how the whole fits together.

Isaiah 61, for instance, is most often dated to the period just after the return from Babylonian exile, and the author of the passage is generally considered to be the speaker in the text. This prophetic passage emerged, therefore, some five centuries before the birth of Christ. In it the speaker says,

*The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;*

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

*he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and
release to the prisoners.*

In its original historical context and literal meaning, the author speaks of the conditions that the returning Babylonian exiles found, especially when he promises that those returning exiles

*shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.*

It also seems that the post-exilic prophet is speaking of his own role in the restoration of Jerusalem when he says, “The spirit of the Lord God is upon me.”

Yet there is also an eschatological edge to the hopes imagined, especially in the proclamation of “the year of the Lord’s favor,” an event still to come. Christians see the spiritual fulfillment of these proclamations in the person and ministry of Jesus, centuries after they were uttered. The reason is simple: Jesus himself read this passage, according to Luke 4, in the synagogue in Nazareth.

There Jesus says of the Isaian pas-

sage, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Lk 4:21). This we might identify with what Catholic biblical scholarship has called the *sensus plenior*, or “fuller sense,” since it does not obviate the original historical meaning and context but points to a fulfillment of which the original human author was unaware.

This is why the questioning of John the Baptist by some representatives of the Pharisees makes historical and theological sense. The Pharisees, like most Jews of this period, were awaiting the Messiah. Because of the attractiveness of John’s prophetic message of repentance to the people, he was someone who had to be examined. They asked, “Who are you?” In response, John



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

How do you wait in hope for the Messiah at Advent?

confesses that he is not the Messiah, not Elijah, not the prophet and cites Isaiah 40:3, a passage dated to the end of the Babylonian exile: “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord.’” John identifies himself as the fulfillment of long-ago prophecies, not as the Messiah but as the one who prepares the way for the coming Messiah.

But the questions still remained, even for John. Who ever thought that it would happen through a young, unmarried woman, that God would look “with favor on the lowliness of his servant,” Mary? God asks that as we wait for fulfillment we be prepared for God to do new things, unexpected things, and be ready for the unlikeliest of answers.

Fulfillment of Hope

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B), DEC. 21, 2014

Readings: 2 Sm 7:1–16; Ps 89:2–29; Rom 16:25–27; Lk 1:26–38

Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” (Lk 1:34)

The fulfillment of hope, especially divine hope, fundamental hope, does not rest on intricately calculated human plans, in which we chart the future according to algorithms that never vary and on the basis of mathematical certainty await the fulfillment of our calculations. Perhaps this works for 401k plans, but Messianic hope is far more significant than investment strategies.

King David had a plan to build God a house (*bêt* in Hebrew), which here indicates the Temple. David wanted to build the house of God, and initially the prophet Nathan encouraged him in his plan. But Nathan received the word of the Lord that directed David not to build a *bêt* for God, for God would build David a *bêt*, a dynastic house.

This prophecy seems straightforward when Nathan speaks God’s word to David: “I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” Again David is promised, “Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.” Is there a question as to what the Davidic kingdom will be?

Such Messianic promises are scattered throughout the Old Testament, including Psalm 89, where God says of the king, “I will make him the first-

born, the highest of the kings of the earth. Forever I will keep my steadfast love for him, and my covenant with him will stand firm. I will establish his line forever, and his throne as long as the heavens endure.” A king forever on the Davidic throne.

We can understand why it was such a crushing blow when the house of David fell with the Babylonian conquest. The house of God was reduced to rubble, the leaders of the people marched into exile, and a king on David’s throne was nowhere to be found. When the Persians allowed the Judeans to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple, hopes for a restored Davidic kingship began to grow, and they expanded as the king was considered more and more in the light of eschatological and cosmic hopes. God’s kingdom would be established as a kingdom to end all kingdoms.

This would not be an ordinary kingdom, but one that drew all nations to it, that foretold a time of peace and prosperity, that would fulfill the hopes and longings of a people bereft of a king for so long. It was their God, of course, the only, true, living God, who would act to establish this kingdom soon. Whenever and however God would do it, its establishment could not be missed.

Unless, of course, the promise was fulfilled through a young virgin, yet to be married, and her infant son, born in the lowliest of circumstances. Mary

asks the question, when instructed by the angel Gabriel that she would give birth, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” It’s an excellent question. We might ask other questions, such as “Why do it this way? Why an infant child? Why not a king like David, seated on an earthly throne, attracting all to him with his glory and power?”

The angel Gabriel says to Mary, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

With Mary and the Jews at Jesus’ time, we might say that we did not see this coming. But as Gabriel says of

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

How does the past fulfillment of God’s promises guide you to hope at Advent?

Elizabeth’s pregnancy, “nothing will be impossible with God.” And Mary’s final response is calm acceptance: “Let it be with me according to your word.”

As we reflect on how God has confounded human expectations in the past, only to fulfill these hopes more majestically than we could imagine, we need these words on our lips at Christmas: “Nothing will be impossible with God.” However God will do it, be ready, for God fulfills hope in ways never before imagined. We need to be able to say with Mary: “Let it be with me according to your word.”

JOHN W. MARTENS

Please give to those who
have given a lifetime.

Retirement Fund for Religious

www.retiredreligious.org



To donate: National Religious Retirement Office/AMR
3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington DC 20017-1194
Make your check payable to
Retirement Fund for Religious.

Or give at your local parish.

Photo (left to right): Sister Elizabeth Mary Knight, ASCJ, 79;
Sister Carolyn Capobianco, ASCJ, 99; Sister Bridget Esposito, ASCJ, 96.



For more than a century the Jesuits at *America* have invested in you.

JESUIT LEGACY SOCIETY

Join today!

Ways to Give

Help *America* to continue its mission to lead the conversation about faith and culture for years to come. Consider re-membering *America* in your estate plan.

Jesuit Legacy Society Benefits

Your membership involves no annual dues or obligations.

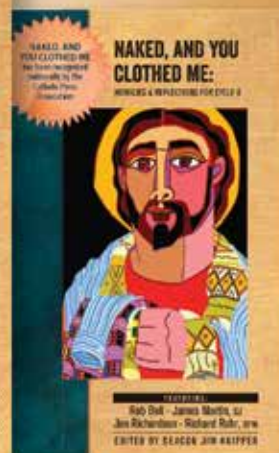
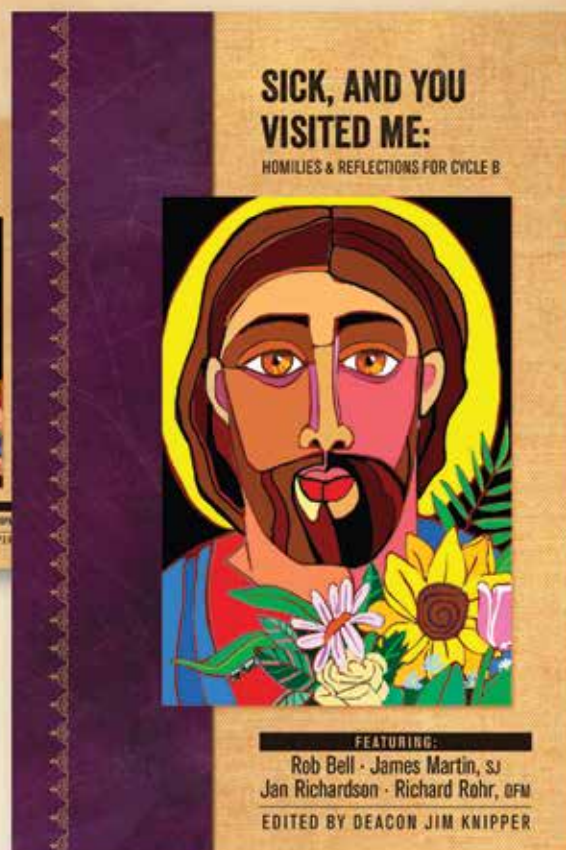
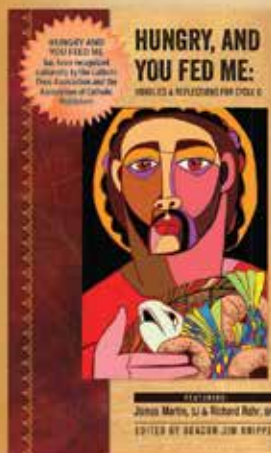
Membership benefits include:

- Inscription of your name in our Jesuit Legacy Society Registry, maintained in a place of honor in *America's* Saint Edmund Campion S.J. chapel.
- Mass of Thanksgiving for the intentions of Jesuit Legacy Society members
- Jesuit Legacy Society Certificate of Membership signed by our president and editor in chief, Rev. Matthew F. Malone, S.J.
- New member recognition in *America's* publications and other platforms, but only with your permission.
- A complimentary 1-year print and digital subscription for a friend or colleague
- Invitations to special events and seminars

"The media may change but the mission is consistent: thoughtful, charitable discourse about the church and the world."

For more information contact Dan Pawlus at 212-515-0118 or pawlus@americamagazine.org

Please note when writing your Will, our legal title and address are: America Press, Inc. 106 W. 56th Street, New York, NY 10019-3803 • (212) 581-4640



NEW RELEASE!

Some of the finest homilists come together under the moniker of "Homilists for the Homeless" in this compilation of homilies and reflections for the Sundays and Feast Days in Cycle B.

The gift made by these contributors make it possible for proceeds of every book to go towards feeding and sheltering the homeless and those in need.

CONTRIBUTORS INCLUDE:

Rob Bell, James Martin, SJ, Jan Richardson, Richard Rohr, OFM, as well as:

Fr. Bill Bausch	Msgr. Michael Doyle	Carol Howard Merritt
Dr. Margaret Blackie	Fr. Jim Greenfield, OSFS	Penny Nash
Joel Blunk	Fr. Paul Holmes	Msgr. Walt Nolan
Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ	Fr. Dan Horan, OFM	Dr. Christine Valters Paintner
Sr. Simone Campbell	Deacon Greg Kandra	Mary Sperry
Dave Davis	Deacon Jim Knipper	Martha Sterne
Deacon Bill Ditewig	Michael Leach	Fran Rossi Szpylczyn
Michelle Francl-Donnay	Fr. Rick Malloy, SJ	Pat Wenrick

Artwork by: Br. Michael O'Neill McGrath, OFSF

**To order your book, go to: <http://clearfaithpublishing.com/homilies/>
To follow us, go to: www.facebook.com/Homilists**