

America



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Religious
Education
Issue

Why Do We Need Catholic Schools?

TIMOTHY M. DOLAN

Newman
on Campus
JAMES J. BACIK

OF MANY THINGS

America

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Last week some boys were rummaging through the attic of a once grand Victorian mansion on Chestnut Place in the old neighborhood. The house had fallen into foreclosure in 2007. They unpacked cartons of hitherto unpublished correspondence between the nephew who owned the house through the mid-1970s and an older uncle who visited very rarely but wrote regularly from all over the world. The letters explored the murky depths of human behavior and the clouds of self-deception that make life seem normal when it is not.

One was written in the summer of 1973, when the Vietnam War was coming to an end and the Watergate hearings were underway, just after the American Indian Movement and federal agents engaged in battle at Wounded Knee and about the time Ian Paisley and his followers broke up the first sitting of the Northern Ireland Assembly. There was discontent everywhere, stoked anger leapt into flames in unexpected places, and the highest authorities in the land couldn't keep what was hidden in darkness from being brought to light.

I share here a portion of one of the nephew's letters that may offer perspective on this, our latest summer of discontent.

Dear Uncle,

We have a moment of great opportunity. The commotion that was aroused five years ago has entered a new phase. Feelings of insecurity mix with dread anticipation of the powerful tumbling from their heights. Old resentments send the middle-aged into the streets and stir young people to violence; and without reconciliation, the hoped-for settlement of old scores promises only decades more unrest. Vengeance is becoming more and more acceptable under the guise of justice.

Everyman sees television as a blessing; but we both know it will prove a curse. Trivial content will drive out serious fare,

and in the absence of moral guidance estheticism will displace the old ways, leaving only raw sensation. Popular culture will be awash in violence. Experts absolve it, saying viewers can distinguish entertainment from reality; but step by step, as our opponents say, souls coarsen. A fascination with the sensations of fine dining will be muddled with the gluttony of pie-eating contests and the hunt for exotically repulsive menus. Musicals will be made of cannibalism; and they will think it smart.

Empathy, that great bulwark of nature holding people back from a war of all against all, withers, to be replaced by endemic rivalry. Not many years hence the game shows of today will be replaced by fantasies of competition plotted with scheming and treachery. Graduates of Jebusite colleges, former Jebusites foremost among them, will make rants more acceptable than reasoned discourse. What a reversal for our relentless old enemies' fantasy of educating the best and the brightest in service of the neighbor.

Controversy without argument will fill the airwaves. Venting will become commonplace, and ears will "itch," as our great adversary Saul wrote—we have to give him credit for an exact metaphor—"itch" to hear the latest outrage. Peddling hate will become a religious duty, and what wrong-thinking people take for progress in overcoming prejudice will be reversed. Self-anointed prophets—thank you, Master, for seducing them—claiming "the Spirit" speaks through them, will look everywhere to find others to hate, ostracize and persecute. The Knights of the White Sheets and Flaming Crosses will rise again. Millions will live by rage.

They believe it can't happen again. "Never again," they say. But you and I know how it begins.

*Your devoted nephew,
Wormwood*

DREW CHRISTIANSEN, S.J.

This local reporter acknowledges his debt to the boys on Chestnut Place, the late C. S. Lewis and the archfiend Screwtape.

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ADVERTISING

Julia Sosa

106 West 56th Street
New York, NY 10019-3803

Ph: 212-581-4640; Fax: 212-399-3596

E-mail: america@americamagazine.org;
letters@americamagazine.org

Web site: www.americamagazine.org

Customer Service: 1-800-627-9533

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Cover: Rosemary Gira, C.R., shares a secret with Christian Castracane at St. Mary of the Angels School in Chicago. Photo: CNS /Sandy Bertog, Catholic New World.

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Mosque Hysteria

Michael Enright's face betrayed fear and perplexity as he became the tabloid news embodiment of America's sudden binge of Islamophobia after his arrest for attempting to murder a Muslim cabbie in New York. Mr. Enright had returned in April from a short tour of duty in Afghanistan as a videographer for an interfaith group. What demons he brought back with him we will never know, but he appears to have carried them to New York. After an afternoon of heavy drinking on Aug. 23, he hailed a cab, questioned the driver about his religion and then began slashing him with a knife.

Most of the voices that have spoken out against the proposed Park51 community center near ground zero in lower Manhattan will deplore Mr. Enright's attack and then deny that their campaign had anything to do with it. Fair enough. No one will ever be able to say for sure what propelled Mr. Enright. But what the "no mosque" pundits cannot deny is the sour contribution they have made to respectful, rational dialogue in U.S. civic life.

Words have consequences; rhetoric is not disconnected from action. Mr. Enright may be unbalanced, and what little self-restraint he possessed may have been broken by alcohol. But civic leaders promoting intolerance and fear cannot offer even these excuses. The voices raised against Park51, formerly called Cordoba House, which would be run by precisely the kind of moderate Islamic leadership the United States should be encouraging, have stirred up an unpleasant neo-nativist brew across the nation.

Initial reaction to Park51 was generally positive. In December 2009 it was described by its founders as a push-back against radical Islam, and it even received a thumbs-up from the conservative personality Laura Ingraham on a Fox News broadcast: "I can't find many people who really have a problem with it," she told a co-founder, Daisy Khan. "I like what you're trying to do." But in May the initiative was discovered by Internet provocateurs who have prospered on Islamophobia. It was not long before political opportunists and assorted talk-radio and cable-TV barkers joined in. "There is no reason for us to accept a mosque next to the World Trade Center," Newt Gingrich said. "Nazis don't have the right to put up a sign next to the Holocaust museum in Washington." "Permits should not be granted to build even one more mosque in the United States of America," Bryan Fischer of the American Family Association wrote, "let alone the monstrosity planned for Ground Zero. This is

for one simple reason: each Islamic mosque is dedicated to the overthrow of the American government."

In May a pipe bomb exploded outside a mosque in Jacksonville, Fla. In August a mosque in California was vandalized, and a suspicious fire broke out at the construction site of an Islamic center in Murfreesboro, Tenn. The heated debate over Park51 has now made home-grown hate a national phenomenon.

A few weeks ago it might have been acceptable for people of good will to support the right of Muslim Americans to practice their faith freely while objecting to the location. But to suggest today, as many have, that this proposed facility is insensitive to the personal loss of so many survivors of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, diminishes the luster of freedom for which 3,000 men and women were killed that day and for which the first responders died.

There are valid rebuttals to the case for impropriety. Park51 is not meant to celebrate the triumph of terrorism, but to confront it; it is a community center, not a mosque; it was intended to promote interfaith relations; it is located blocks from the heart of the World Trade Center site, while businesses and storefronts that hardly honor the sacredness of the suffering and loss experienced at ground zero may be found close by.

But now the ugliness has become widespread. People are being assaulted because of who they are, and constitutionally protected attempts to build mosques are being thwarted out of fear and ignorance. America is beginning to look like the crusading enemy of Islam that Al Qaeda claims it is. Political and religious leaders must cease waffling on this issue and unequivocally support both the right of Muslim citizens to build a place of community and worship—open to all—and the appropriateness of building in proximity to a place where cunning and cruelty took the lives of so many. Park51 can be a counterforce here and abroad to a toxic nativism that is propelling a clash of civilizations most Americans find repugnant. If we allow our worst fears and suspicions to deny Muslim Americans associated with the Cordoba Initiative a chance to do the good work they propose to do at Park51, then we are resigning ourselves and our children to a future of testy relations at home and abroad.



Proposed site of Park51

Hold to the Deadline

The Taliban, according to a cover story in *Time* on July 29, ordered the nose of 19-year-old Bibi Aisha cut off to punish her for fleeing her husband's family, where she was being abused. Later they shot 10 aid workers and stoned to death a young couple who had eloped. If NATO leaves Afghanistan, many tell us, such atrocities will continue. But Aisha's husband, not the Taliban, cut off her nose; and the almost 100,000 foreign troops have failed to reform brutal tribal customs during the nine years they have fought there.

Meanwhile, civilian casualties rise. The U.S. policy is to avoid killing civilians, even at risk to our troops; but recent reports of 52 people, mainly women and children, killed in the Helmand province—condemned as “morally and humanly unacceptable” by President Hamid Karzai—and another 32 a week later, demonstrate that drones and rockets fail to distinguish sufficiently between the enemy and the innocent. According to U.N. reports, in 2009 the great majority of the 2,412 civilian victims were killed by insurgents; 596 were killed by the United States, mostly by air strikes. Nevertheless, local polls show that Afghans, particularly in the villages, blame the foreigners for civilian deaths.

Each week the parallels between Afghanistan and Vietnam become more vivid: the corrupt America-sponsored government; our troops bogged down in a hostile culture and terrain; our military leadership plugged into its “can do” philosophy; our domestic economy stretched to the breaking point; a public uninformed and unconvinced of the war's necessity; and a president stuck with a premature decision to fight and determined not to become, in Richard Nixon's words, “the first president to lose a war.”

Americans must face the fact that we cannot control the world. Given the current burdens on our military and our economic problems, we cannot remake a nation in our image.

Afghanistan will attempt a congressional election in September, and President Obama will re-evaluate our strategy in December. The consensus is growing that he should spell out an exit strategy. Gen. David Petraeus told President Obama last November that if political conditions did not improve in 18 months he would not suggest we stay longer. Mr. Obama should hold him to that commitment.

That we are in Afghanistan fighting Al Qaeda to prevent another 9/11 is a delusion. None of the culprits in the terrorist attacks that day were Afghans. Today Al Qaeda membership in Afghanistan is estimated to be below 100. If

we stay longer, we may kill more Taliban leaders; but there is a high probability that younger and more radical people will replace them.

We should focus on negotiating a way out, with an exit strategy that involves every country with a stake in Afghanistan's future—including Pakistan, India, China, Russia and Iran—with the understanding that no neighboring state may dominate. It should require a plan to administer the development of the \$1 trillion in un-mined mineral deposits—iron, copper, cobalt, gold and lithium—which, if the wealth is equitably distributed, could benefit the whole nation. Afghanistan, once a stop on the Silk Road, could become a land bridge joining Central Asia, South Asia and the Persian Gulf.

The United States prides itself that it has stimulated some social progress in Afghanistan: growth in school attendance, especially by girls; wider health care; and more radio and television stations, cell phones and Internet users. But Afghanistan's needs demand an international humanitarian solution, not a military one. We must ask whether those minor advances are enough on balance to justify the costs and risks of becoming in effect a permanent presence in “the graveyard of empires.”

Peace will call for compromises. President Karzai is already trying to bargain with non-Al Qaeda factions in the Taliban and may cede to them dominance in certain areas. To assert his own authority, he has ordered the phasing out of all private security companies, foreign and domestic, within four months. The September elections are an opportunity to start talking about how power will be distributed in the new Afghanistan as we withdraw.

The Obama administration is already engaged in talks with Afghanistan's neighbors. The challenge is to convince key countries—particularly India, which has already invested in Afghanistan; Pakistan, which is tempted to prefer a weak neighbor; and Iran, which may rather keep America bogged down in an endless expedition—that a neutral and stable Afghanistan is better for all. This is difficult, but we must try. Obama should stress that our 2011 departure is a commitment, not a mere gesture. Our soldiers have done their heroic best. We have wounds to heal. We will honor our troops by bringing them home.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

MEXICO

Bishops Call for Reconciliation On National Bicentennial

As Mexico began bicentennial celebrations of its independence from Spain, the Mexican bishops' conference issued a wide-ranging pastoral letter calling for a national reconciliation of centuries-old divisions over ethnicity, historical interpretations and the often strained relationship between church and state.

"One of the great pending tasks...is the reconciliation among all those that formed this great nation," the bishops said in their letter of Aug. 30. Reconciliation with the past means "accepting our indigenous and European roots, especially Spanish [roots]," the bishops said. It also means "eliminating secular fundamentalism and religious intolerance of any kind." The bishops urged action to fight the country's rampant poverty and called for structural changes so that the country's officially secular education system "becomes a true school of respect and appreciation of the cultural and religious differences."

"The bishops of Mexico think that it would be a sin of omission to stay on the margins and keep silent about...history," said Archbishop Alberto Suárez Inda of Morelia, president of the bishops' commission on the bicentennial. "As citizens and as Christians we consider it a duty to join in the commemoration of these significant historic acts."

The bishops published the letter as a booklet of 140 key points. The first points are dedicated to setting the record straight on the church's complex role in the nation-shaping revolution against Spanish rule, which was fomented on Sept. 15, 1810, by a parish priest, the Rev. Miguel Hidalgo Costilla, and opposed at the time by the Catholic hierarchy. The letter acknowledged the hierarchy's opposition but said that Father Hidalgo and another independence hero, the Rev. José María Morelos, were not excommunicated for their acts of rebellion, despite what is taught in Mexican public schools.

The letter also expressed a desire for today's church to be an active player in national affairs. The bishops called on the political class to develop an "intellectual maturity" by putting aside personal and partisan interests for the national good. "We Catholics have the commitment to collaborate in

the construction of this grand Mexican nation," the bishops said. "We don't want to be excluded nor much less exclude ourselves; we know we are identified with this people and this culture [as is] so clearly expressed in the mestizo face of Our Lady of Guadalupe," they said.

Mexico's bishops marked independence on Sept. 1 at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Special Masses were planned in each diocese on Sept. 15, the day Mexicans traditionally gather after dark to watch re-enactments of Father Hidalgo's *grito*, or shout, for independence made from his parish in the state of Guanajuato.

Even as celebrations of Mexico's past continued, its troubled present was not far from the minds of Mexican

Catholics. In the northeastern Mexican state of Tamaulipas prayers were offered for 72 undocumented migrants whose bodies were discovered on Aug. 24 after what was possibly the largest mass slaying since Mexico began cracking down on drug cartels and organized crime.

CHINA

How to Unite?

The controversy surrounding a bishop in a Catholic diocese about 100 miles outside of Beijing illustrates the problems facing Chinese Catholic communities trying to follow Pope Benedict XVI's



A young man performs an Aztec dance on the Zócalo in front of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City.



instructions to unite. Coadjutor Bishop Francis An Shuxin of Baoding, who spent 10 years under house arrest for refusing to join the government-approved Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, agreed last year to join his local association—a move he hoped would foster unity between Catholic communities that have registered with the government and those that have refused.

In August the government conducted an installation Mass to make Bishop An head of the Catholic community in Baoding. The move was controversial because the Vatican-recognized head of the diocese, Bishop James Su Zhimin, was detained in October 1997 and has not been released. He surfaced briefly in a hos-

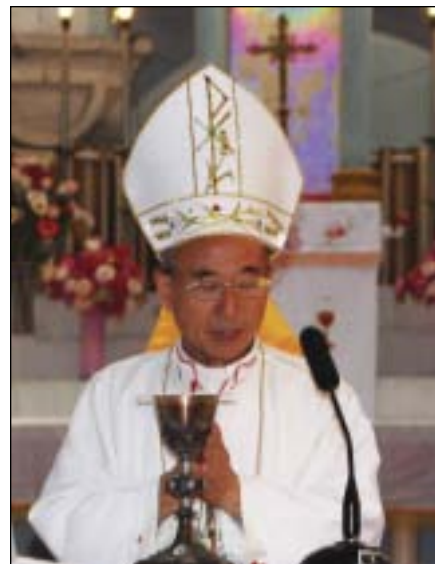
pital in November 2003, but there has been no news about him since then.

The ceremony provoked discord in the Catholic community that Bishop An hoped to unify, and the bishop has been described by some critics as a puppet of the Chinese government. One of the 40 unregistered priests who chose not to attend the ceremony said that at this time there is “no more space for reconciliation” with the registered community. “At a meeting in June, we reminded Bishop An to be loyal to the church, his faith and the pope’s letter. It is he who has not followed the faith, not we who are refusing to reconcile,” he said.

Despite the installation Mass, the Vatican still regards Bishop An as coadjutor. Jeroom Heyndrickx, a Belgian Missionhurst priest who directs the Verbiest Institute at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium and is one of the most authoritative experts on Catholicism in China, said, “It is well known that Bishop An insisted with Chinese authorities that he considers Bishop Su...the bishop of Baoding and himself as coadjutor. Authorities did not contradict that, but they did insist on having such an ‘installation ceremony.’”

Pope Benedict’s 2007 letter to Chinese Catholics urged reconciliation between the two Catholic communities that in some parts of China, like Hebei province, where Baoding is located, operate in the same cities and sometimes even the same parishes. The letter emphasized that some aspects of the government’s religious policies were incompatible with church teaching and said the Holy See “leaves the decision to the individual bishop,” having consulted his priests, “to weigh...and to evaluate the possible consequences” of joining the association.

“I refused to join the [Catholic Patriotic Association] at first after I was released in 2006,” Bishop An said. “I changed my mind after reading the pope’s letter.” Bishop An has become one of the five vice chairmen of the local branch of the Catholic Patriotic Association and director of the Church Affairs Committee. Bishop An said he felt helpless over the divisions in the Catholic community in his diocese and hoped that by taking positions in the government-sanctioned bodies, he could “facilitate the diocese’s development.”



Coadjutor Bishop Francis An Shuxin of Baoding, China

His decision to join the government-recognized association is similar to that faced by thousands of Catholics who suffered after the Communist government closed churches in the late 1950s and during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution. They kept their faith alive under persecution and later had to decide whether or not to worship and work openly within the system under restrictions imposed by the government.

From CNS and other sources.

Bankrupt Diocese Raises \$22 million

Boosting morale in a diocese deeply wounded because of the abuse of children by some members of the clergy in past decades, Catholics in the Davenport Diocese pledged \$22 million in a capital campaign that succeeded despite the worst economic conditions in decades. The campaign was the first in over 20 years for the diocese and came at a time of rebuilding after bankruptcy. "I am absolutely overwhelmed at the response of people for their church," Davenport's Bishop Martin J. Amos said. "The initial need was prompted by the bankruptcy, but the success of the campaign has truly moved us forward in faith and hope." Bishop Amos said volunteers "were absolutely super in listening to fellow parishioners. I think that was a real benefit to the campaign.... People were able to vent about things within the church that troubled them, but at the same time were able to talk about the deep faith that they have and what the church has meant to them in a very positive way."

Pakistani Christians Deliberately Flooded

Nongovernmental organizations in Pakistan report that inhabitants of the Christian village of Khokharabad in central Pakistan were killed and their village obliterated when floodwaters were deliberately diverted into their community. Many villagers drowned; homes and crops were washed away. The N.G.O.'s charge that flooding was "guided" by Jamshed Dasti, a local politician and landowner, who directed construction of emergency dams and barriers, diverting the water to the village to protect his own possessions. The Christians were not notified and had no time to escape, and the entire

NEWS BRIEFS

As France continues its campaign to expel foreign-born Roma, Pope Benedict XVI called on Aug. 22 for greater acceptance of cultural differences and urged parents to teach their children "universal fraternity."

• Opposition to September's **papal visit to Scotland** is dramatically smaller than some had predicted, with one survey reporting that as few as 2 percent of Scots are "strongly opposed" to the visit.

• **Catholic Charities USA**, one of the nation's largest social service networks, will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Sept. 25 to 28 in Washington, D.C. • **The Rev. Raimon Panikkar**, a great scholar of comparative religion, theology and interreligious dialogue, died at his home in Tavertet, near Barcelona, Spain, on Aug. 26. He was 91. • Citing the abundant blessings that have followed the suffering and deaths caused by Hurricane Katrina, Archbishop **Gregory M. Aymond** of New Orleans marked the fifth anniversary of the nation's worst natural disaster on Aug. 29 with a Mass and an interfaith prayer service at St. Louis Cathedral. • The **German Catholic Church** will require all employees who work with young people to obtain police checks and undergo psychiatric tests when necessary, under new guidelines published Aug. 31.



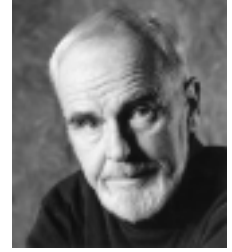
A Roma evicted in Spain

village was wiped out. At least 15 are dead. Taj Masih, one of the village leaders, said: "Dasti, just to save his own land, preferred to leave 377 people without home or harvest, our only source of livelihood. Now we have nothing." Dasti has denied any responsibility in the incident.

Cardinal's Spokesman: No Coverup

A spokesman for Cardinal Godfried Danneels of Belgium said the transcript of a meeting in April with a victim of clerical sexual abuse has been taken out of context. "There was no intention of any cover-up," said Toon Osaer, spokesman for the cardinal, who retired in January as archbishop of Mechelen-

Brussels. "The cardinal [now] realizes he was rather naïve to think he could help the family in question reach a reconciliation," he said. "At that moment, however, the family did not want to make public something they had kept secret for 24 years." Belgium's Flemish-language dailies, *De Standaard* and *Het Nieuwsblad*, published a transcript of the cardinal's April meeting with relatives of the nephew of Bishop Roger Vangheluwe of Brugge. The unnamed nephew had been abused between the ages of 5 and 18 by his uncle. Osaer said, "This was a totally confidential meeting, and the family intended to keep it all within the family," the spokesman said. "This is why the cardinal tried to see if a reconciliation was possible."



How Will They Know?

In his encyclical “Deus Caritas Est,” Pope Benedict XVI joins “the ministry of charity” in proclaiming the word of God and celebrating the sacraments as the expression of the church’s “deepest nature.” What is more, charity, which Benedict equates with love, is called the “indispensable expression” of the church’s very being.

These are inspiring words addressed to everyone in the Catholic Church. But there is a problem: the words are often not matched by reality. To be sure, there are armies of known and nameless Catholics who powerfully witness to love. There are many devoted clerics and vibrant parishes and spiritual movements. Most of us, we can hope, have even had our own high moments, expressive of charity.

But we should be honest with ourselves, especially when considering the church as institution and how it is perceived in the world. Are we known by our love?

Since the encyclical is addressed to everyone in the church, we might want to consider whether the answer to that question has something to do with us.

Indeed, there have been members of the hierarchy who, like Archbishop Mark Coleridge in Australia, have worried about a “clericalism understood as a hierarchy of power, not service.” But there is at least a perception among many Catholics (including the 10 percent who have left the church in the last decade) that power is a greater concern to members of the hierarchy

than service to “proclaiming the word of God,” the sacraments and “the ministry of charity.”

I would be surprised if I were the only priest to have been asked painful questions like the following: Is having a male, celibate priesthood more important than the liturgy itself or than other sacraments administered only by a priest? Why is it supposedly forbidden to even raise this question?

If proclaiming the word, living the sacraments and charity mark the church’s deepest nature, why does it at least appear that our highest priorities are rules and self-protection? In the public eye, the church is perceived as mounting its most urgent opposition in matters of sexuality and ecclesiastical law rather than of justice, charity and service.

Such a confusion of priorities is exemplified in incidents like the full-page indictment and excommunication of a sister who supports women’s ordination while some highly placed clerics, profoundly compromised by their actions of injustice and disordered attachment, seem to be quietly passed over. The confusion is intensified when newspapers throughout the world give front-page coverage to a Vatican document that, by its presentation, appears to assert a strange moral equivalence between attempting to ordain a woman and the abuse of children or the disabled, or the distribution of child pornography. They are all considered “grave crimes.”

I do not think such questions

betray hostility to the hierarchy or the church, although I know many people who have left the church because of them. But there are also many who abide in painful conflict, like the appellate court judge in Illinois who wrote in *The Chicago Tribune* that maybe she should be excommunicated because she has questions similar to those reported above. As a committed Catholic and mother who loves the church, she cannot abandon it, because “walking away would break my heart.”

The encyclical’s inspiring words are often not matched by the reality.

Perhaps the whole church can learn from her. For members of the hierarchy, one hopes that they do not ignore her plight or belittle her complaint. May they always embody what Archbishop Coleridge

calls the way of service, rather than power. And we can hope, for the church and the world, that our bishops’ model for love is the one who said, “as I have loved you.”

As for the rest of us, the Illinois judge exemplifies the fact that none of us can say, “I am the church” or “They are the church.” We are all the church; and our union of hearts and minds is not found in our state of life, but in the saving Lord the church has given us through all its years of splendor and, yes, its crying need of reform.

As his followers, we will be known, then, like the great ones who have gone before us, not for our self-righteousness or anger, our resentment or judgment of others, our human-made laws or pet causes, but for our love.

JOHN F. KAVANAUGH, S.J., is a professor of philosophy at St. Louis University in St. Louis, Mo.



PHOTO: CNS / GREG TARCZYNSKI



The Catholic Schools We Need

BY TIMOTHY M. DOLAN

When St. Paul describes the gifts God has given the church, he includes teaching among the most important (1 Cor 12:28). No surprise there. “Go teach!” was the final mandate of Jesus. History has long taught that without teachers to announce the Gospel and educate the young, the church struggles to survive. Evangelization through good teaching is essential to Catholic life. Pastoral leaders in developing nations say that Catholic education is what attracts people to Jesus and his church. When it comes to education, nobody has a better track record than the church.

In the 20th century, for example, there was no greater witness to the effectiveness of Catholic schools than the Nazi and Communist efforts to destroy them. Pope Benedict XVI’s own beloved homeland—where to be Bavarian was to be Catholic—was perhaps hardest hit in all of Germany. By January 1939 nearly 10,000 German Catholic schools had been closed or taken over by the Nazi Party. Tyrants know and fear the true strength of a Catholic education: what parents begin in the home, Catholic schools extend to society at large.

But what of today’s Catholic schools that exist in a world largely free of those sorts of 20th-century threats? Are we not facing our own crisis of closure for the Catholic school in America?

The answer is yes. Statistics from the National Catholic Educational Association tell a sobering tale about Catholic schools in the United States. From a student enrollment in the mid-1960s of

MOST REV. TIMOTHY M. DOLAN, *archbishop of New York*, has just released “*Pathways to Excellence*,” a new course of long-term planning for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York.

more than 5.2 million in nearly 13,000 elementary and secondary Catholic schools across America, there are now only half as many, with just 7,000 schools and 2.1 million students enrolled.

The reasons for the decline are familiar: the steady drop in vocations to the religious teaching orders who were the greatest single work force in the church's modern period; the drastic shift in demographics of the late-20th century that saw a dramatic drop-off in Catholic immigration from Europe; the rising cost of living since the late 1970s that forced nearly every American parent to become a wage-earner and put Catholic education beyond their budget; and the crumbling of an intact neighborhood-based Catholic culture that depended upon the parochial school as its foundation.

The most crippling reason, however, may rest in an enormous shift in the thinking of many American Catholics, namely, that the responsibility for Catholic schools belongs only to the parents of the students who attend them, not to the entire church. Nowadays, Catholics often see a Catholic education as a consumer product, reserved to those who can afford it. The result is predictable: Catholics as a whole in the United States have for some time disowned their school system, excusing themselves as individuals, parishes or dioceses from any further involvement with a Catholic school simply because their own children are not enrolled there, or their parish does not have its own school.

Widespread Benefits

The truth is that the entire parish, the whole diocese and the universal church benefit from Catholic schools in ways that keep communities strong. So all Catholics have a duty to support them. Reawakening a sense of common ownership of Catholic schools may be the biggest challenge the church faces in any revitalization effort ahead. Thus, we Catholics need to ask ourselves a risky question: Who needs Catholic schools, anyway?

The answer: We all do. Much of the research on Catholic education conducted over the last five decades—from the Rev. Andrew Greeley to the University of Notre Dame; from the National Opinion Research Center to the work of independent, often non-Catholic scholars—has answered with a unanimous voice that without a doubt Catholic schools are an unquestioned success in every way: spiritually, academically and communally. More to the point, the

graduates they produce emerge as lifelong practitioners of their faith. These Catholic graduates have been, are and will be our leaders in church and society.

Consider:

- The academic strength of Catholic schools is unassailable. Researchers like Helen Marks, in her essay "Perspectives on Catholic Schools" in Mark Berends's *Handbook of Research on School Choice* (2009), have found that when learning in a Catholic school is done in an environment replete with moral

values and the practice of faith, its test scores and achievements outstrip public school counterparts.

- Updating the work of John Coleman in the early 1980s, Professor Berends also estimates that two factors—the influence of Catholic values and the fostering of Catholic faith and morals—are the single biggest supports for the

success of many young people, Catholic or not, educated in inner-city Catholic schools.

- Sociologists like Father Greeley, in his book *Catholic Schools in a Declining Church* (1976), and Mary Gautier, in her more recent article "Does Catholic Education Make a Difference?" (National Catholic Reporter, 9/30/05), have found that graduates of Catholic schools are notably different from Catholic children not in parochial schools in four important areas: 1) fidelity to Sunday Mass and a keener sense of prayer; 2) maintaining pro-life attitudes, especially on the pivotal topic of abortion; 3) the personal consideration of a religious vocation and 4) continued support for the local church and community, both financially and through service projects, for the balance of their adult lives.

- Catholic school graduates make good citizens, deeply committed to social justice, the care of the poor and the planet, proud volunteers in the church and in community. The widespread institution of service program requirements in Catholic schools over the last two decades has helped to create an entire generation of generous, socially minded alumni ready to help, no matter the need.

More could be written, of course, about how Catholic schools continue to excel in so many ways, helping to form citizens who are unabashedly believers in the way they live out what is most noble in our American identity. The few points listed above are potent reminders of the many long-term effects that Catholic schools have on the formation of their students. As both history has shown and researchers have documented, there are plenty of reasons for all American Catholics to take proud ownership of Catholic schools.

It is time to recover our nerve and promote our schools for the 21st century. The current hospice mentality must give way to a renewed confidence.

Reviving Catholic Schools

Not only should the reasons behind changes in attitude toward Catholic schools give us pause, but also the consequences of letting this school system decline. If Catholic education promotes lifelong commitment to faith and virtue, a high sense of social justice, greater numbers of religious vocations and an embrace of a way of life based on responsible stewardship, then will not its continued decline risk further erosion in all of these areas? Catholic history can answer this clearly.

In New York, for example, a nagging concern from the 19th century is re-emerging at the start of the 21st. My predecessor, Archbishop John Hughes—famously known as Dagger John for his fearsome wit and readiness to fight for Catholic rights—struggled to rid the New York public schools in the 1840s of their anti-Catholic bias. He was convinced, after watching immigrant families fight discrimination, that “the days had come, and the place, *in which the school is more necessary than the church*” (from James Burn’s *A History of Catholic Education in the United States*, emphasis added). Quite a statement—one echoed by several of his brother bishops, including a saint, John Neuman, bishop of Philadelphia, and the scholar and reformer John Lancaster Spalding of Peoria, who said that “without parish schools, there is no hope that the Church will be able to maintain itself in America” (see David Sweeney’s *The Life of John Lancaster Spalding*). These men understood that until

Catholic schools were up and running, Catholic life would be stagnant. They made the establishment of Catholic schools their priority, and, thank God, most other American bishops followed their example. In 1956, for instance, my own parish in Ballwin, Mo., built its school even before its church, and I am sure glad they did, because that year I entered first grade to begin the most formative eight years of my life.

Given the aggressive secularization of American culture, could it be that Catholics are looking at the same consequences that met those 19th-century prelates? Today’s anti-Catholicism hardly derives from that narrow 19th-century Protestantism, intent on preserving its own cultural and political hold. Those battles are long settled. Instead, the Catholic Church is now confronted by a new secularization asserting that a person of faith can hardly be expected to be a tolerant and enlightened American. Religion, in this view, is only a personal hobby, with no implications for public life. Under this new scheme, to take one’s faith seriously and bring it to the public square somehow implies being un-American. To combat this notion, an equally energetic evangelization—with Catholic schools at its center—is all the more necessary.

The 21st-century version of the Hughes predicament, which tried to establish Catholic rights in the face of a then anti-Catholic America, would seem to suggest that without Catholic schools the church in the United States is growing

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less Catholic, less engaged with culture and less capable of transforming American life with the Gospel message. As long as we Catholics refuse to acknowledge that the overall health of the church in the United States is vitally linked not only to the survival but the revival of the Catholic school, we are likely to miss the enormous opportunity this present moment extends.

It is time to recover our nerve and promote our schools for the 21st century. The current hospice mentality—watching our schools slowly die—must give way to a renewed confidence. American Catholic schools need to be unabashedly proud of their proven gritty ability to transmit faith and values to all their students, particularly welcoming the immigrant and the disadvantaged, whose hope for success lies in an education that makes them responsible citizens. This is especially true for the Catholic Hispanics in the country, whose children account for a mere 4 percent of the Catholic school population. Failure to include the expanding Hispanic population in Catholic education would be a huge generational mistake.

To re-grow the Catholic school system, today’s efforts need to be rooted in the long-term financial security that comes from institutional commitment through endowments, foundations and stable funding sources and also from every parish supporting a Catholic school, even if it is not “their own.” Catholic education is a communal, ecclesial duty, not just for parents of schoolchildren or for parishes blessed to have their own school. Surely American Catholics have sufficient wealth and imagination to accomplish this.

It is both heartening and challenging to remember that

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Catholic churches and schools were originally built on the small donations of immigrants who sacrificed nickels, dimes and dollars to make their

children Catholics who are both well educated and fully American. Have we Catholics lost our nerve, the dare and dream that drove our ancestors in the faith, who built a Catholic school system that is the envy of the world?

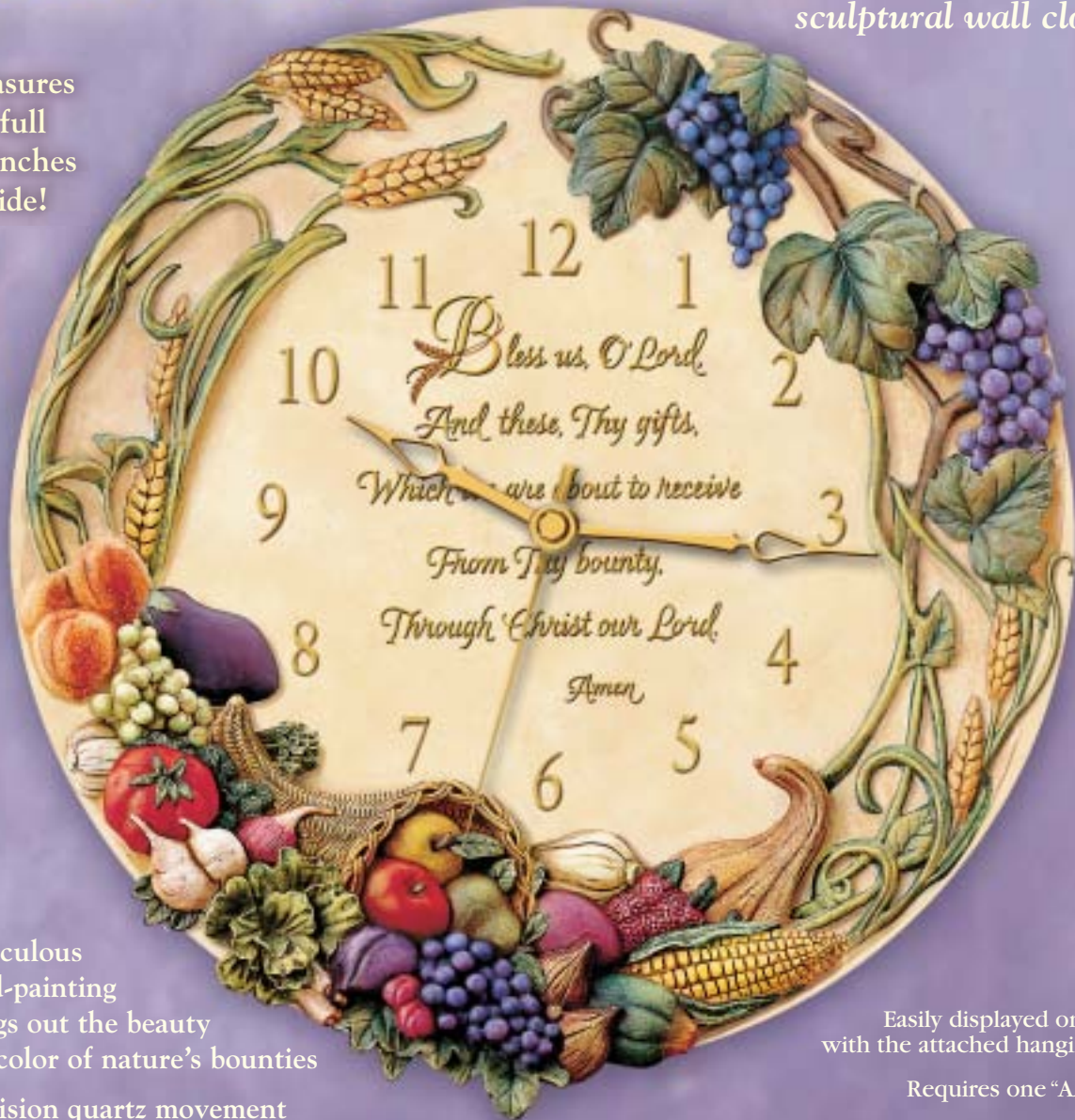
We cannot succumb to the petty turf wars that pit Catholic schools against religious education programs and other parish ministries. Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that the church is all about both/and, not either/or. Strong Catholic schools strengthen all other programs of evangelization, service, catechesis and sanctification. The entire church suffers when Catholic schools disappear.

As the Most Rev. Roger J. Foys, Bishop of Covington, has said: “While there may be alternatives to Catholic education, there are no substitutes.” **A**

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Father John F. Baldovin, S.J. is a Professor of Historical and Liturgical Theology at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry. He's a leading expert on the Mass and has been teaching for 28 years. Father Baldovin is past president of the North American Academy of Liturgy and the international ecumenical Societas Liturgica. He's currently president of the International Jungmann Society for Jesuits and the Liturgy. His previous Now You Know Media series is entitled, *The Catholic Mass Today*.



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Liberating Catechesis

A call for imagination and renewal

BY ROBERT BRANCATELLI

‘A re we confirming them or ordaining them?’ an exasperated parent once asked a bishop after a confirmation liturgy as the two stood talking in the parish hall.

“What do you mean?” the bishop replied.

“Well, it was a two-year program with homework assignments, tests, retreats, parent conferences and service projects. I thought my son was getting ordained!”

The sentiment is perhaps indicative of a larger trend. Since the publication of the English edition of the *Catechism*

of the Catholic Church in 1992, the number of catechetical guidelines, curricula, standards, frameworks, formation programs, magisterial documents and assessments for the church in the United States has exploded. Some of these provide content and structure for handing on the faith to the next generation of Christians. Others are used to train and form those who work in catechesis, including confirmation programs. (See sidebar, pg. 19.)

The scope of official church documents on religious education has also increased, as has the publication of such documents. And there have been numerous training and formation resources developed by publishers, catechetical programs produced by dioceses, diocesan certification institutes, university master’s degree programs and older but seminal documents.

ROBERT BRANCATELLI, a visiting professor at the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education at Fordham University, Bronx, N.Y., was assistant executive director of the Department of Religious Education at the National Catholic Educational Association and taught at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

Cardinal William H. Keeler, Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl and Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick during the National Catholic Educational Association convention in Baltimore in April 2007.

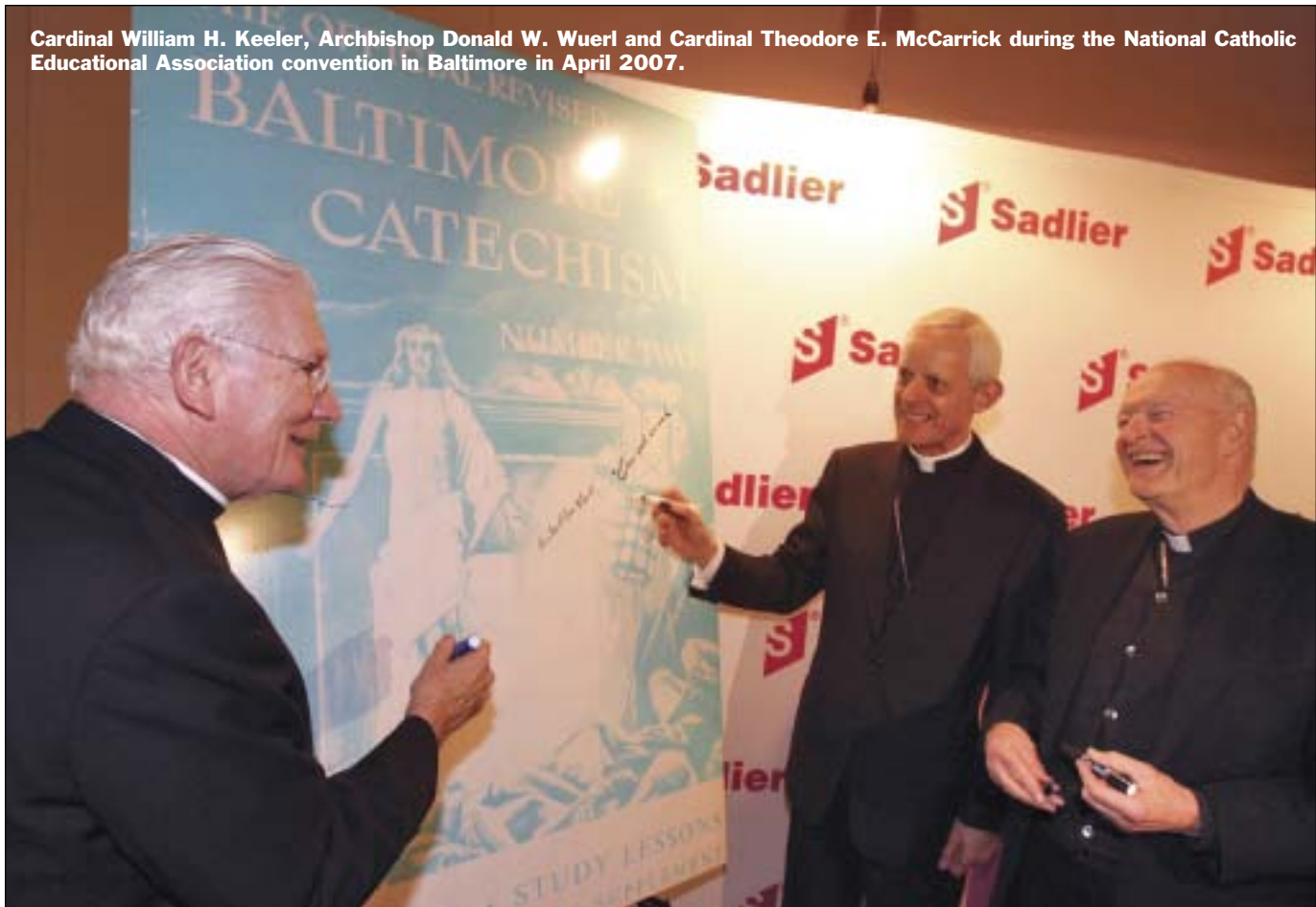


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The seminal documents reflect the church's attempt to standardize a ministry that has experienced its share of instability over the years (compare the description of the church as a "force for freedom" in *Sharing the Light of Faith*, 1979 [No. 190] with the treatment of personal conscience in the current *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 2006 [p. 314]). Standardization has brought about significant gains in the expertise of catechists, the number of catechists and religious education programs throughout the United States and a flowering of adult faith formation as individual Christians respond to the needs of the church. There can be no doubt that the dedication and sacrifice of those working in parishes, schools and campuses across the country are a sign of the Spirit's activity in the church and of hope for the future. Those who are committed to their ministry as administrators, professors, publishers, consultants and speakers also play a vital role in a practical and theoretical way.

But there is a downside to standardization: In seeking to make a profession out of a ministry and create an instrument of ongoing conversion, the church in the United States has modeled itself on its closest secular counterpart—the U.S. education system—and its conceptual framework on education theory. This involves more than the application of developmental psychology to stages of faith or the implementation of age-appropriate learning tools. It includes adopting the latest developments in pedagogy and assimilating the culture of secular education. Religious education now has certification programs, competency standards, learning outcomes, evaluations, mission statements, strategic plans, so-called "best practices" and even preschool programs to ensure that religious education students do not fall behind in the race to achieve excellence. That the goal of each is different does not diminish the overwhelming influence of the larger society on the ministry. This is especially true in a high-tech, media culture in which the method is too often the message.

A Pervasive Influence

The publication of the catechetical documents at issue occurred in a definite historical context. The pontificate of Pope John Paul II was concerned with restoring the solid intellectual footing in catechesis that it believed had been lost in the 1960s and 1970s. In "Catechesi Tradendae," the pope called for the "word of faith" to be delivered "not in a mutilated, falsified or diminished form but whole and entire, in all its rigor and vigor" (No. 30). In calling for the ministry to remain grounded in doctrine, the pope gave expression to the belief that human experience in itself is not revelatory but rather leads to revelation and that there was a serious lack of knowledge of the faith and religious sensibility among the faithful.

This "intentional catechesis," which prizes knowledge of doctrine, liturgy and community, has already moved beyond standardization to institutionalization, with all the official safeguards in place to guarantee its survival. Catechesis now has everything the secular professions have. Professionalization has become the de facto goal of many training and formation efforts, parish mission statements notwithstanding. Catechesis now exists as a subculture in the church with its own language, licensing, rites of passage, governance structures, iconic figures, sacred texts, membership associations, professional education and an annual day of public recognition (Catechetical Sunday).

Has the ministry become too influenced by mainstream education? The same texts used to support the institutionalized view of catechesis also call for a transformation of the heart, mind and soul so that the person catechized is "impregnated" with the word of God ("Catechesi Tradendae," No. 20). But impregnation requires intimacy; intimacy demands risk; and risk has little to do with master catechist certification. There can be no room for an institutionalized mind-set, no matter how well trained or updated the catechist. Pope Paul VI recognized as much when he asked everyone engaged in evangelization and catechesis to move beyond conventional notions of teaching to offer the world an "authentic witness of life" that goes beyond societal norms and gives "hope in something that is not seen and that one would not dare to imagine" ("Evangelii Nuntiandi," No. 21). If the point of evangelization and catechesis is to help people dare the unimaginable, then the best form of catechesis would stimulate the imagination rather than confine it.

There is a need for imagination in the 21st century. What Cardinal Henri de Lubac, S.J. (1896-1991) once referred to as the "drama of atheistic humanism" is making the rounds again as the "new atheism." What this new version lacks in intellectual depth (no one would accuse Christopher Hitchens of being another Nietzsche), it more than makes up for in intensity, which should cause concern. While catechesis remains fixated on uniform standards and conformity to the catechism, society is questioning whether there should be a church at all.

None other than Jürgen Habermas, standard bearer of Enlightenment rationality, now concedes that something is missing in a society that turns its back on religion. Modern liberal states, he declares, are missing "the essential contents of their religious traditions," which alone can "rescue the substance of the human." These contents are the transcendental, mythic, ritualistic and communal aspects of the tradition that historically have moved people out of themselves. They provide meaning not just beyond the material, but beyond the human. In catechesis, one essential element touches on all these aspects: the proclamation of Christ

(*kerygma*). It, too, seems to be missing in action despite laudable attempts, like *Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States* (1993), to keep it foremost in the minds of catechetical leaders. In practice, the growth of catechesis as an institution has coincided directly with a decline in emphasis on the *kerygma*.

One does not need to delve too deeply into the history of religious education to find a similar situation. The modern kerygmatic movement spearheaded by Josef Jungmann, an Austrian Jesuit, began in earnest in 1936 with the publication of Jungmann's *Die Frohbotschaft und unsere Glaubensverkündigung* (translated into English as *The Good News Yesterday and Today*). Jungmann proposed a return to the *kerygma* as a corrective to the abstract, highly deductive approach of the catechetical model in use at that time, which was based on the Roman Catechism. The kerygmatic model stressed salvation history, biblical narrative and liturgical life as a way to make the faith come alive for a new generation of Christians. Jungmann believed that this was crucial, since "all that is genuinely Christian, the truly supernatural—the merciful plan of God revealed in the humanity of Christ, calling for man's inmost participation—all of this has been largely lost from sight. Christianity such as this is not the Good News proclaimed by Christ!"

It might seem unfair to claim that it has been lost from sight again or that the drive to create a professional class of catechists is the latest version of what Jungmann criticized as "conventional Christianity." But there are parallels. The disillusionment of many in ministry, the emergence of a catechetical bureaucracy preoccupied with its own version of No Child Left Behind, the growing number of seekers and unchurched, the failure of American Catholicism to offer a prophetic vision and moral voice to the issues of the day—all point to the conclusion that something has been lost.

What has been lost is the *kerygma*, so there is a need for a second renewal. But new times call for new measures. What worked in the 1930s will not work today, and so a new kerygmatic movement cannot rely on Scripture and liturgy as the basis of renewal, though these remain vital for the church. Rather, the movement must go to the heart of the Christian faith—Christ—as Son in relation to the Father and Spirit, Christ as second person of the Trinity.

A Trinitarian-focused renewal will resonate with contemporary people, who are moved not by professional credentials but by relation and the struggle for freedom. Being-in-relation—Trinity—is the fundamental ground of theology and faith. It is where the Christian understanding of grace, salvation, redemption, forgiveness and suffering comes from. It is also the source of freedom, since entering into relation requires a deliberate movement from self to

Current Resources

Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992)

The first universal catechism to be issued in more than 400 years, the catechism is a uniform compendium of Catholic doctrine.

Protocol for Assessing the Conformity of Catechetical Materials with the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1997)

An evaluative instrument for assessing whether catechetical materials from publishers conform to the catechism. See also *Guidelines for Doctrinally Sound Catechetical Materials* (1990).



General Directory for Catechesis (1997)

A revision of the earlier 1971 directory, this addresses "crises, doctrinal inadequacies, influences from the evolution of global culture and ecclesial questions derived from outside the field of catechesis which have often impoverished its quality" (No. 2).

National Directory for Catechesis (2005)

A corrective to and an expansion of the national directory of 1979, which emphasized human experience, and added "knowledge of the faith" and "missionary spirit" to the tasks of catechesis (No. 20).

National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers (2006)

Sets standards and "core competencies" in the areas of personal and spiritual maturity, ministerial identity, theology, pastoral praxis and professionalism for catechists, youth ministers, pastoral associates, parish life coordinators and music directors. See also *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* (2005)

Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age (2008)

An apologetic approach to curriculum development concerned with imparting knowledge of the doctrine of faith "authentically and completely."

See americamagazine.org for more on these resources.

another. This encounter is both *ad intra*, comprising an authentic experience of self, and *ad extra*, or directed to others in such a way as to create community. As Cardinal Walter Kasper has observed, human beings are “relational and dialogic,” finding their fulfillment in “respectful and loving recognition of the otherness of the other.” As the source and model of relation, the Trinity could become the focal point of this new movement.

A Path Forward

Relation requires equality. A relationship without equality among the parties will result in coercion, direct or indirect. One party’s having the upper hand is not conducive to the *communio* the documents call for. Establishing true equality may require a shift in a faith community’s self-identity, the way it makes decisions, and its definition and exercise of authority. Theologically, it would mean that the expression of Trinity would become manifest in relationships among parishioners and between parishioners and the wider community. Practically, it would require the parish to put its resources into adult faith formation and to institute a governance model based on charisms rather than office. It would also mean that the catechetical program would identify empowerment of the faithful as a goal, rec-

ognizing that knowledge of the faith is an important part of empowerment. Knowing would take a back seat to relating, with emphasis on grace and Christian freedom.

Further, a second kerygmatic movement must take into account the global nature of political, economic, social and cultural issues today. The current economic crisis, for instance, will probably decrease Western aid to Africa, which will affect the development of its infrastructure, including banking, transportation, education and health care. The word of God has much to say about these issues, but unless the horizon of catechesis in this country and elsewhere moves beyond the question of whether a text is in conformity with the catechism, that word will be muffled.

The role of bishops will be extremely important in this new movement of the Spirit. As the head of the local church, the bishop must provide the necessary vision and leadership to inspire the faithful and attract those who have fallen away from the church or have never been part of it. It is up to him to remind the faithful—especially catechists—that they are called to something greater than conventional Christianity; that they have great freedom and opportunity in being called to radical discipleship with Christ. **A**

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Gregory Wolfe, Founder & Editor of *Image*

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Ann Astell, University of Notre Dame

October 21, 2010 - Driscoll Hall Auditorium - 7:00 PM

Augustine in the Italian Renaissance

Meredith Gill, University of Maryland

November 11, 2010 - Driscoll Hall Auditorium - 4:30 PM

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James Wilson, Villanova University

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David Cregan, OSA - Student Theatre Production

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Gregg Garrett, Baylor University

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Habits of Mind and Spirit

What campus ministers can learn from Blessed John Henry Newman

BY JAMES J. BACIK

Since 1893, when Catholic students at the University of Pennsylvania established the first Newman Club in the United States, Cardinal John Henry Newman has been associated with Catholic campus ministry. His beatification this September offers an opportunity to reflect anew on how his life and thought can guide and enrich campus ministry today.

My own reading of Newman is colored by many years of serving at state universities, but the following five guidelines can be applied to a variety of ministerial settings.

1. Leave the ghetto. Campus ministry is more faithful to its mission when it moves off the periphery and close to the center of campus life. Newman's academic career at Oxford University offers guidance. After attending Trinity College at Oxford, Newman was elected a fellow at Oriel College, a position that provided comfortable lodgings, good food, social position and sufficient income for life. Newman totally immersed himself in the life of the university and once said he wanted nothing more than "to live and die a fellow at Oriel." In 1825, he was ordained an Anglican priest and a few years later was appointed vicar of St. Mary the Virgin Church, which served as the university church, a position that brought him even closer to the heart of Oxford life.

Campus ministry does well to follow Newman's lead. He challenges the still common temptation for campus ministry to confine itself to the restricted arena of church concerns, and he encourages a ministry that embraces the academic world and its vital interests. Leaders of the faith community who heed Newman's example are inclined to collaborate with administrators and faculty members in helping the university live up to its own highest ideals. They are also in a better position to encourage Catholic students to be involved in campus life and to take advantage of its many opportunities for personal growth and service to others.

2. Cultivate relationships. Campus ministry

thrives when rooted in healthy personal relationships. When Newman was a teenage student at Oxford, he received very little direction or guidance from anyone in the Oxford system. Consequently, as an Oriel fellow he took very seriously his responsibility as a tutor. Rejecting the traditional detached approach to tutoring, he met personally with students and helped them develop as whole persons. From 1833 to 1845, Newman also worked collaboratively with colleagues, especially John Keble and Edward Pusey, in the Oxford Movement, which endeavored to reform the Church of England. They wrote tracts on theological topics in order to promote dialogue on matters important to the reform movement.

Leaders who have cultivated good relationships with



THE REV. JAMES J. BACIK, *the pastor of Corpus Christi University Parish in Toledo, Ohio, is also a campus minister and adjunct professor of humanities at the University of Toledo.*

ART FROM PHOTO ©GNS/ COURTESY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND WALES

administrators and faculty increase their opportunities to minister at the center of university life, for example, by serving on a university ethics committee or giving a presentation on Catholicism to a class on world religions. Many campus ministers do some of their best work interacting with individual students as spiritual directors, counselors or mentors. Catholic students can do their part to spread the kingdom on campus by cultivating healthy relationships with students of other religious traditions. In all the interpersonal relationships that constitute campus ministry, Newman exemplifies generous, enlightened commitment to the other.

3. Focus on conversion. Reflecting on conversion in a broad sense can help ministers facilitate personal development. Newman's own conversion from Anglicanism to Catholicism was largely intellectual. Through a close study of the Church Fathers, he became convinced that the Catholic Church had best preserved the traditions of the patristic period. In 1841

Newman published the famous "Tract 90" that claimed Catholicism provided the key to understanding the Anglican tradition. Widely attacked for his views, he withdrew into a long period of intense reflection. Four years later, Newman resigned as a fellow of Oriel and was received into the Catholic Church.

Newman's intellectual conversion forced upon him great emotional challenges. Separating from his beloved Oxford was intensely painful. He suffered from the continuing attacks of Anglican colleagues and from the distrust of some within the Catholic community. He needed an affective conversion to maintain psychic equilibrium and carry out his new duties as a Catholic. Newman had an especially keen sense of the role of conversion in personal development. He knew from experience that transformative change is essential to full growth as a person and a Christian. As he famously put it: "To live is to change and to be perfect is to have changed often."

In "Empowered by the Spirit," the 1985 pastoral letter on campus ministry that still serves as a guide today, the U.S. bishops list among the six fundamental ministerial functions the personal development of all the members of the faith community, including faculty, staff, students and campus ministers. Influenced by Newman, the great 20th-century Jesuit theologian Bernard Lonergan stressed the need for conversion in all the dimensions of human life. Expanding on this central insight, one can think of campus ministry as facilitating the healthy development of the physical, emotional, imaginative, intellectual, moral and religious

dimensions of life. This suggests a wide variety of approaches and programming: encouraging students to exercise and eat properly; offering a workshop on managing stress; counseling individuals with low self-esteem; providing opportunities for campus ministers to continue their theological education; offering seminars on sexuality and other key ethical issues of the day; and providing prayerful liturgies with homilies that link the Christian tradition to the joys and crosses of everyday life.

Wise ministers help students discern which dimension of their lives needs attention if they are to progress in Christian discipleship. For some, it may be setting aside time for daily prayer, while for others it may be avoiding

binge-drinking. Individuals who give personal witness to the ways the Holy Spirit has guided their personal development serve as an inspiration: for example, a student on retreat recounts his struggles with the capital sin of lust; a biology

teacher gives a presentation to colleagues on the importance of her Catholic faith.

4. Form a community. Campus ministry has the vitally important mission of forming communities that foster Christian virtues. A few years after Newman's ordination as a Catholic priest in 1846, Archbishop (later Cardinal) Paul Cullen of Dublin asked him to help establish a Catholic University there. Newman was excited by the opportunity to introduce elements of his Oxford experience into Ireland and gave a series of lectures in 1852 that formed the basis for his classic study *The Idea of a University*.

For Newman the purpose of a liberal education is less to inculcate virtue than to form a "habit of mind which lasts through life, of which the attributes are freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation and wisdom." Education at its best is not a matter of reading much or accumulating a great deal of information; it is, rather, learning "how to think, reason, compare, discriminate, and discover and contemplate the truth." Liberally educated individuals have acquired the habit of "viewing many things at once as a whole, of referring them severally to their true place in the universal system, of understanding their respective value, and determining their mutual dependence." The goal of liberal education is to help form "the gentleman" with a "cultivated intelligence, a delicate taste and a noble and courageous bearing."

By recognizing the inherent limits of even the best liberal education, Newman opens up space for the church on campus to function as a community of virtue. All the members are responsible for creating a communal setting where

It is important that campus ministry form a Christian community where the future leaders of society and church can practice virtuous living.

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Christian virtue is practiced and learned. Campus ministers are called to be authentic models of the servant leadership taught by Jesus. Committed and caring faculty members demonstrate the Gospel teaching of love of neighbor. Students who make newcomers feel welcome in their liturgy, meetings and social events exercise the virtue of hospitality. The common celebration of the Eucharist is the definitive school of virtue for collegians today. It is the event that draws people into community, instructs in the word and nourishes for the task of living the Gospel. With the contemporary weakening of the Catholic subculture, liturgy becomes even more crucial in socializing young people into the Catholic tradition.

Christian service projects are another important school of virtue, especially when combined with theological reflection. Students who spend a summer working with the poor in Latin America or a day volunteering at a local food distribution center learn firsthand something about the Gospel challenge to help those in need as well as the social situation of the less fortunate. Guided reflection on the experience is an effective way to learn more about Catholic social teaching. Retreats are still another good way of forming community and fostering Christian living. Because students are not learning in the classroom to be virtuous persons, it is all the more important that campus ministry form a Christian community where the future leaders of society and church can learn and practice virtuous living.

5. Teach the faith. Campus ministry has a responsibility to creatively appropriate the faith through theological education. Newman saw theology as an important element in

liberal education and offered the following arguments for including it in the curriculum: theology is a legitimate discipline and universities should not arbitrarily exclude it; religious doctrine involves a claim to genuine knowledge that deserves to be examined in an academic setting; Christianity claims that God is implicated in history and thus history should be examined from a Christian perspective; and theology helps us see things whole and gain an integrated view of the world so that we are not narrowly one dimensional. For Newman, “theology occupies our language, it meets us at every turn in our literature, it is the secret assumption, too axiomatic to be distinctly professed, of all of our writers; nor can we help assuming it ourselves, except by the most unnatural vigilance.” Religious truth is “not only a portion but a condition of general knowledge.”

Newman challenges campus ministry to find ways to overcome religious illiteracy and help students gain a mature understanding of their Catholic faith. Newman’s rationale for the study of theology can be supplemented by the argument of John Courtney Murray, S.J., who contended that students have a right to examine their own religious tradition and to learn more about the world religions that inform various cultures.

Campus ministers can also promote religious studies on campus: by identifying existing courses that deal with religious matters; working with administrators and faculty to establish a department of religious studies or a major; and encouraging faculty members to teach courses on values or ethics in their field. Within the faith community, ministers can sponsor lectures on theological topics, seminars on ethical issues and Bible study that includes modern critical methods as well as faith-sharing.

An important recent development is the establishment of chairs of Catholic studies at universities. Typically, campus ministers have initiated the idea, gained support from the university and the local diocese, consulted with Catholic faculty members and raised money for an endowed position that is administered by the university. There are now 10 or more of these, including one on my own campus home at the University of Toledo.

This whole effort draws campus ministry into the center of university life and provides a place for the Catholic tradition in the public arena—an endeavor very much in the spirit of Cardinal John Henry Newman. **A**

ON THE WEB

From 1909, an appraisal of Cardinal Newman’s sermons. americamagazine.org/pages

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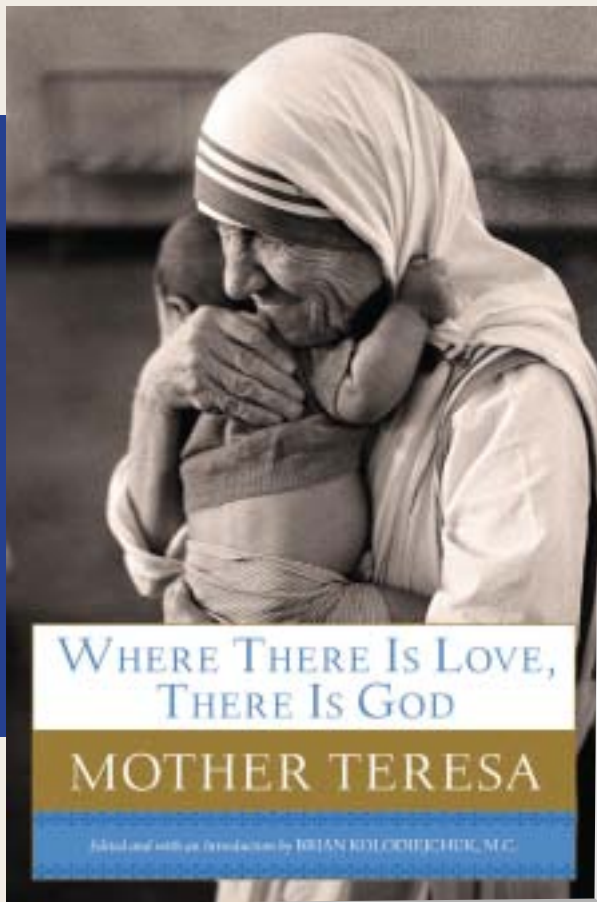
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BOOKS & CULTURE

MUSIC | ELIZABETH ELLIOTT

SING A NEW SONG

The grass-roots debate about liturgical music

When the St. Louis Jesuits, one of the most popular singer/songwriter groups in the post-Vatican II church, began playing their music, they were often perceived as aspiring rock musicians, said Dan Schutte. "Before the Mass started, the congregation would say, 'Oh, my gosh, they're bringing the guitars in!'" he said. "People's whole image of contemporary music was connected with what they had seen on TV, like

the Beatles or the Grateful Dead." Schutte, a member of the St. Louis Jesuits and now composer-in-residence at the University of San Francisco, said those same people would come up after Mass with a much more positive reaction.

The debate about the use of contemporary music and traditional music has been a part of church life for ages. But since the Second Vatican Council, which called for "full, con-

scious and active" participation during Masses, the battles in Catholic parishes have intensified. Should music directors use newer songs, which may be unfamiliar to congregations, or older ones, which may seem out of date? When and how should a music minister introduce a new song? And what if no one in the pews likes it, or can sing it? Serving the congregation is a balancing act.

At the Grass Roots

Nicole Chambers Cook, of Omaha, Neb., who for three years was the director of music ministry at St. Columbkille Parish in Papillion, Neb., knows the importance of striking the



CNS PHOTO: GREGORY A. SHEMITZ, LONG ISLAND CATHOLIC

Of the Tibetan Lion Dog

For young Jack is a small lion in my house.

—Hunt Hawkins, “My Cat Jack”

For there is the Thunder-Stop, which is the voice of God direct.

—Christopher Smart, “Of the Spiritual Musick”

For the parts of the Tibetan lion dog are as follows:

For the heart is murmurous but sound;

For the head is a chrysanthemum nuzzling the tall grass, but softer,
more smellable yet;

For the nose leather is black, polished, and the shelf of the nose
precise;

For the fleecy white bellyhair seems edible to children;

For the torso is a stretched and sturdy monument when the lion dog
guards our house, sphinx of the sliders;

For the right forepaw of the sphinx is precious paw, ever curled
to the pettable chest;

For the tremor in the neck is both theatrical and worrisome;

For the pituitary tumor is a goad to the adrenal glands;

For the tail is a plume but in her last days ratskinned;

For the golden coat is now sparse, the keratoses not;

For the pancreas is a vindictive organ, furious with fat;

For the flux is pure blood;

For the blood is the blood of Paper Dragon and Yobo Ting-Yay,
of Sonny Boy, Spot, and Judy, of the ancestral palace pets;

For the teeth are as sharp as my conscience;

For the eyes are on me as the lion dog roars and relaxes.

M. B. POWELL

M. B. POWELL has published widely on medieval literature, and her poetry has appeared in various reviews. She teaches English at Pierce College in Puyallup, Wash. This poem was third runner-up in this year's Foley Poetry Contest.

right balance. “Much of what we now consider traditional was at one point considered contemporary, and where would we be without it?” she said in a recent interview. “I love when traditional songs are brought into a contemporary setting—for instance, “How Great Is Our God,” by Chris Tomlin—because it shows the juxtaposition of the two and brings together older and younger generations of the church in prayer.”

Schutte prefers a combination of different types of music. “The ideal would be to have a traditional hymn, Gregorian chant and contemporary song in worship,” he said. Schutte stressed the importance of performing the music well, so that parishioners who may not like a certain type of music might come to enjoy it more easily.

On one end of the “contemporary versus traditional” divide are churches that celebrate the Latin High Mass, like the Church of Saint Agnes in St. Paul, Minn. “Our repertory includes orchestral Masses by classical and some Romantic composers, like Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Gounod and Herzogenberg,” said Virginia A. Schubert, who is secretary and executive director of the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale. “We sing about 27 orchestral Masses each season, from October until Corpus Christi.”

Michaela Glesinger, a mother of three from St. John’s Church in Omaha, believes that more contemporary music might help her teenagers keep focused through Mass. “I would like to see the Catholic Church make a real effort to find ways to keep our teens and young adults more represented in Mass, and I think a more contemporary approach to liturgical music is one way,” she said.

Is New Music Singable?

I asked several singers if they felt that congregations and choirs could sing newly composed music. Many believed



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they could if the songs are not too demanding. But some musicians, like Chambers Cook of Papillion, believe it depends upon the singer. "The youth I work with find it very easy to sing, while the older musicians find it a little more challenging," she said. "A lot of what is written now, because of the more gentle melodies and accompaniments, is a better backdrop for prayer, while the older more traditional melodies and voicing lend themselves to congregational singing on your typical Sunday."

Duane Gallagher, a guitarist at St. John's Church in Omaha, believes the music of some composers tends to be easier to sing than that of others. "Dan Schutte's songs tend to be easier to learn than those by David Haas," he said, whereas songs by Bob Dufford, John Foley and John Michael Talbot tend to be more difficult. "It depends on the simplicity, and 'flowingness' of the song's melody," he said.

Introducing New Music

Learning new music can be a challenge for both the choir and the congregation. If the choir cannot read music, repeated practices may be necessary. Mylene Suzara, the music director at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Goose Creek, S.C., explained in an e-mail message how she and Mary Gertner, the choir director, teach new music: "We have a volunteer choir, and nobody in our choir reads music. The choir attends weekly choir rehearsals, and we plan in advance to teach new music to them.... As long as our choir has had several weeks to practice the new music, they have not had any difficulties in singing it."

Their congregation also picks up new music over time, Suzara and Gertner said. "When we have a new piece, we plan that piece to be used for the next couple of weeks so that our congregation can become familiar with it." They described theirs as "a singing

parish,” in that “after they hear the new piece of music a couple of times, they can sing the new music like their regular music.”

Suggestions from music directors on how to introduce new music to the congregation focused on repetition. “I would suggest using the piece several times within the given season so [the people can] hear it more than once and are given a fair chance to learn it,” said Nancy Chmiel of Omaha. “Maybe introduce slower pieces that work as psalms, so the congregation has to learn only the refrain at first.” She added, “The preparation of the gifts is also a good place to introduce a new piece.”

Williams suggests publishing an announcement in the weekly bulletin or newsletter that new music is on the horizon. “It might be helpful to walk the congregation through a piece a few minutes before the service begins,” he said. Chambers Cook said she likes using technology to introduce new music. “I like the idea of advertising a link in the church bulletin so that people can go to the parish Web site and listen to some of the new music the congregation will be singing,” she said.

The placement of new music is also paramount. “I dislike it when brand new pieces are done during the gathering, Communion or recessional,” said Chambers Cook. “Those are times when everyone should feel very much a part of what’s going on, and that’s considerably more difficult when you don’t know the music being sung.”

John Rudzinski, choir director at Good Shepherd Church in Shawnee, Kan., said he, too, introduces new music seasonally. “First, it is played instrumentally as a prelude or a meditation for at least two weeks,” he said. “Then the cantor/choir/ensemble performs the piece as a solo. Finally the piece is partially taught before the welcoming at the liturgy.” He finds that such a process takes time “but is worth the planning and the repetition.”

Contemporary Music Challenges

For some, the use of contemporary music can be a challenge because of lack of money and resources.

“It is relatively expensive to introduce any music that is not printed in our hymnals,” said Thomas Kodera, choir director at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Lees Summit, Mo. “For this reason, many times I will select pieces for the choir to offer alone, without community participation.”

“Our hymnals are also becoming dated,” Kodera added, but “I cannot justify replacing our current hymnals before the new missal changes are introduced.”

Darla Sullivan, choir director at St. Pius X Church in Omaha, finds it a temptation to think the music must always please the congregation or choir or pastor. “A good music liturgist is like a good parent; we listen and understand but sometimes have to challenge people to new heights,” she said. “That being said, it should also be our primary goal to engage the congregation and draw them into the transcendent reality that the liturgy

presents to us.

“It is far better to err on the side of simplicity and let the essence of the liturgy speak for itself than to distract from it with flourish and whimsy,” added Sullivan.

The debate continues. But, as those on the ground have shown, bringing contemporary music to a parish is possible. It takes gently introducing

music to congregations, ensuring adequate preparation time for choirs, being sensitive

about when new music is introduced and bringing a healthy mix of traditional and contemporary music into parishes and updating traditional songs. The experience of these parishes shows how music, new and old, can help congregations “sing to the mountains, sing to the sea,” as the St. Louis Jesuits would say.

ELIZABETH ELLIOTT is a freelance writer in Omaha, Neb., who majored in music and journalism at Creighton University. For over 20 years she has played flute for church-related events and can be heard on the recordings “Days of Yesteryear” by Patrick J. Cullen, and “Spirit & Life” by Tony Ward.

ON THE WEB
Jake Martin, S.J., reports from the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.
americamagazine.org/culture

BOOKS | SUSAN LANG ABBOTT

LISTEN UP

THE NEXT GENERATION OF PASTORAL LEADERS

What the Church Needs to Know

By Dean R. Hoge and Marti R. Jewell
Loyola Press. 160p \$11.95 (paperback)

This is the fourth book from the Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership Project. The project has three goals: provide solid research on parish pastoral leadership, stimulate conversation about the use of pastoral imagination to create vibrant parishes and explore ways in which national

associations can collaborate to serve the church. The co-authors of this study, Dean R. Hoge and Marti R. Jewell, contribute significantly to fulfilling the first two goals, bringing scholarship and expertise to the task. The late Professor Hoge, a well-respected researcher, was a sociology professor at Catholic University for over 30 years. Jewell, assistant professor of theology in the School of Ministry at the University of Dallas, is the former director of the Emerging Models project.

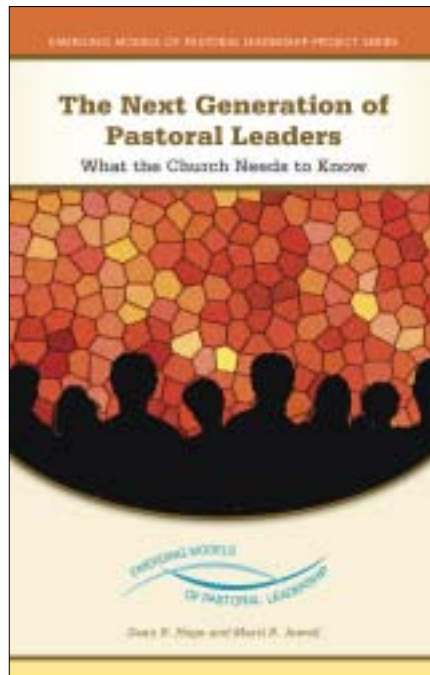
The book begins with a look at

shifting demographics in the church in the United States, and it is against this backdrop that the authors present the fruit of their labors. Hoge and Jewell conducted online surveys of young adult Catholics from across the country drawing from two groupings—college campus ministry programs and diocesan young adult lists—to get at their thoughts about faith and their attitudes toward the church, both positive and negative.

Readers familiar with studies of lay ecclesial ministry, pastoral leadership or the challenges of parish mergers will find little groundbreaking information here. But do not dismiss this book; it is well researched and worth reading. This study asks the next generation of pastoral leaders for their comments and opinions, and herein lies the book's value. The authors are not talking about them, but rather with them. Respondents provide information and perspective for today's church and the church of the future. The chapters maintain a balance between survey responses in table form and narrative provided by the interviewees.

Included in the survey are questions about vocations to the priesthood and vowed religious life. It becomes clear that respondents believe God's call is not limited to these vocations. The young adults surveyed consider lay ministry to be a call from God too: thousands, in fact, are already answering that call, working in full-time lay ministry in parishes or diocesan positions. One respondent acknowledged that today's young adults are second-generation lay ministers. Her parents' generation, she comments, "paved the way." Other young adults likewise refer to their parents' involvement as volunteers and lay ministers in their parish. Young adults are dedicated to God and the church. They want to make a difference and want to serve. They expressed a firm belief that lay ministry is not a "stopgap" measure until priestly vocations increase. It is here to stay.

Some, however, cited reasons for not pursuing lay ministry—interest in another career, for example, a commitment to having a family and the low pay. "Interested in another career," in fact, consistently came up in the responses. (The authors suggest that proposing lay ministry as a career option at an earlier age may have a positive impact.) The demanding



schedule of parish work concerned several young adults, who spoke about wanting to spend time with a spouse and children. It is no surprise that low salary is also a deterrent. When asked, however, what issues they would bring to their bishops if given the opportunity, financial support came in next to last. Their primary concerns are for a better appreciation of and support for lay ministry, for more opportunities for spiritual development, greater financial support (this includes, in addition to salary concerns, funding for youth ministry and young adult ministry) and more credentialing.

Six administrators of lay training programs were also interviewed for the book. They unanimously agreed there is an adequate supply of candidates for available positions (with the possible

exception of youth ministry positions) but acknowledged lay ministry does need more young people. They also noted a more conservative ecclesiology among today's students.

The final chapter offers recommendations from the young adults. Heading the list is the need for more attention not only to their age group but to college students—advice that came from both ends of the ecclesiological spectrum. The insights they bring to bear can be valuable indicators to clergy and hierarchy of the shape of our church in the future.

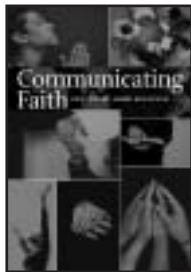
The book concludes with three helpful commentaries that put the subject in clear perspective. Rachel Hart Winter, a doctoral candidate working at the Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage at Loyola University Chicago, and Paul Jarzembowski, executive director of National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association and full-time director of Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Joliet, Ill., speak from their own experience. Their words are heartfelt and their suggestions worthwhile. Edward Hahnenberg, who teaches theology at Xavier University in Cincinnati and was a consultant to the bishops' Subcommittee on Lay Ministry, offers this insight: "If there is a single finding that summarizes this study, it is this: those young adults who are active in the Church find it easier to imagine staying active. So if our goal is to promote the Church leadership of tomorrow, we ought to be asking how we foster Church involvement today."

Concluding that "research does not make decisions," Hoge and Jewell have successfully achieved their stated goal "to provide reliable information to Church leaders to help them make decisions." The task of interpreting the study's findings is theirs.

SUSAN LANG ABBOTT is director of religious education for the Archdiocese of Boston.

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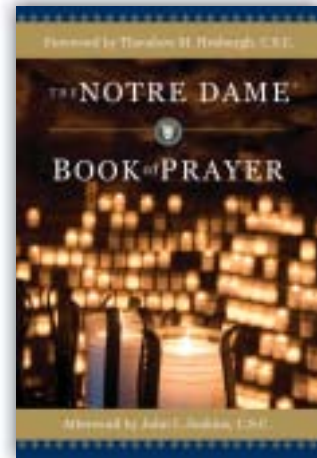
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ON THE PILGRIM PATH

WAYFARING

Essays Pleasant and Unpleasant

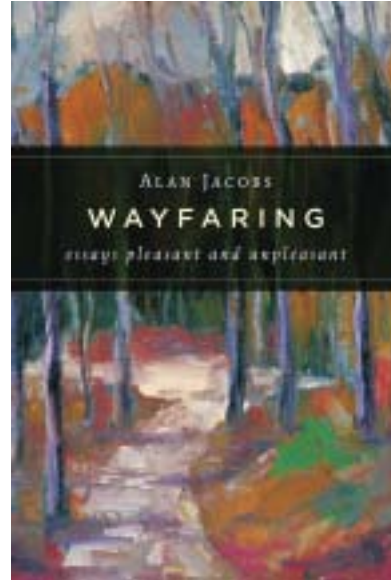
By Alan Jacobs

Eerdmans. 168p \$18 (paperback)

Alan Jacobs has passed the quarter-century mark as a professor of English at Wheaton College in Illinois. Though not to be confused with A. J. Jacobs, the author of *The Year of Living Biblically*, this Jacobs has lived many years as both an academic and an evangelical Christian and lists “hermeneutics and Christian theology and literature” among his interests. Having written more than a half-dozen books on topics ranging from C. S. Lewis and W. H. Auden to original sin, he has collected a bundle of essays and reviews covering the range of these interests, and then some, in *Wayfaring*:

Essays Pleasant and Unpleasant.

Reading these essays, it’s hard to be sure which ones Jacobs considers “unpleasant.” Surely no one would deliberately select unpleasant writings if the word is a judgment on the writing itself. And though he suggests that “some are celebratory, some are critical,” the former predominate because Jacobs is an inveterate celebrator. Sometimes the laudatory adjectives get a little wearing, particularly when they rise to the superlative. Virginia Woolf’s “A



Room of One’s Own” is “that greatest of English essays,” but Montaigne’s “Of Repentance” is “the finest essay ever written.” And this only four pages into his introduction.

Jacobs’s criticism is reserved not for bad prose, but for bad theology, by which he usually means the over-simplified, feel-good sort that can be found in some contemporary evangelicals, as well as in Kahlil Gibran, whom he parodies in a review of the *Collected Works*:

“Expansive and yet vacuous is the prose of Kahlil Gibran/ And weary grows the mind doomed to read it.”

But his enthusiasms far outweigh his irritations. He loves the classical tradition, from Horace to Virgil, and its British successors both Miltonic and Swiftian. But he particularly delights in Anglo-Christian 20th-century writers: C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, G. K. Chesterton, T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden and, on the secular fringe, J. K. Rowling. (As Calvin Trillin once said in another context, can’t any of these people afford a first name?) Wheaton College is the repository of many of these writers’ papers, including Lewis’s personal library.

There are separate essays on three of these authors—Auden, Tolkien and Rowling—and all appear regularly in the other essays, except those with highly specialized subjects, such as English landscape gardening, church billboards or American evangelical practice.

As these essays suggest, Jacobs is an epigone, a follower-after, and the greater giant in whose shadow he writes, the better his own work.

WITHOUT GUILF



“I don’t think you can make an enemy-of-my-enemy request on Facebook.”

CARTOON BY TONY MURPHY

Writing on Samuel Johnson and the Oxford English Dictionary, for example, he has much to say on “dictionary-reading as a school for virtue” and on the general merit of one-author dictionaries over committee products (though he praises the O.E.D. as the “great outlier,” a committee work that is “the world’s largest linguistic rummage sale”). His essay “The End of Friendship,” probably the most enduring piece in the collection, not only treats Lewis and Tolkien’s bond and its withering, but extensively explores the epistles of Horace to Maecenas, of which Jacobs says, “taken all together they form as lovely and vivid a picture of friendship as we have, and as we are likely to get.”

The implication, of course, is that Tolkien, Rowling and the rest are in their own way giants. Jacobs certainly makes the case for them. While conceding that *The Lord of the Rings* “is notably deficient” in some literary virtues, he suggests that it has a special place among “much-loved books [that] lie permanently beyond the reach of academic critique.” With an assist from G. K. Chesterton’s defense of an earlier genre, Jacobs calls the Potter series “the greatest series of penny dreadfuls ever written” and asserts that “they can be, if we read them rightly, both a delight in themselves and a school for our own imaginings.” And in an essay titled “The Brightest Heaven of Invention,” he offers even higher praise for Tolkien’s creativity, arguing that “the pattern and motto of *inventio* is, surely, the first chapter of the book of Genesis.”

Tolkien himself might have eschewed such praise, though in the essay “On Fairy-Stories” he made much the same point. After all, as Jacobs notes, Tolkien once said of his trilogy, “If you like it you do,/ If you don’t, then you boo.” Jacobs too is becomingly modest. In the essay “Sentences,” he says “I may not be much of a writer, but I do like sentences; indeed I love them, and think

about them a lot—shockingly often, really.”

Reading the writers he loves over Jacobs’s shoulder makes for a companionable conversation, the kind his


favorites might have shared over port or porter.

RICHARD BARBIERI is a career educator and frequent book reviewer. He has recently edited Charlie’s Prep.

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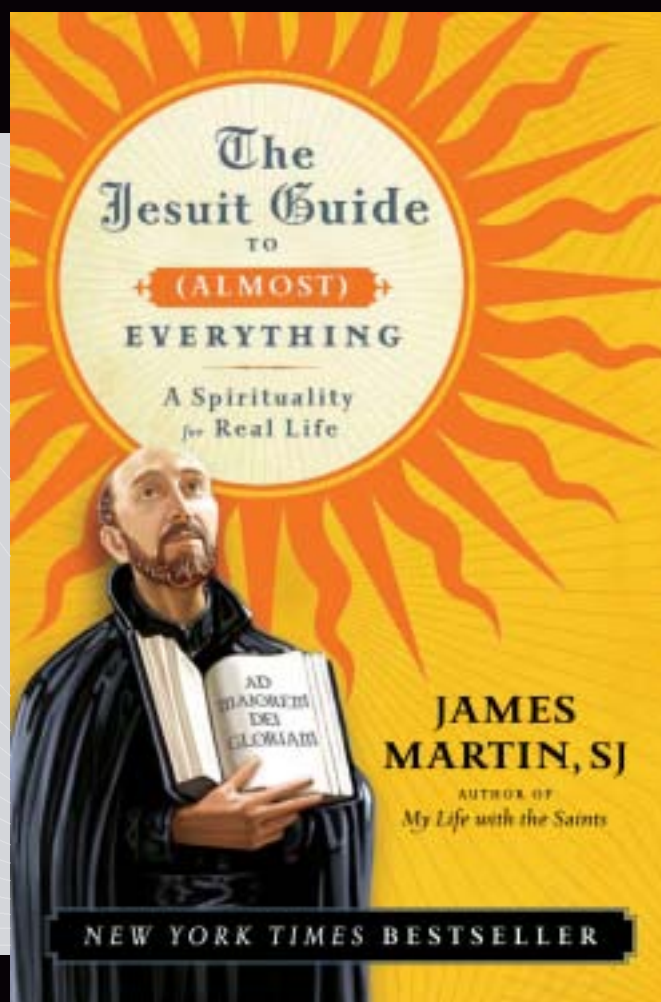
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LETTERS

Relax, They Won't Hurt

I have just perused the changes referred to in "Musicians Prepare for Coming Changes in Mass Text" (8/2). They are very minor. They seem to reflect a return to translations that older members might remember from the joint Latin-English missals. In this respect, Novus Ordo might be considered the "change," whereas the new texts represent a traditional and more faithful translation and continuation of the original Mass texts. I welcome them. I'm sorry for the inconvenience to musicians and choirs. Maybe they can readapt some of the music and lyrics from the pre-Vatican II days. The changes are so minor there should not be anywhere near the disruption caused in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

JAMES CARUSO
Fairfax, Va.

The Tragedy of Iraq

Your editorial on leaving Iraq (8/16) is outstanding. Copies should be passed out to all Americans. As a retired U.S. Air Force chaplain with two enlisted Navy years during World War II and 18 years as a military priest at 12 bases, five of which were overseas assignments, including Vietnam, I totally agree with your exquisite statement. Over 4,000 soldiers killed and over 310,000 injured. What a frightful tragedy!


(REV.) JOHN L. MANSFIELD
Boston, Mass.

What Is the Greatest Danger?

In response to the editorial "Turning Point" (8/16): the people of Iraq are much worse off now than when the United States invaded. We must not attack Iran. Even if Iran develops

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LECTURE



Thursday, September 30, 2010 6:00 p.m.

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nuclear weapons, it will not be to attack Israel. Iran knows that if they take any offensive against Israel they will be annihilated. The danger of an attack on Iran by Israel or the United States is the greatest danger facing the world now.

JOSEPH MALIKAIL
Ottawa, Canada

Nonviolence Is Not Pacifism

I agree with the review by Drew Christiansen, S.J., of Daniel Philpott and Gerard Powers's *Strategies of Peace* (Of Many Things, 8/2), and I too was puzzled by the absence of a section on nonviolence. I nearly gasped at Powers's conclusion that more Mahatma Gandhis are needed, but even more needed are more Reinhold Niebuhrs.

Gandhi, not Niebuhr, breaks beyond the categories of just war and pacifism and gives us what William James was looking for—a moral alternative to war. Gandhi shows how non-violent action can confront and absorb violence and how nonviolent action can change sinful social structures to prevent violence. Niebuhr represents the realist position, as in just war theory: faced with overwhelming violence, the responsible person will endorse a violent response.

Niebuhr compares his position with nonresistance, which he dismisses as otherworldly, but in our time we see violent interventions stretch on for years. On the other hand, we have seen nonviolence work in our own civil rights movement, the revolutions that freed Poland, the Philippines, the Velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia, the Orange revolution in Ukraine and the Otpor movement that ousted Milosevic.

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Furthermore, endorsing Niebuhr implies that the just war theory is the Catholic Church's position on war. In recent years the Sermon on the Mount, love of enemies, has moved to the center of the church's reflections, to be appreciated not as pacifism but as a creative nonviolent response to violence.

TERENCE J. RYNNE
Milwaukee, Wis.

Trust the Rising Tide

No one doubts that workers deserve a fair wage, but other assertions in your editorial "Give Labor Its Day" (8/30) need to be challenged. Liberal economists assert that an earnings gap is inherently evil; the editorial says, "If left unchecked this gap could also threaten the health of the large middle class that characterizes the world's best democracies." There is no empirical data to support this underlying premise.

The real issue is the lowest level of education and earning power. It shouldn't matter what the top wage earners make, so long as there is opportunity, not a guarantee, for all to achieve. It is true that a rising tide lifts all boats, no matter how tall the mast. There is no need to envy the rich; there is a responsibility of all to work for justice.

ROBERT OBERLE
Macungie, Pa.

The Real "Real Islam"

Contrary to the current comment "The Real Islam" (8/30), the peaceful nature of early Islam is contradicted by its assault on the Christian Byzantine Empire and its conquest of the Levant and North Africa. The assault went on to conquer Spain and attempt to conquer France. Islamic aggression continued for centuries, subjugating Christian peoples. Today Christians are persecuted in Islamic lands. **America**, National Geographic and other publications have made it clear that Christians are fleeing from Islamic persecution.

THOMAS FARRELLY
Seattle, Wash.

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Grace-Filled Complexity

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C), SEPT. 19, 2010

Readings: Am 8:4-7; Ps 113:1-8; 1 Tm 2:1-8; Lk 16:1-13

“What shall I do?” (Lk 16:3)

Things are not as simple as they used to be—or so it seems. Perhaps there never really was a time when issues were clear-cut and moral decisions were easy. In our time, technology allows choices never before possible. Decisions about medical choices, for example, particularly those involving the beginning and ending of life, are more complex than ever before. In global economic systems the ramifications of our choices now go far beyond our local and immediate venues. How to understand complex systems and make good moral choices is a question that today’s Gospel can open up for us.

The parable in today’s Gospel is itself so complex that the only thing biblical scholars agree on is that it poses more questions than it answers, and no interpretation fully answers all of them. Questions such as these confront us: How can a dishonest steward be praised by his master? Who is the master? Jesus? The rich man? Is the parable about lost honor or lost income? What is the economic system presumed in the story? Does it concern usury? Or the steward’s commission? What does “squandering” signify? Is the charge true or false? Who are the debtors? Is the master a sympathetic character or a villain? Is the steward someone to be emulated or is

BARBARA E. REID, O.P., a member of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Mich., is a professor of New Testament studies at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Ill., where she is vice president and academic dean.

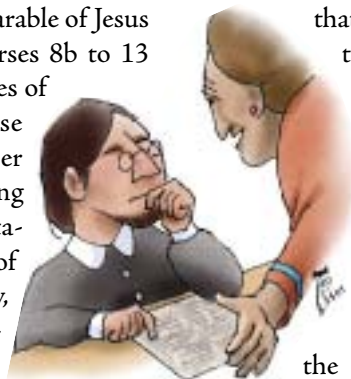
he a picaresque character designed to give us a chuckle in a comic story?

To complicate things further, it seems that the original parable of Jesus ends at verse 8a, and verses 8b to 13 are more like homily notes of early interpreters. These verses are stitched together by catchwords offering four different interpretations around the theme of the right use of money, none of which really captures the dynamics of the parable proper.

One possibility for this Sunday is not to try to settle the interpretation of the Gospel parable, but to look instead at the underlying values and attitudes that the readings propose, which orient us toward what we must do in order to be able to make good moral decisions in complex situations. In the first reading, the situation seems straightforward: the dishonest merchants cannot wait for the sabbath to be over so they can return to cheating the poor.

As with Amos, our first important step is to cultivate the ability to see from the perspective of those made poor and to be outraged, as he was, about economic practices that feed greed and “trample upon the needy.” Once one sees these practices, it is then important to do whatever is possible to counter them. Publicly raising one’s voice, as did Amos when telling the truth about the unjust practices, is one important response. Another is to observe sabbath

days, when rest and communal and contemplative prayer can help communities of faith to cultivate eyes that see what is needed for the common good. A sabbath rest from buying and selling also provides a hiatus from exploitation of the poor and cultivates reliance on providence. The letter to Timothy reminds us of the importance of praying



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- How does Sabbath rest enable you to see more clearly and allow the Spirit to guide you in complex decisions?
- Pray for those in authority in the various arenas of your life.
- How do you cultivate an ear for the voices of those made poor?

for all those in authority so that they will be persons of wisdom, able to lead in such a way that all can enjoy a dignified and tranquil life. From the Gospel we can see that a time of crisis is an opportunity to assess one’s own or a community’s strengths and weaknesses while weighing different possibilities for the future. Cultivating relationships, as did the steward, is essential. When all these values and practices are put together, then a creative solution for the common good emerges and decisive action can be taken.

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The Bridgeable Chasm

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (C), SEPT. 26, 2010

Readings: Am 6:1-7; Ps 146:7-10; 1 Tm 6:11-16; Lk 16:19-31

“Between you and us a great chasm has been fixed” (Lk 16:26)

Stories of the ongoing misery in Haiti after last January’s earthquake continue to appear in the news. The New York Times recently told of Alourds Grandoit, age 70, who lost 10 family members when her house collapsed on them. Left with next to nothing, a plastic barrel full of clothing, toiletries and food is wending its way to her from her cousin, Gislaine Vieux, in Queens, N.Y., Gislaine left Haiti 41 years ago in search of work in the United States to be able to help support her family in Haiti. For 30 years income from her hospital job has helped sustain her struggling relatives. Now, she and her husband are also helping coordinate their parish’s response of monetary aid and relief missions to her homeland.

The gap between Gislaine’s modest home in Queens and the unspeakable conditions in which many live in Port-au-Prince might at first appear unbridgeable, but ties of family and loving commitment to one another forge bonds unbroken by geographical and socioeconomic distance. By contrast, in today’s Gospel Jesus tells a story of a rich man who steps over a destitute brother who is lying at his doorstep. The rich man pays no attention to the poor man, Lazarus, until he needs something from him. From his

tormented place in the afterlife, the rich man wants Lazarus to bring him the relief of cool water. When Abraham replies that this is impossible, then the rich man asks Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers.

The rich man was not able during his earthly life, nor afterward, to perceive the poor man as one of his brothers, even when he sees Lazarus intimately embraced (literally “in his bosom,” v. 23) as one of Abraham’s own. The rich man calls Abraham his own father in order to claim what he thinks is his privileged inheritance. He has not shared his wealth as Abraham did when he was wealthy (Gn 24:35), nor does he claim the rest of Abraham’s children as his brothers and sisters. He sees Lazarus only as his servant and messenger.

Abraham does not grant the rich man either request. The vast differences between him and Lazarus could have been bridged during the rich man’s lifetime, but he chose not to respond to his brother. Now the consequences of those repeated choices cannot be reversed. He had everything he needed from Moses and the prophets to know what to do. So do his rich brothers. It is not enough to claim kinship with Abraham.

As John the Baptist had warned the

crowds who came to be baptized, it is also necessary to “produce good fruits as evidence of your repentance” (Lk 3:8). Jesus’ practice of recognizing people who were marginalized as sisters and brothers, children of Abraham—like the woman bent double for 18 years (Lk 13:16) and Zacchaeus, the tax collector (Lk 19:9)—also shows the way. Ironically, the rich man asks for Lazarus to “warn” his brothers, using the verb *diamartyromai*, one that occurs nine times in the Acts of the Apostles to refer to “bearing witness”

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

- Ask the help of the risen Jesus to see and love each person as sister and brother.
- Pray for the grace to act in ways that help bridge the chasm between rich and poor.
- Ask Holy Wisdom to guide you in your response to the feminization of poverty.

to the risen Jesus. Even testimony about the risen Jesus will not turn the hearts of the rich brothers.

Moses, the prophets and Jesus have given us all we need to know in order to bridge the chasm between rich and poor in this life. We begin by recognizing those made poor, not as an abstraction but as real persons who have names, most of whom are women and children, who are sister and brother to us, and to whom we are bound in covenantal love. From there, the gap is bridgeable.

BARBARA E. REID

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