

America



APRIL 30, 2018

THE JESUIT REVIEW OF FAITH AND CULTURE

Catholics in Trudeau's Canada

By Dean Dettloff

p18

**Reflections on
'Gaudete et Exsultate'**

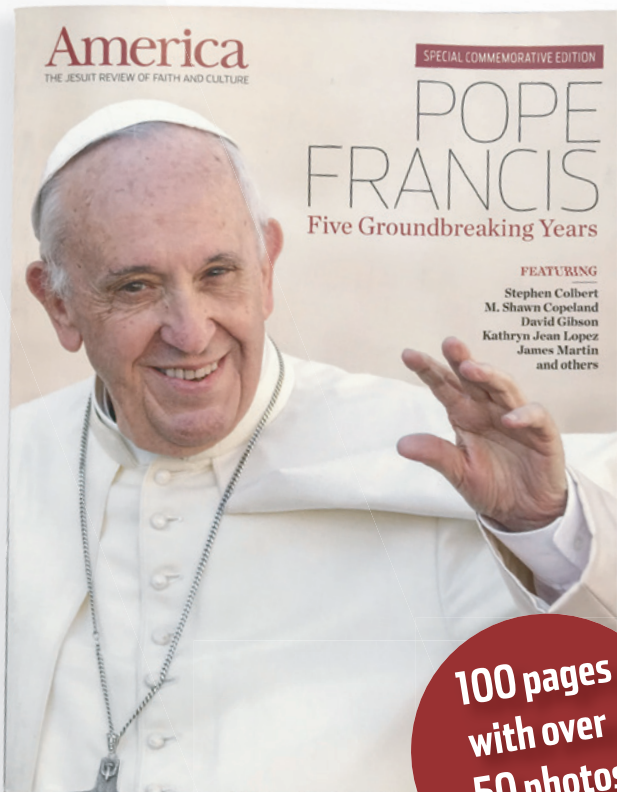
p42

**A Life (With
Disability) in Full**

p26

**Bruce Springsteen's
'Crookedly Blessed'
Imagination**

p44



Purchase your commemorative issue today

Featuring beautiful full-color photos and content from **America's** contributors, with an introduction by **America** editor-at-large Fr. James Martin, S.J., and a concluding essay by award-winning Catholic journalist and author David Gibson, this one-of-a-kind issue includes in-depth explorations of Pope Francis' background, impact and hopes for the future.

100 pages
with over
50 photos
\$14.95



To purchase the Pope Francis commemorative issue or to give as a gift, please call 1-800-627-9533 or contact us at <https://americamag.org/francis5>

Asking the right question

I am writing this from Saint Louis University, where I am taking part in a lecture series celebrating the 200th anniversary of this great institution. My topic is Pope Francis, U.S. politics and polarization, a subject I am often called upon to discuss. I think in five years I have taken part in at least a dozen panels, all of which were asking, “What are the causes of polarization?”

Yet in contemporary politics, the question is not “What is the cause of polarization?” The question is “Who is the cause of polarization?” And the answer is: You are. You are the cause of polarization. And I am. Together, we are the causes of polarization. Unless we are willing to admit that, then the situation will only get worse. For polarization is not something that is happening to us but something we are causing. And the temptation to think that you or I are not complicit in it and that the fault lies entirely with someone else is actually what polarization is.

After all, what does polarization require? Two poles. By that I do not mean two people or groups of people who disagree with each other. That is actually what democracy requires. What polarization requires is two people or two groups of people who disagree, each of whom believes that the other is entirely at fault and is politically, philosophically and perhaps even morally irredeemable. This is the fault line of our contemporary politics, the result of our choices.

How many of us have stopped reading opinions with which we disagree? How many of us have stopped watching news channels that feature

opinions with which we disagree? How many of us complain about the content in our social media feeds while somehow forgetting that we actually chose to follow every one of those people? How many of us, deep down in places we don’t like to talk about, take some pleasure in the adrenaline rush that comes from clicking “like” and thereby instantly creating an us and a them?

The 2016 presidential election was one of the closest in U.S. history. It was weeks, in fact, before we learned the final tallies. It was that close. Yet consider this: 65 percent of Americans live in a congressional district that favored either Mr. Trump or Mrs. Clinton by 20 points or more. We do not even live near people with whom we disagree. That is the result of our choices, yours and mine, and those of our elected representatives.

Pope Francis sees this clearly for what it is. The phenomena involved in polarization reflect a deeper spiritual crisis in modernity, within you and within me. That is why this is the most important thing that Pope Francis has ever said about politics: “I am a sinner.” The first question he was asked in his very first interview, which we published in *America*, was “Who is Jorge Mario Bergoglio?” To which the pope replied: “I am a sinner.” I suggest that this is where we should start the reform of our politics, by recognizing our individual complicity in the sin of polarization, by what we have done and by what we have failed to do, and by asking for the grace to change.

I appreciate that this may not be what we want to hear. But this is our

best hope. As long as you believe that the problem is someone else, then there is nothing you can do about it, and you will continue to feel helpless and at the mercy of forces beyond your control. But if we are all able to acknowledge how we are a part of the problem, then we can begin to imagine how we might be part of the solution.

We can begin the conversation by focusing on what we all have in common rather on our differences, a move that is itself subversive of polarization.

What is the issue at its heart? Pope Francis told us when he addressed the U.S. Congress: “The contemporary world, with its open wounds which affect so many of our brothers and sisters, demands that we confront every form of polarization.... We know that in the attempt to be freed of the enemy without, we can be tempted to feed the enemy within. To imitate the hatred and violence of tyrants and murderers is the best way to take their place.”

“The enemy within” is nothing more than our age-old nemesis: fear. We are afraid. All of us. And that’s good news too, because it means that we all have something else in common and an additional means of relating anew to each other, by the grace of God. To do that we simply need to do what God, through the risen Christ, is always urging us to do anyway: “Be not afraid.”

—
Matt Malone, S.J.
Twitter: @americaeditor.



THE ISSUE

GIVE AND TAKE

6
YOUR TAKE
 Whose interests should be the first priority for U.S. trade policy?

8
OUR TAKE
 Pregnant women in detention; questioning police seizures; the call to holiness

10
SHORT TAKE
 Life without parole is the death penalty in disguise
 By Katie Rose Quandt

DISPATCHES

12
THE CHURCH'S DIGITAL COUNTER-WITNESS

Infographic: Ordinations in 2018

Protecting water as a human right in El Salvador

Is the Trump administration closing the door on asylum seekers?

In North Ireland, the Good Friday agreement is imperiled by Brexit

FEATURES

18
THE COMPLICATIONS OF CANADIAN CATHOLICISM
 Church life under the “celebrity secularism” of Justin Trudeau
 Dean Dettloff

26
A LIFE IN FULL
 My friend's cystic fibrosis has indelibly shaped her view of life—and mine
 Anna Keating



Pope Francis blesses an electric car that is part of the Formula E ahead of the Rome EPrix street race, April 11

Cover Image: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada in Ottawa, March 19
Justin Tang/The Canadian Press via AP

CNS photo/Vatican Media

FAITH & REASON

34
**CHURCH TEACHING ON
 HOMOSEXUALITY**
*Responding to a commonly
 asked question*
 James Martin

FAITH IN FOCUS

38
SENIOR CALLING
*I joined the Jesuit Volunteer Elder
 Corps at 68—and never looked back*
 Helen Donnelly Goehring

42
 Reflections on
 “Gaudete et Exsultate”

IDEAS IN REVIEW

44
**THE ENDURING CATHOLIC
 IMAGINATION OF BRUCE
 SPRINGSTEEN**
*Andrew Greeley was right about
 the Boss*
 Brian P. Conniff

Books
*Dagger John; Faith on the Avenue;
 Vatican I; College Hookup Culture
 and Christian Ethics*

Culture
 “Angels in America”; “Summer in
 the Forest”

THE WORD

58
**When Christians act in love, they
 allow Christ to continue his ministry**
 Jesus guides the Christian community
 and empowers it with the Spirit
 Michael Simone

LAST TAKE

62
HOSFFMAN OSPINO
*New home, new neighbors, a
 changing society*

Whose interests should be the first priority for U.S. trade policy?

Forty-eight percent of respondents to the above question told **America** that U.S. trade policy should prioritize workers worldwide. Creede Caldwell of Madison, Wis., explained: “In a global economy, what affects other countries affects us all. If we want to have a just and prosperous home, our businesses must sustain ethical practices everywhere.”

Michael Finocchiaro of Wilmington, Del., concurred: “The Catholic social teaching principle of solidarity requires us to think globally and act locally. National boundaries are artificial and do not affect each worker’s right to dignified work and livable wages.”

Thirty-four percent of respondents to our informal survey, distributed on social media and in our email newsletter, told us that U.S. workers should be the foremost priority for U.S. trade policy. “A government’s first priority is to its citizens, particularly those citizens who need protection,” wrote Will Redmond of Silver Spring, Md. “That doesn’t mean U.S. workers are our only prior-

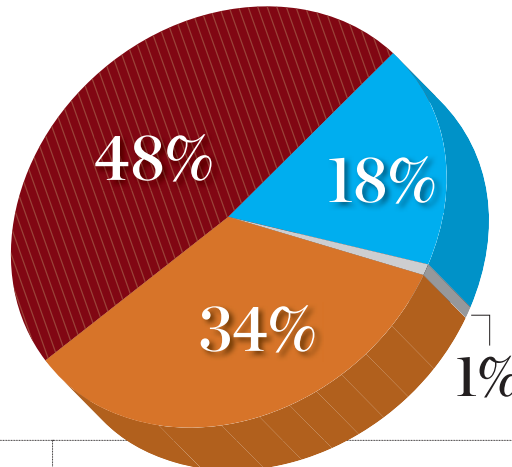
ity; the interests of workers should not be allowed to supersede the imperatives of human rights or world peace.” Megan W. of Portland, Tenn., agreed that U.S. workers should be prioritized. “We need to make sure our own workers are taken care of first, followed by consumers. It needs to be what is best for the American people first, not businesses.”

Of the remaining respondents to our poll, 18 percent said that U.S. consumers should be the first priority of U.S. trade policy, and only 1 percent of respondents thought business owners should be prioritized.

Related to the above question, **America** also asked this sample of readers: Do you make an effort to “buy American?” In response, 72 percent said yes. “I tend to buy American when I can,” said Zach Wilson of Saint Paul, Minn. “Not for nationalistic reasons, but because there is a higher likelihood that the workers involved in its production were treated more fairly than those in many of our import partners.”

Whose interests should be the first priority of U.S. trade policy?

U.S. consumers	18%
U.S. business owners	1%
U.S. workers	34%
Workers worldwide	48%



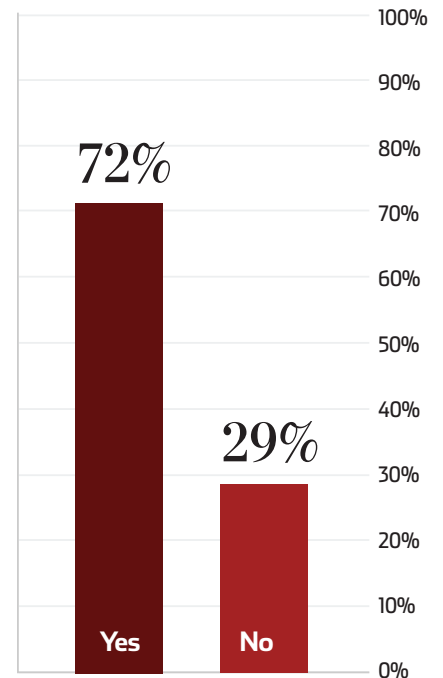
Do you think President Trump’s new tariffs on steel and aluminum will..

Help the economy	4%
Hurt the economy	70%
I am not sure	26%

Should trade be...

More free	59%
Less free	13%
About the same	29%

Do you make an effort to ‘buy American’?



These results are based on reader responses to a poll promoted on Facebook, Twitter and in our email newsletter. Because of rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.

Not to be Compromised

Re “The Voices of Parkland,” by the Editors (Editorial, 4/16): I didn’t realize the editors of **America** want the repeal of the Second Amendment. I don’t see that happening. My ability to protect myself and my family should not be compromised, which is what would happen if the Second Amendment is repealed.

Mike May

Online Comment

Not Saying Much

Re “The Avenue of the Americas,” by Matt Malone, S.J. (Of Many Things, 4/16): Often the statement is made that “immigrants need to come here legally” or “my family came here legally.” Many people honestly but incorrectly believe their ancestors came here through some vetting process. The concept of being an “illegal” immigrant pretty much dates back to 1924—less than a century ago. For most of U.S. history, coming here “legally” meant next to nothing. So when some say my family came in “legally,” they’re really not saying much.

Philip Fabiano

Online Comment

All-Embracing

Re “How Does Your Parish Reach Out to Hispanics in Your Community?” (Your Take, 4/16): I think as a universal church we also need to think about other cultures that participate and contribute their talents, time and treasures to the Catholic Church. With the influx of other people as migrants, refugees and the like, we need to be cognizant and all embracing, just like what Pope Francis has taught from day one.

Thelma Tiambeng-Bright

Online Comment

Not Represented

Re “Beyond Measure,” by Maria Luisa Torres (4/16): The most prestigious Catholic high school in my diocese openly recruits non-Catholics to come and play sports for the school. Financial assistance is always forthcoming for those students. Meanwhile, Hispanic students are not represented at a level proportionate to their percentages in the parish elementary schools or in the diocese as a whole. Is one allowed to wonder why poor Latino Catholic students are turned away from this fine Catholic (mostly in name) high school? Is it because they are too poor to attend and because there is no money for them as they are not good enough athletes?

Henry George

Online Comment

No Real Choice

Re “‘Elimination’ of Down Syndrome Is a ‘Great Hate Crime’” by Angelo Jesus Canta (4/16): When the Down syndrome population is almost entirely eliminated, services for those with Down syndrome are also eliminated, taking away any real choice. The social pressure to abort a baby with Down syndrome can be intense when an entire society basically tells you that the choice you’re making is contrary to what everyone else thinks is the right choice and to what even the government comes to expect of its citizens.

Bob Hunt

Online Comment

My Biggest Objection

Re “Why Telenovelas: A Powerful (and Problematic) Part of Latino Culture,” by Olga Segura (4/16): My husband is a big fan of “Señor de Los Cielos.” My biggest objection to this new incarnation of the novelas is that they portray the bad guys as the good guys. There are a number of novelas about the life of Pablo Escobar, where it is almost a Robin Hood ethic, portraying him as the hero of the poor. At the root, these are still very violent people committing horrible acts, regardless of how corrupt the government is that is oppressing the people of the country.

Eowyn Lubbs Hernandez

Online Comment

Commercial Emphasis

Re “To Quince or Not? No Easy Choice,” by Annette Jiménez (4/16): The church herself has contributed to this overly secular and commercial emphasis of quinceañeras. By telling people it’s just a birthday, it’s become that.

Harry Gonzales

Online Comment

A Religious Component

Interesting! I am not Latina, but frequently see quince groups dressed up and taking photos in our favorite park here in Tulsa, Ariz. I didn’t realize there was, traditionally, a religious component.

Rachel Piotraschke

Online Comment

Letters to the editor can be sent by email to letters@americamedia.org. Please include the article title, author and issue date, as well as your name and where you are writing from.

Miscarriages Are Happening in ICE Custody— How Will the Pro-Life Movement Respond?

In his latest apostolic exhortation, “Gaudete et Exsultate,” Pope Francis reminds Catholics that our defense of the unborn must be “clear, firm and passionate” and that the lives of the poor and the marginalized are “equally sacred.” He goes on to say that while some might consider the situation of migrants to be “a secondary issue compared to the ‘grave’ bioethical questions,” this dismissal might be understandable from a politician but could not be acceptable for a Christian. And yet, as recent events have made clear, both the defense of the unborn and the rights of migrants have been cast aside in our fear-driven enforcement of U.S. immigration laws.

Last month, Immigration and Customs Enforcement announced a new policy expanding the agency’s power to detain pregnant women. Previous practice had been to free pregnant women on bond or supervised release, according to USA Today. Fears that pregnant women would not return for deportation hearings is the stated reason for the change. Fear that these unborn children would become U.S. citizens is perhaps the unstated reason. All the same, the new policy is in keeping with the Trump administration’s

broader pattern of cruel and arbitrary enforcement of the nation’s outdated and unjust immigration laws.

Contrary to ICE claims, reports indicate that these pregnant women are not receiving adequate medical care. Katie Shepherd of the American Immigration Council told The Daily Beast that the rate of miscarriages in detention is on the rise. The new policy is jeopardizing the lives of innocent, unborn children. Detentions of undocumented pregnant women occurred under President Obama as well, but the change in ICE policy under a nominally pro-life president is making the problem worse. As Catholics committed to the pro-life cause and to justice for immigrants, we condemn this development.

It is worth noting that the Trump administration previously acted to defend unborn life within the immigration system. In the tragic case of a young Central American immigrant who desired an abortion, the Trump administration battled the A.C.L.U. in court to prevent her from ending her pregnancy. While the court ultimately allowed the abortion in that case, there is no legal obligation forcing the administration to hold pregnant

women in detention and expose them and their unborn children to greater risk of miscarriage.

The pro-life movement must reckon with the moral dissonance of an administration that fights in court to save the pregnancies of women who do not want them while approving a policy that jeopardizes the pregnancies of women who do want them.

Where does this leave those of us who are pro-life? So far, many pro-life advocates do not seem to be giving the matter much attention. But the Trump administration’s reliability in opposition to abortion must not be used to excuse its ever more draconian crackdown on immigrants and refugees. Continuing to allow ICE to hold pregnant women in custody when other options are available implies that immigrant women and their unborn children are disposable.

The pro-life movement should join advocates for immigration reform in speaking out strongly against policies that harm pregnant women and unborn children. This is a critical moment, when they can make a difference in the lives of pregnant women and their unborn children. But for some of them, their silence speaks loudest.

Guilt Before Punishment

Constitutional safeguards protect U.S. citizens from being imprisoned on the mere suspicion of having committed a crime. But law enforcement in most states and at the federal level can seize cash and property without proof of wrongdoing, let alone a criminal conviction. The practice is called civil

forfeiture, and Attorney General Jeff Sessions justifies it as a way to “hit organized crime in the wallet”—without having to win cases in the courtroom.

The use of civil forfeiture has not been limited to drug kingpins. In 2014 The Washington Post looked at the nearly 62,000 seizures of cash since

Sept. 11, 2001, totaling more than \$2.5 billion, and found that about half involved sums of less than \$8,800, many taken during traffic stops on flimsy pretenses. In most cases, local governments keep whatever money they seize (appeals are rare because of the legal expenses), creating a perverse incen-

tive to trawl the highways for revenue.

In late March, the Republican governor of Wisconsin, Scott Walker, signed a forfeiture reform bill banning the seizure of assets by police unless and until there is a criminal conviction. Wisconsin is the 15th state to at least put limits on seizures. Other states should follow suit. In a poll taken in 2016, 84 percent of U.S. adults opposed civil forfeiture; only the political clout of prosecutors and police departments is keeping it alive. Eliminating this routine violation of constitutional rights should be a priority for bipartisan criminal justice reform.

‘Gaudete et Exsultate’

On April 9, Pope Francis released a new apostolic exhortation, “Gaudete et Exsultate,” which joyfully re-proposes the universal call to holiness, renewing and reinforcing a significant theme of Vatican II.

The exhortation is, above all, a practical guide. The pope tells us that holiness is not a goal that is out of reach for the people of God but is something we can find in abundance “next door.”

Pope Francis emphasizes the importance of discernment, “small gestures” and daily attention to the task of holiness. His distinctively Jesuit approach is both programmatic and personal, challenging all Catholics, especially those already in tune with his papacy, to consider how they might deepen their cooperation with God.

“Do not be afraid to set your sights higher, to allow yourself to be loved and liberated by God,” he writes. “Holiness does not make you less human, since it is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God’s grace” (No. 34).

President and Editor in Chief	Matt Malone, S.J.
Executive Editors	Maurice Timothy Reidy Sam Sawyer, S.J. Kerry Weber Jeremy Zipple, S.J. James Martin, S.J.
Editor at Large	Robert C. Collins, S.J.
Production Editor	Kevin Clarke
Senior Editors	James T. Keane J.D. Long-García Edward W. Schmidt, S.J.
Poetry Editor	Joseph Hoover, S.J.
Vatican Correspondent	Gerard O’Connell
National Correspondent	Michael O’Loughlin
Associate Editors	José Dueño, S.J. Ashley McKinless Olga Segura Leo Stuebner, S.J. Robert David Sullivan Eric Sundrup, S.J.
Assistant Editors	Zachary Davis Joseph McAuley
Editorial Assistant	Vivian Cabrera
Producer	Eloise Blondiau
Creative Director	Shawn Tripoli
Contributing Writers	Elizabeth Bruenig Brendan Busse, S.J. Nichole M. Flores Pascal-Emmanuel Gobry Cecilia González-Andrieu Leah Libresco Jim McDermott, S.J. Kaya Oakes Nathan Schneider Stephanie Slade Eve Tushnet
Contributing Editors	Ellen Boegel Patrick Gilger, S.J. Adam Hincks, S.J. Maryann Cusimano Love Paul McNelis, S.J.
Regional Correspondents	Dean Dettloff (Toronto) Anthony Egan, S.J. (Johannesburg) Jan-Albert Hootsen, S.J. (Mexico City) Jim McDermott, S.J. (Los Angeles) Timothy Padgett (Miami) Russell Pollitt, S.J. (Johannesburg) David Stewart, S.J. (London) Verna Yu (Hong Kong)
Special Contributors	Jake Martin, S.J., Sean Salai, S.J.
Editor, The Jesuit Post	Daniel N. Gustafson, S.J.
Moderator, Catholic Book Club	Kevin Spinale, S.J.
O’Hare Fellows	Angelo Jesus Canta Antonio De Loera-Brust Colleen Dulle
Executive V.P. & C.O.O.	Ted Nadeau
V.P. for Finance and Operations	Rosa M. Del Saz
Director of Advertising Services	Kenneth Arko
Director of Marketing	Louis Cassetta
Director of Advancement	Heather Trotta
Associate Director of Advancement	James Cappabianca
Special Assistant to the President	
and Editor in Chief	Nicholas D. Sawicki
Business Operations Staff	Anastasia Buraminskaya, Glenda Castro Karina Clark, Ana Nuñez, Ryan Richardson, Elena Te Raymond A. Schroth, S.J. Francis W. Turnbull, S.J. Susan S. Braddock
Editors Emeriti	
Chair, Board of Directors	
americamagazine.org	1212 Avenue of the Americas, 11th Fl.
facebook.com/americanmag	New York, NY 10036
twitter.com/americanmag	America Press Inc. d/b/a America Media ©2018

Life without parole is no moral alternative to the death penalty

On Feb. 23 three Americans were scheduled for execution on the same day. Ultimately, one man received a last-minute death row commutation, and the botched, painful execution of another was halted and postponed. This drew the spectacle of the death penalty back into the spotlight, but the United States has moved away from the punishment, with just 39 people sentenced to death in 2017, down from 315 in 1996. Another sentence has silently taken its place: life imprisonment without possibility of parole.

Often regarded as a humane alternative to the death penalty, sentences of life without parole (also known as LWOP) have essentially the same result: slow aging behind bars and death in prison. The Sentencing Project reported in 2017 that about 53,000 Americans are serving this hopeless sentence, which Pope Francis has called “a death penalty in disguise”—a number that has quadrupled since 1992.

Giving an imprisoned person the possibility of parole does not guarantee eventual freedom, but it does offer a glimmer of hope for redemption. Denying this hope is considered inhumane and degrading treatment by the European Court of Human Rights.

LWOP sentencing is biased and arbitrary. About 56 percent of those with the sentence are black, an even greater overrepresentation than the number of black prisoners on death row. And are people inherently more dangerous in California, Florida, Louisiana, Michigan and Pennsylvania, the five states responsible for 58 percent of life without parole sentences?

A study based on past exonerations,

published by the National Academy of Sciences, estimates that 4 percent of people on death row were wrongfully convicted. If that percentage holds for those with LWOP sentences, 2,000 people are dying in prison for crimes they did not commit. Innocent people serving life without parole are unlikely to have their convictions overturned, as they lack the state-funded legal support and unlimited appeals offered to those on death row.

When we permanently remove 53,000 people from society, countless others are left behind. Children, spouses, parents and loved ones face lifelong stress, trauma and financial strain as they work to maintain relationships that will never be the same again.

Until recently, even children were routinely locked up for life. But in 2012 the Supreme Court ruled that only “the rare juvenile offender whose crime reflects irreparable corruption” may receive the sentence. The U.S. Catholic bishops have called for an absolute ban on life sentences without parole for juveniles.

Banning the sentence for children is not enough. Americans and lawmakers across the political spectrum support reducing our prison populations by shortening sentences for non-violent offenses. But just over half the people in state prisons are there for violent crimes. Rethinking their sentences is more difficult, but it is just as necessary for reform.

Incarceration serves four purposes: deterrence, incapacitation, retribution and rehabilitation. Life without parole is not necessary to serve any of these. First, while potential criminals may be deterred by the threat of

prison, studies show that extreme sentences like life without parole do little to prevent additional crime.

Prison sentences do incapacitate by physically removing potentially dangerous people from the community, but in this realm, too, life without parole is usually excessive. Research shows that even those who commit violent crimes mature out of lawbreaking by middle age, yet we bury people in prisons as they grow old, sick and frail. In the words of Pope Francis, “To cage people...for the mere fact that if he is inside we are safe, this serves nothing. It does not help us.”

As for retribution, that is a complicated factor. Violent crimes tear lives apart, and the desire for punishment is understandable. The pain of victims should never be dismissed, and our criminal justice system should allow more opportunities for healing as a community. But as Catholics, we are called to show mercy.

That leaves rehabilitation. The U.S. Catholic bishops wrote in 2000 that “Abandoning the parole system, as some states have done...turns prisons into warehouses where inmates grow old, without hope, their lives wasted.” And as Pope Francis said before the U.S. Congress in 2015, “A just and necessary punishment must never exclude the dimension of hope and the goal of rehabilitation.”

For those opposed to the death penalty, a sentence of any length may sound like a better alternative. But locking people away and throwing away the key is not a moral solution.

Katie Rose Quandt is a criminal justice journalist and a Soros Justice Media fellow.

ONLINE MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN CHURCH MANAGEMENT

O' YE OF LITTLE BUSINESS

Most people do not enter ministry to manage budgets, resolve HR issues, and adapt new technologies, yet those are the *business* issues that often can get in the way of effective pastoral ministry.

Whether you are a church leader looking for increased management expertise or a volunteer looking to apply your skills in the church, a

Master of Science in Church Management from Villanova University gives you a solid management foundation designed specifically for faith-based institutions.

What's more, you can receive your masters from home in only two years - from the **#1 ranked online graduate business program.**



MANAGEMENT SKILL FOR MINISTRY

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP | ECCLESIOLOGY | HR | IT | LAW | FINANCE

GET YOUR MASTERS AT
MSCM.VILLANOVA.EDU

Wooden Caskets Handcrafted and Blessed by Trappist Monks

Receive a free cross
with your free catalog request

TRAPPIST CASKETS

NEW MELLERAY ABBEY | EST. 1849
888.433.6934 | www.trappistcaskets.com



Facebook C.E.O. Mark Zuckerberg arrives on Capitol Hill in Washington on April 10 for a congressional grilling on the use of Facebook data to target American voters in the 2016 election.

AFTER THE FACEBOOK DEBACLE, CAN THE CHURCH BE A DIGITAL COUNTER WITNESS?

By Jim McDermott

On Jan. 2, 2007, dressed in his trademark turtleneck, jeans and sneakers, Apple's chief executive Steve Jobs debuted the iPhone. It was like a door opening directly into the future. Almost overnight Silicon Valley seemed to become the capital of human progress, a Wonka-esque home to possibility and wonder.

Eleven years later, the reputation of our latter-day Athens curdles. Rather than a mall or town square where you can find anything you can imagine, the internet appears to have become a vast surveillance system with cameras hidden on each page you visit—tracking your choices, the movements of your cursor, even the searches you delete.

As a founding figure of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, an international nonprof-

it organization that oversees the smooth running of the internet, Dr. Paul Twomey watched the online universe's Big Bang moment at the turn of the century. Now an international consultant on cybersecurity, privacy and governance, he has followed the growth of social media and search engine platforms and watched the rise of personal data mining as the internet's default business strategy.

He has been in the room with the people involved.

What he has seen there leaves him cold.

"There's no one saying you can't do some things," he said of many tech organizations today.

"There are no adults in the room. You talk to them about ethics, the concept of political freedom, and they're like deer in the headlights. They have no idea

what you're talking about.”

It is a point that has come up many times in recent months: How does a company like Google or Facebook evaluate its ethical responsibilities? Does it evaluate them at all?

In November, the actor Kumail Nanjiani of the TV series “Silicon Valley” tweeted about visiting start-up companies and inquiring about products that seemed potentially harmful. “They don’t even have a pat rehearsed answer,” he wrote. “They are shocked at being asked.... ‘We’re not making it for that reason, but the way people choose to use it isn’t our fault. Safeguards will develop.’”

“Only ‘Can we do this?’,” Mr. Nanjiani continued. “Never ‘Should we do this?’”

Mr. Twomey agrees. Referring to the National Security Agency, he said, “People complain about it, [but] I trust the spooks more than I trust these people.”

He notes with equal concern the growing transfer of important societal functions to computer algorithms. “For the last 200 years,” said Mr. Twomey, “we’ve been developing political systems to ensure an essential set of values around things like fairness. Now [those determinations] are being done increasingly by private companies via algorithms.”

In some cases this is being done very poorly. In 2016 a ProPublica study found that the Compas software now used in many state court systems to advise on sentencing was only “somewhat more accurate than a coin flip” in predicting the likelihood of an individual’s future criminal activity within the following two years. Worse, the software was “likely to falsely flag black defendants as future criminals, wrongly labeling them this way at almost twice the rate as white defendants.”

Similar problems have surfaced in algorithms for everything from teacher performance and hiring practices to loan evaluations.

A key problem, said Mr. Twomey, lies in the background of the creators. “Ninety percent of all algorithms written in this world are written by the same people—20-something male gamers. The tech companies say they’re wonderfully diverse, and it’s nonsense. They’re every color of the rainbow, but they’re all the same person, 20-to-30-year-old men coming from mathematics, computer science, maybe physics. And most of them wouldn’t know who Aristotle was if they fell over him.”

Anil Dash is a tech activist and entrepreneur. In March he wrote in a blogpost at medium.com, “The values of technology creators are deeply ingrained in every button, every link, and every glowing icon that we see”—and with them their assumptions and blind spots. A predictive algorithm used by child protective services ends up disproportionately flagging African-American children as requiring intervention and underreporting similar situations with white children. Another tool for setting car insurance rates ends up charging lower-income people more. Coders’ prejudices and assumptions are embedded in the system.

Mr. Twomey fears they will promote a “global caste system” in which “your kids are going to get discriminated against” without even knowing it.

How can the church respond? Its general lack of pliancy would seem to be a huge disadvantage when change and innovation are happening so fast.

But Mr. Twomey said that the church getting tech savvy is less important in this moment than its continuing to clearly stand with and for those on the margins: “The church needs to understand that the preferential option for the poor in a digital age includes the digitally naïve, ignorant and excluded. Someone has to be a voice for their interests, a voice for their safety, a voice [to ensure] they’re being treated fairly.” They need the church’s leaders and scholars to be their advocates.

And the church may in fact have much to contribute to the development of algorithms. “Collectively the Catholic Church and her institutions have a Big Data capacity that rivals, if not surpasses, any social network,” the tech commentator and consultant Robert Ballecer, S.J., pointed out. “Are we aware of the power in that data? Can we show the world a more responsible way to use it?”

The tools of our information age are “fantastic,” said Mr. Twomey. “They do wonderful things. But we need to have confidence in the principles we think are important. It’s taken us a long time to express them in our political process. We shouldn’t allow some start-up to say they don’t apply to them. This is just hubris.”

Jim McDermott, S.J., *Los Angeles correspondent.*
Twitter: @PopCulturPriest.

Hispanic Catholics underrepresented in this year's ordination class



Only 20 percent of the respondents to a survey of men scheduled to be ordained as priests this year are Hispanic, according to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate. The figure adds to concern about the low percentages of Hispanics entering the priesthood, enrolling in seminaries and entering religious orders. Among seminarians in the 2017-18 academic year, 15 percent identified as Hispanic, lower than the 34 percent of the nation's Catholic population who are Hispanic and far less than the 52 percent of U.S. Catholics under 30 who are Hispanic.

The Rev. Jorge Torres, secretary of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors, believes the church can overcome the disparity by creating more opportunities for evangelization and catechesis within Hispanic communities.

"We need to be more involved with U.S.-born Hispanics—not just administering sacraments, as beautiful as they are," he said. "We need to find a different path to help them see how they want to serve God and their neighbors." Father Torres is the vocations director for the Diocese of Orlando, Fla., where 50 percent of seminarians are Hispanic.

Many young Hispanics feel called to provide for their families, which can be an obstacle to discernment, Father Torres said, or cannot afford the college education needed for religious vocations. He said that increasing Hispanic enrollment in higher education is an important goal so "academics won't be a stumbling block" to the "men and women who want to serve God." "It's an incredible task," he said. "but the more leadership is open to the Latino community, the more [Latinos] will respond."

J.D. Long-García, senior editor. Twitter: @Jdlonggarcia.

NEW PRIESTS (2018)

430 U.S. SEMINARIANS SCHEDULED FOR ORDINATION
21 REPORTED BY THE JESUITS, THE MOST OF ANY ORDER
75% ARE PREPARING FOR ORDINATION TO A DIOCESE OR EPARCHY, THE REST TO RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES

RACE AND ETHNICITY

	WHITE	HISPANIC	ASIAN	BLACK	OTHER
U.S. CATHOLIC POPULATION	59%	34%*	3%	3%	2%
ORDINANDS (2018)	65%	20%	11%	2%	2%
POSTULANTS AND NOVICES	67%	17%	11%	3%	2%
SEMINARIANS	61%	15%	9%	3%	11%

*Among U.S. Catholics under 30, 52% are Hispanic as of 2016.

NATIONAL ORIGIN

	BORN IN U.S.	MOST COMMON BIRTHPLACES OUTSIDE U.S.
ORDINANDS (2018)	70%	MEXICO, VIETNAM, THE PHILIPPINES, COLOMBIA
POSTULANTS AND NOVICES (2017)	79%	VIETNAM, MEXICO
SEMINARIANS (2017-18)	87%	MEXICO, VIETNAM

THE TYPICAL FOREIGN-BORN ORDINAND CAME TO LIVE IN THE UNITED STATES **12 YEARS AGO AT THE AGE OF 23.**

AGE

THE MEDIAN AGE OF PRIESTS SCHEDULED TO BE ORDAINED IN 2018 IS **33. THE YOUNGEST IS 25; THE OLDEST IS 70.**
 AVERAGE AGE AT WHICH ORDINANDS FIRST CONSIDERED BECOMING A PRIEST: **17**



RELIGIOUS INSTITUTE* ENTRIES (2017)

NO ENTRANTS **70%**
ONE ENTRANT **14%**
AT LEAST TWO ENTRANTS **16%**

*Including 768 religious congregations, provinces and monasteries in the United States

Sources: Survey data from "The Class of 2018: Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood," Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate; data on postulants and novices at 768 religious institutions from "Women and Men Entering Religious Life: The Entrance Class of 2017," CARA; seminary data from "Catholic Ministry Formation Enrollment: Statistical Overview for 2017-2018," CARA; data on U.S. Catholic population from "A Closer Look at Catholic America" (2015), Pew Research Center, and "America's Changing Religious Identity" (2017), PRRI.

The church in El Salvador defends access to water as a human right



Taking a break during a protest against water privatization in San Salvador in July 2017.

absorbs the country's abundant rainwater, resulting in severe seasonal flooding. Climate change may be another reason that El Salvador now endures floods as well as rapidly drying lakes, rivers and aquifers. According to government data, 90 percent of the country's surface water is heavily contaminated, and almost 1.5 million Salvadorans do not have access to potable water.

Roberto Díaz, a taxi driver, is reminded of water's scarcity every day. In a compact house made of concrete in San Salvador, Mr. Díaz rushes to fill his cistern whenever water reaches his tap. "Water comes twice or three times a week," he said. "When I change my filter every few months, it is full of dark, slimy mud." Like many other families, he relies on commercial bottled water, despite being charged for municipal water.

He recalls his rural hometown, where water flowed from nearby springs and was regulated by community boards. "Where my parents live, the village still has its own well," he said. "I love drinking water there. It is still fresh and affordable."

Economic interests like the sugarcane industry rely on enormous quantities of water in El Salvador. "A lot of big corporations...are content with today's chaos in water regulation because they can continue consuming huge amounts of water and polluting it without worrying about sanctions," Mr. McKinley said. "And people in Congress have family members working in these industries."

Mr. McKinley and his team at U.C.A. drafted a version of the General Water Bill that includes a governing body with representatives from the national and local governments, civil society and the private sector. "It's a matter of consensus," he explains.

Even if the bill passes, some corporations say they should have a greater say in how it is implemented. "Their main argument is efficiency and being apolitical," Mr. McKinley said. "But private enterprise is the reason for so much misuse and contamination. It has been the [source] of problems, not the solution."

He said users and regulators should have distinct roles: "We argue that water is a public good, not a merchandise. It's a human right, a source of life."

Melissa Vida, reporting from El Salvador.
Twitter: @MelissaVidaa.

In 2017 the Archdiocese of San Salvador in El Salvador, along with the Jesuit-run University of Central America (U.C.A.), spearheaded a movement to ban mining for gold and other metals, practices that produced considerable water pollution. Now the church is fighting to protect the human right to water and the privatization of water resources.

"Water is monopolized and contaminated by industries," Archbishop José Luis Escobar Alas told **America**. "There isn't a law that guarantees the access to water for the poor, the people, the multitudes, but there is total freedom for businesses."

For nearly two decades, El Salvador has reviewed but failed to pass such a comprehensive law. Instead there are many contradictory and overly technical laws with loopholes that allow the abuse and misuse of water. "We are not going to rest until we have our General Water Bill approved," the archbishop said. "It's not possible that we still don't have a law that regulates access to water. As the church, we cannot stay silent."

"It is a question of life or death," agreed Andrés McKinley, a mining and water specialist at U.C.A. In 2016 water shortages led to protests and the declaration of a national state of emergency by President Salvador Sánchez Cerén.

Decades of mining, forest destruction and unsustainable agricultural practices have caused the soil throughout El Salvador to atrophy. In many regions the land no longer

Trump administration seeks new restrictions on asylum seekers

Following new restrictions sought by the White House, it will be more difficult than ever to obtain asylum in the United States.

Kirstjen Nielsen, the U.S. secretary of homeland security, said on April 4 that the Trump administration would address “the rising level of fraud that plagues our system,” noting an increase in asylum claims overall in the last five years, including claims from families and unaccompanied minors.

“Loopholes” in U.S. immigration law caused the growth in Central American migration over the last 10 years, according to Ms. Nielsen. She did not mention the increase of gang violence and poverty in Central America, although these have been cited among the major causes of migration from the region by migration experts.

“The traffickers and smugglers know that if you arrive with a family, under our current legal and court system, you have a much better chance of being released into the United States,” Ms. Nielsen said during a press briefing, accusing asylum seekers of using “magic words” when they claim “credible fear.”

“When we have to deal with the fraud and the backlogs,” she said, “we are unable to help those truly in need.”

Ashley Feasley, director of migration policy and public affairs at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, called the assertions of fraud troubling.

“People who are applying for asylum face extreme persecution,” she said. “It’s something people avail themselves of in extreme circumstances.... People are doing this out of complete desperation.”

A year ago the Trump administration changed the threshold that establishes a “credible fear” justifying asylum status. According to the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, asylum seekers now have to present a “preponderance of evidence” rather than simply a “significant possibility” to establish credible fear.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services also announced in January that it would process more recent asylum claims before addressing older ones. The service said the move is “an attempt to stem the growth of the agency’s asylum backlog.”



A woman reviews a temporary transit visa granted by Mexican immigration authorities. She was among a group of Central American migrants traveling with an annual Stations of the Cross caravan who were camping out in Matias Romero, Oaxaca State, on April 3.

Michelle N. Mendez of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network said the new policy means asylum seekers should be ready for interviews three to six weeks after filing. Tighter deadlines could lead to incomplete applications, especially if submissions are coming in from a different country.

“For asylum-seekers who have already been waiting for months or years to have their asylum case scheduled, the wait is about to get much longer,” Ms. Mendez said in an email to **America**. That wait “has life or death implications for any family residing abroad in dangerous conditions and waiting for the family member to make it through the [U.S.] asylum system.”

Kevin Appleby, the senior director of international immigration policy for the Center for Migration Studies in New York, noted the administration’s effort to repeal protections for unaccompanied children, which was among those aspects of the law described as a “loophole” by Trump officials.



AP Photo / Felix Marquez

Bishop worries Brexit could complicate Northern Irish peace



A wall in West Belfast commemorates victims of "The Troubles".

April 10 marked the 20th anniversary of the historic Good Friday Agreement, a peace deal that effectively brought an end to “The Troubles” that had cast a sectarian shadow over Northern Ireland for three decades and resulted in the deaths of more than 3,500 people. The accord led to the removal of British Army security checkpoints and watchtowers along the 310-mile border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, facilitating cross-border travel and increasing trade.

But now at least one Irish bishop is concerned that the United Kingdom’s decision to leave the European Union could complicate life for Ireland, both north and south of the border. Despite assurances from London, Brexit has raised fears of a return to a hard border on the island.

Shared membership by Britain and Ireland in the European Union meant Brussels became the source of much-needed funding for cross-border cooperation programs aimed at helping trade. In the wake of the Good Friday Agreement, these programs also eased tensions between divided and alienated communities.

“The Good Friday Agreement was based on the assumption that both the Republic of Ireland and the U.K. would be in the [European Union] together,” Bishop Donal McKeown of Derry said.

The bishop said the prospect of a hard border would cause “enormous resentment. It would mean going back on the ‘identity’ assumptions of the Good Friday Agreement.”

Bishop McKeown said the economies of Northern Ireland and the Republic “are intertwined, most especially in the field of agriculture and food production/processing. Within the [European Union], the two jurisdictions have been enabled to grow together with enormous benefits for both.”

Catholic News Service

“They are also separating families, mothers from their children, at the border. That sends a definite signal, ‘Don’t come,’” Mr. Appleby said.

Since 1948, the United Nations has recognized the right of individuals to seek asylum from persecution in other countries. According to its 1951 convention on the treatment of refugees, the U.N. prohibits the detention of asylum seekers simply for the act of seeking asylum. The convention also recognized that seeking asylum may require individuals to “breach immigration rules.”

The Trump administration is sending a different message, said Dylan Corbett, executive director of Hope Border Institute in El Paso, Tex.

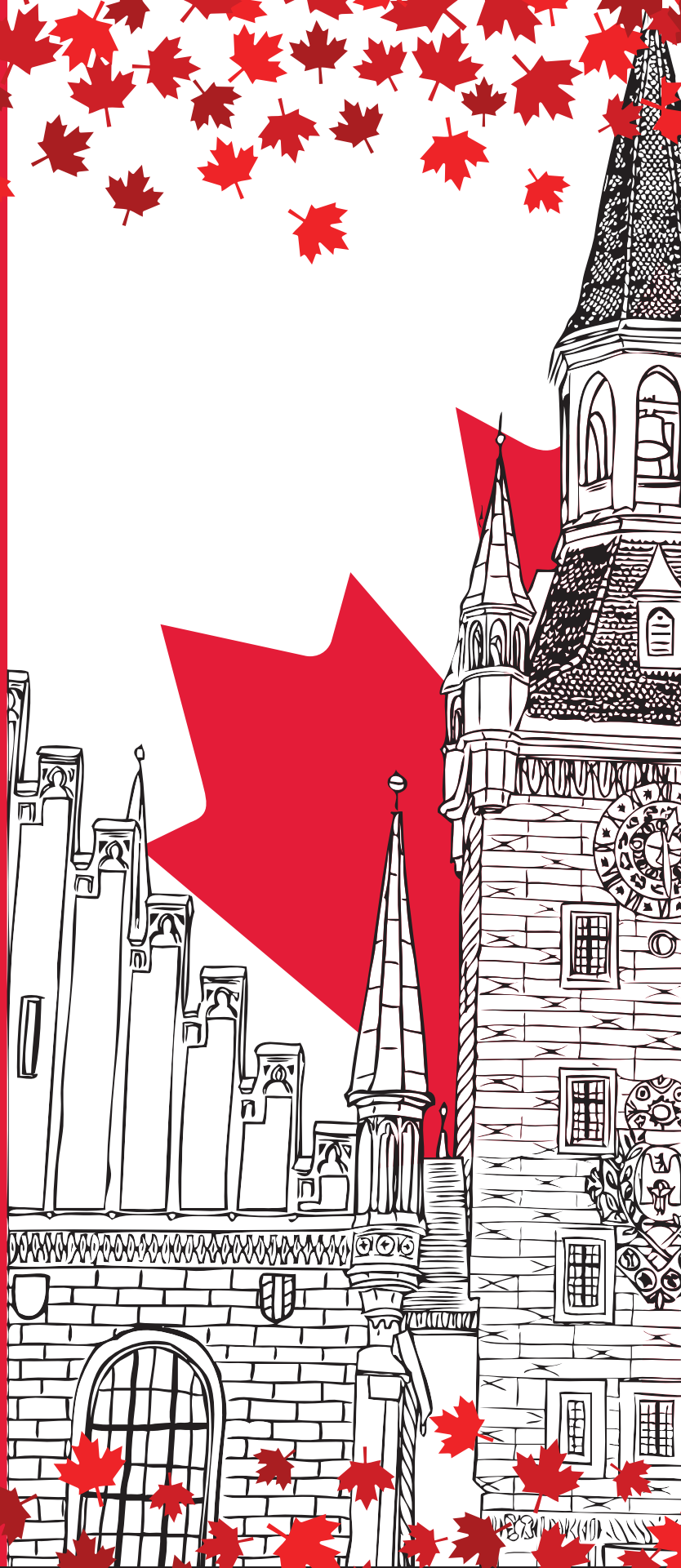
“Word is going to get out that the border is closed,” he said. “We’re not open to asylum seekers and refugees. That’s a fundamental change in the identity of our country.”

J.D. Long-García, senior editor. Twitter: @jdlongarcia.

The Complications of Canadian Catholicism

*Church-state relations
have become even
more complex under
Justin Trudeau.*

By Dean Dettloff





In Canada, a nation that sees itself as a multi-cultural hodgepodge proud of its differences, Catholics are caught in a complex web of influences and identities. And that web does not stop at the personal level. The complications of Canadian Catholicism came into sharp relief when Justin Trudeau, a Catholic politician and leader of the popular Liberal Party, became prime minister in October 2015.

Prior to his bid for prime minister, Mr. Trudeau announced in May 2014 that the Liberal Party he served as leader would no longer run candidates who refused to vote along pro-choice party lines. Liberal Party members of Parliament could have alternative personal views, Mr. Trudeau said, but if a bill or motion came to a vote, they would have no choice but to vote along party lines, supporting access to abortion.

The new policy made headlines in part because it ignored the pro-life positions of many lifelong Liberal Party members and made the Conservative Party the only one of Canada's three major parties that allowed candidates to vote their conscience on abortion issues. (The third major Canadian political party, the New Democratic Party, also requires its members to vote pro-choice.) But the decision also gained publicity because Mr. Trudeau is himself Roman Catholic.

It is tempting here to talk about a kind of ‘celebrity secularism,’ a public image that significantly puts pressure on religious communities by appeals to public opinion and effective marketing campaigns. 🍁🍁

Cardinal Thomas Collins, archbishop of Toronto, wrote an open letter to Mr. Trudeau that same month, urging him to reverse his position. The letter said that while party unity and discipline are reasonably within the scope of political leadership, “political authority is not limitless: it does not extend to matters of conscience and religious faith.”

A variety of other members of the Catholic hierarchy also criticized Mr. Trudeau’s decision, including the archbishop of Ottawa, Terrence Prendergast, S.J., who asked for a meeting with the Liberal Party leader to discuss the issue. Mr. Trudeau defended his position, and its conflict with his church’s teachings, by appealing to the example of his father, Pierre Trudeau. As a Catholic prime minister, the elder Trudeau had legalized divorce and decriminalized homosexual relations between consenting adults, noting, “The state has no business in the nation’s bedrooms.”

While the reference to his father’s legacy may have been politically astute, the experiences of the two Trudeaus, especially regarding their relationships with the church in Canada, cannot be compared easily. Pierre Trudeau was known as a Catholic intellectual and maintained a different style of leadership and public persona than his son.

Educated by Jesuits in Quebec and later influenced by French Catholic, left-leaning intellectuals like Jacques Maritain, Étienne Gilson and Emmanuel Mounier, Pierre Trudeau had disagreements with the church hierarchy that were nevertheless formed in a Catholic milieu. Beginning his tenure as prime minister in 1968, Pierre Trudeau also was a benefactor of the progressive spirit of the Second Vatican Council, not least in his dialogue with the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, which became increasingly concerned with issues of social justice and collaborating with other institutions in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Born while his father was still serving as prime minister, Justin Trudeau did not grow up in the unique Québécois Catholicism of the early 20th century. When he was 5 and liv-



Many Canadians have been upset by the contrasts between Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s public image and the actions of the Liberal government.

ing in Ottawa, his parents famously and publicly separated.

When Justin Trudeau, at 12, attended the same private school his father had attended, it was no longer run by the Jesuits. Like many Catholic institutions, after the Quiet Revolution, a time of rapid legal secularization in Quebec initiated after the election of a Liberal provincial government in 1960, it had been secularized. While he recalls a strong presence of prayer and church attendance from his childhood, by his late adolescence, Justin Trudeau says, he became a “lapsed Catholic.”

Later, however, his faith would be revived after the loss of his brother, Michel Trudeau, who died in an avalanche. He would even deliver a speech at World Youth Day in Toronto in 2001. The young Trudeau’s Catholicism was of a different kind than his father’s, more affective than academic, even while both Trudeaus have had their disagreements with Canada’s bishops.

The controversy surrounding the Liberal Party’s stance



toward pro-life politics signaled what would become a series of public clashes between Mr. Trudeau's political and Catholic identities as he campaigned for and subsequently won his party's prime ministership. As Mr. Trudeau negotiates this tension in his own life, Canadian Catholics have had to negotiate their own along with him. The Liberals have been slow to deliver on campaign commitments to climate responsibility and indigenous rights, while they have loudly supported the legalization of euthanasia and the earmarking of Canadian foreign aid for abortion and contraception.

The latest contretemps between Mr. Trudeau and the church in Canada erupted over funding restrictions set in place for the Canada Summer Jobs program. That federal program subsidizes nonprofits and small and public-sector employers, including Catholic diocesan and other church-based organizations, to help create summer jobs for students between the ages of 15 and 30. Individual

members of Parliament review applications and allocate the grants within their districts.

After reports surfaced that millions had been awarded under the program to Catholic right-to-life groups, the Liberal Party said in December that it would limit funding only to groups that can attest that "the job and the organization's core mandate respect individual human rights in Canada, including the values underlying the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," adding, "as well as other rights." Those other rights include "reproductive rights and the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of sex, religion, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression."

Canadian bishops denounced the new limitation in a statement released in January: "Faith communities consider abortion, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression as major questions with ethical, moral, social and personal bearing which determine our understanding of human dignity and thus appreciation for the meaning and significance of each and every human life," they wrote. "This new policy conflicts directly with the right to freedom of religion and conscience which too are enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as well as in associated case law."

The bishops argue the subsidy restriction "seriously undermines the right to religious freedom since the Government of Canada is directly limiting the right of religious traditions to hold, teach and practise their principles and values in public." The Toronto Right to Life Association has sued to force the federal government to drop the "attestation"; final arguments are expected to be heard in May.

Of course, Mr. Trudeau's Liberal Party is not a strictly Catholic party, nor is any other significant party in Canada, a nation with a difficult history between Catholics and Protestants and an increasing influx of immigrants from other traditions and identities. Mr. Trudeau often defends his party's positions by expressing his desire to include "all Canadians" and then delivering a snappy comment, like his famous rationale for having a cabinet for the first time in Canadian political history evenly represented by both men and women: "Because it's 2015." Though including all Canadians is a tall order, with Mr. Trudeau at the helm, the Liberals have a young, good-looking, celebrity citizen guiding and advertising policy agendas.

It is tempting here to talk about a kind of "celebrity

secularism,” a public image that significantly puts pressure on religious communities, including the church Mr. Trudeau belongs to, by appeals to public opinion and effective marketing campaigns. That dynamic is undeniably present in Mr. Trudeau’s governing strategy. But in Canada, in light of the value the country places on pluralism and diversity, Catholics have complicated identities already. As a result, Mr. Trudeau is less exceptional and Canada’s secularism is more complicated than some public confrontations might suggest.

Motivation Matters

Narratives that involve conflicts between “secular” states and “religious” communities are well known in places like the United States, from banal complaints about holiday greetings to legal challenges over health care policy. In those debates, “secular” usually means a form of social control that challenges religious views or commitments. Ardent secularists push this view themselves, insisting on the “backward” thinking of religious people or worldviews, but so do religious objectors, who see themselves as victims of cultural persecution.

Setting secularism up this way paints a picture of religious communities defending themselves against secular authorities, a sort of underdog story. There are certainly Canadian Catholics who feel they are being intentionally pushed out of public discourse, like the Rev. Raymond de Souza, who late last year called Justin Trudeau “the acceptable face of hardline secularism.”

Some Canadian bishops have tried to speak up about that worry. But, as Pamela Klassen, a professor in the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto, says, “If we want to think about Canada as a secular society, we have to always bring that down to local contexts and figure out what is meant by ‘secular’—for whom, in opposition to what?”

Ms. Klassen, who researches how conversations about the secular and religious shape Canadian society, argues that the term secular as applied to Canadian society is not a descriptor that can be taken for granted. It may mean something altogether different north of the U.S. border, and when divisions are drawn between the religious and secular, some voices in religious communities gain more traction than others.

“They can more forcibly say what differentiates them from secularism,” says Ms. Klassen, “whereas the groups



► Pope Francis meets Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during a private audience at the Vatican in May 2017. A majority of Canadian Catholics believe that “what’s right or wrong is a matter of personal opinion.”

within any particular religious tradition who feel themselves to have alliances with certain ‘secular’ causes can get sort of written off as sellouts. I think it’s way more complicated.”

Ms. Klassen points out that even Catholics who find themselves making hard decisions about Catholic teaching—about the use of birth control, for example—are often motivated by their faith, their families and their religious values, and are not simply capitulating to secularism. She cited the Canadian bishops’ controversial statement in 1968 on Pope Paul VI’s encyclical “*Humanae Vitae*,” commonly called the Winnipeg Statement, as an example of how the church hierarchy, too, recognizes that these difficult choices can still be motivated by faithful intentions.

In the Winnipeg Statement, the Canadian bishops said that some Catholics “find it either extremely difficult or even impossible to make their own all elements of [the] doctrine” contained in the encyclical, which





CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano via Reuters

albeit one that tries to make room for religious identities within certain limits. When, for example, Cardinal Collins and Bishop Douglas Crosby wrote letters against the commitment of the Liberal government to send \$650 million overseas to promote and provide abortion services and other health matters, they were speaking against a secularism that allows them to be Catholic but puts limits on their authority.

Whether in their personal lives or politically promoting aspects of church teaching that are not labeled conservative in North America, faithful Catholics are sometimes accused of capitulating to their secular environment instead of making decisions or fighting for certain causes precisely because they are Catholics. As Catholics often emphasize, Catholic social teaching is not reducible to prepackaged political positions. Yet rarely are voices raised about Canadian secularism when it clashes with Catholic complaints about issues like the Liberal government's greenlighting of new oil pipelines in Canada or in connection to their pleas for a more just society for L.G.B.T. persons.

All this is to say that talking about Canada's secularism runs the risk of oversimplifying the situation. "Catholics are a complicated bunch," Ms. Klassen says, "just like any others. If you take an issue, depending on how you slice it, the people who end up 'religious' or 'secular' change. We have to see how these categories help us see the world in clearer ways, but also obscure the world."

The Canadian Compromise

If a harsh division between secularism and religion is hard to sustain, how exactly do Catholics relate to their contemporary, complicated Canadian context? Asking such a general question is already starting off on the wrong foot, suggests Dennis O'Hara, associate professor in the faculty of theology at St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto. "The typical Canadian doesn't exist, and neither does the typical Canadian Catholic. A city like Toronto is so multicultural, and so is my parish," he says. "The notion that Roman Catholics in Canada are homogenous is so off the mark."

The diversity of Catholicism is unsurprising in Canada's shifting landscape, Mr. O'Hara says. "If you're involved with hockey, you meet a tremendously diverse group of people there. In various social justice issues you meet diverse people from different strata. And in our parishes you meet a tremendous diversity of people." Navigating that

famously prohibited the use of contraceptives. "[T]hese Catholics should not be considered, or consider themselves, shut off from the body of the faithful," the statement says, while underscoring the need for "sincere self-examination to determine the true motives and grounds for such suspension of assent."

"Many women think about fertility as a spiritual question, and the decision to use birth control isn't necessarily a secular one," Ms. Klassen says. The Winnipeg Statement seems to suggest something similar to Ms. Klassen's statement when it refers to the "conflict of duties" Catholics might feel when it comes to the use of contraceptives, for example, "the reconciling of conjugal love and responsible parenthood with the education of children already born or with the health of the mother."

Still, when it comes to Catholics who are trying to be in line with the church's official teachings, Mr. Trudeau's Canada might seem like a secularist disciplinarian indeed,



With Mr. Trudeau at the helm, the Liberals have a young, good-looking, celebrity citizen guiding policy agendas. 🍁🍁

difference, says Mr. O'Hara, has led to a desire "to find compromise and to seek reconciliation as much as possible."

A 2015 study on Canadian views on religious belief, faith and multifaith issues by the Angus Reid Institute, a public opinion research organization based in Vancouver, British Columbia, confirms Mr. O'Hara's analysis. Between 2001 and 2011, 478,000 Catholics immigrated to Canada, making them the largest religious demographic among newcomers to Canada, a nation that often contrasts its multiculturalism with the U.S. melting pot.

But despite that influx, the study suggests a flattening of religious edges in Canada, a nation where 26 percent say they are inclined to reject religious belief, 30 percent report that they are inclined to embrace religious belief—their numbers have been shrinking—and the remaining 44 percent reside uneasily somewhere in between. A majority of Canadian Catholics—57 percent overall and 63 percent among Quebec Catholics—believe that "what's right or wrong is a matter of personal opinion." The Angus Reid Institute also reports that 85 percent of Canadian Catholics think a woman should have the right to get an abortion if her own health is at risk, and 45 percent support access to abortion without qualifications.

The Canadian Catholic hierarchy is aware of the range of Catholic opinion in Canada even on bedrock moral issues, as well as the changing social landscape that is propelling it. In an email, Archbishop Paul-André Durocher, of the Archdiocese of Gatineau, Quebec, told **America**, "In the past, when the broader society mirrored Christian ethics, it was easier to live according to the teachings of the church. In a sense, one didn't even have to think about it, one simply followed the crowd."

Archbishop Durocher wonders if this situation made it more difficult for Catholics to find a mature faith. "Indeed, the fact that so many Catholics stopped attending church when the social strictures fell is a sign that they had not attained the maturity of faith for which we should all strive."

Without the ability to take a thickly Catholic commu-

nity for granted, Archbishop Durocher says, the bishops have tried to avoid extremes: for example, "on the one hand, viewing contemporary culture as totally deprived of any worth, as if God's Spirit had retired from our world and been constrained to the Catholic Church; on the other, accepting everything that our culture proposes as if every new trend were a 'sign of the times'."

Instead, Archbishop Durocher says the church has tried to sift through Canadian society to find what aspects seem compatible with the Gospel and what ones are counter to it. "In my estimation, the approach adopted by the Bishops of Canada tends to follow Saint John's advice about 'testing the spirit' to see whether it be from God or not."

In an interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation about assisted dying, Archbishop Prendergast noted Canadian society is characterized by toleration for other positions even if they disagree with the church and that his role and challenge is to communicate church teachings in that environment. Mr. O'Hara, who researches environmental and medical ethics, says that while he wants the church to have a public voice, its moral credibility remains badly weakened not just because of pluralism, but because of its own slow response to moral crises within its own institutions, like the sex abuse scandal in Canada.

"The role of the church in [public] matters is moral suasion, not [pushing specific] legislation," Mr. O'Hara says, and he hopes the church can work to regain some of its lost moral witness. Some of that work, he suggests, is happening through the willingness of Catholic religious orders to wade into difficult situations themselves, like the Jesuits interacting with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the Sisters of St. Joseph advocating for more palliative care as an alternative to euthanasia, which became legal in Canada in June 2016.

Despite the Liberal Party's current exclusionary policy on pro-life membership, "Trudeau was offering a more conciliatory and dialogical approach in the last election," Mr. O'Hara says, adding that such an approach actually fits with how many Canadian Catholics in the pews feel.

Characterizing that attitude, Mr. O'Hara says those Catholics might say something like: "I'm not for abortion, but I can understand why, as a society, we're going to permit it as a legal option and treat it as a health care issue. I'll still try and persuade people who are considering it not to have an abortion, but I'll try to be respectful."

That might seem like a weak moral stance to some

pro-life U.S. Catholics, Mr. O'Hara says, "but this is the way we like to do things."

Though Mr. O'Hara recognizes there are challenges for Catholics reflecting on what their church teaches in relation to the trends in their polity, he says Canadian society depends on and welcomes these tensions as part of the diversity of opinion it accepts in public space. "If the bishops are saying Trudeau has shut down the conversation on an issue, good—make that point. There has to be some sort of tension to create the desire for change."

Navigating those tensions can be difficult, but Archbishop Durocher says: "The first step is to acknowledge them. Second, to understand why they arise. Third, accept and even embrace them. And fourth, commit to living a mature Christian faith in spite of those tensions."

Dialogue and Conscience

Mr. O'Hara says that while he appreciates that Canadians value dialogue in their society, "Canadians can be very smug about these things." That smugness can get in the way of recognizing deeper contradictions and conflicts at the heart of Canadian life, including Canadian religious life. With all the complications about the secular noted by Ms. Klassen and all the compromising politeness celebrated by Mr. O'Hara, a close look at Canadian debates about, and displays of, religion in public reveals that at least some form of northern secularism does try to muscle out voices that it deems too religious.

"Trying to speak out intelligently on such issues is not easy," says Archbishop Durocher. "The voices of Quebec's bishops were not heard during the debate on euthanasia. I was told in a media interview that I had no right even to express myself on this topic."

In those confrontations, Mr. O'Hara says, paying attention to conscience can help make all the difference, both for diagnosing the problems of secularism and interacting with them. "I do think there are things people don't really want to talk about in public because of secularism," Mr. O'Hara admits, and he says the Liberal Party's decision to prohibit members from voting their conscience is a significant issue.

"Examining your informed conscience is what Roman Catholics do all the time," he says. "Sometimes that might mean disagreeing with the church too. The bishops are right in noting there is a tension between Canadian politics and Catholic teaching; they would also

want to create the pastoral setting for people to reflect deeply on these tensions themselves."

The church has to accept, says Mr. O'Hara, that there is "not just a tension between what the Liberal government is doing and people in the pews, but there are also tensions between individual people in the pews with the church and their government."

"Canadians are great compromisers, for better and worse, and many Canadians get uncomfortable with the possibility of extreme polarizations," says Mr. O'Hara. That discomfort, he says, can be a good thing when it creates a little more breathing room for a variety of opinions and also a little more respect for opposing views.

Archbishop Durocher agrees, saying: "The challenges are numerous. I believe the path forward lies in the formation of enlightened, committed Catholic adults willing to engage society in dialogue."

Whether or not Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party encourage a society that knows how to respectfully conduct that dialogue is not always clear. Many Canadians have been upset by the contrasts between Mr. Trudeau's public image and the actions of the Liberal government, suggesting his conscience might sometimes be shaped more by trending issues than by sincerely confronting the difficulties of including "all Canadians."

His enthusiasm for pipeline construction, for example, startled many, and some members of Canada's indigenous communities have questioned his sincerity. Perhaps a "celebrity secularism" is a reasonable concern after all.

While he may sometimes feel as if he were engaged in "what the French call a dialogue with the deaf," Archbishop Durocher says dialogue between individuals is a better way forward than dialogue between institutions. "I'd love to sit down with Mr. Trudeau—or any other politician—to chat about faith and justice, personal flourishing and the common good," the archbishop says.

"I'd love to be able to engage in breaking down stereotypes on both sides of the wall and try to understand where the other is coming from.

"I've done so on a few occasions with various public officials and have always come away from such encounters enriched and wiser," Archbishop Durocher adds, "and I like to think they have too."

Dean Dettloff is *America's Toronto correspondent.*

A LIFE IN FULL



My friend's diagnosis of cystic fibrosis has powerfully influenced her outlook on life—and mine.

By Anna Keating

In a widely circulated essay in *New York* magazine, the writer Jen Gann describes her experience of learning that her newborn son, Dudley, has cystic fibrosis. Had she known of the diagnosis during pregnancy, she writes, “I would have had an abortion.” She decides to sue her midwife for “wrongful birth,” specifically, the failure to diagnose her son’s C.F. in utero, which deprived Ms. Gann of the ability to terminate.

Ms. Gann’s anger and grief, her shock and lack of acceptance, are understandable. She and her family have just been handed a devastating diagnosis. Her world has been turned upside down. Cystic fibrosis is a terrible disease. It causes persistent lung infections and, over time, limits a person’s ability to breathe. In patients with C.F., a defective gene causes a thick, sticky mucus to build up in the lungs, pancreas and other organs. The mucus clogs airways and traps bacteria, leading to frequent lung infections and, eventually, respiratory failure. Cystic fibrosis is also a digestive disease. The mucus in the pancreas prevents the release of enzymes that allow the body to break down food and absorb essential nutrients.



The author (left) and Libby (right), who has cystic fibrosis, became friends in elementary school.

All photos courtesy of the author

Even newborns with diagnoses that are ‘incompatible with life’—do these children not have the same right to love as children who will have an average life expectancy?

Ms. Gann’s essay raises many troubling questions because, if she wins her case, it will mean that the courts essentially agreed that it would be better if her son had not been allowed to live. Disability rights advocates express concern that this is tantamount to saying that lives lived with cystic fibrosis are less valuable, less worthy of care—in a word, “unfit.”

These struggles are not new. Once openly discussed in early 20th-century America as eugenics, it was widely accepted as a moral duty for mainline Protestants and progressives to avoid having diseased or deformed children. The American Eugenics Society referred to them as “people born to be a burden on the rest.” After World War II and the horrors of state-sponsored eugenics in Germany, this proposition was reimagined as “genetic counseling.” Americans no longer speak of “improving the quality of the race”; we simply do it as a matter of course.

As Amy Laura Hall writes in her book *Conceiving Parenthood: American Protestantism and the Spirit of Reproduction*, “The core assessment of burden and birth led to an arsenal of biotechnological tools to plan, evaluate and enhance children and to measure the worth of a given family—tools that today have become standard political equipment.” After the Second World War, the eugenics movement became less coercive, and there were fewer forced sterilizations of “imbeciles,” criminals and racial minorities. Instead, producing “better” children, became a voluntary, parental and social duty. “Responsible parenthood” came to mean discriminating reproduction and the scientific pursuit of the good or comfortable life. Part of this meant using prenatal testing and abortion to prevent the births of certain “kinds” of people, part of what Pope Francis condemns as the “throw-away culture.”

Jen Gann loves her son and imagines that removing people with C.F. from the population is the merciful and

compassionate thing to do. She believes that to let such persons be born only to suffer is itself immoral. She states, “The women who willingly made choices that were never presented to me and chose a child’s suffering [i.e., to let their children with C.F. be born]: Sometimes I hate them.” Ms. Gann sees terminating prenatal children with a disability or disease as reducing the overall suffering in the world.

Which brings us back to Ms. Gann’s lawsuit. Would the world be a better place if there were “no Dudley”? Would Dudley, his mother and his community be better off had he been terminated in utero? For now, “healthy” adults will decide, as Dudley is a toddler and cannot speak on his own behalf. We can only imagine what he will someday tell his parents or the courts. His mother imagines looking into his eyes and saying, “I’m sorry I didn’t save you from your own life.”

Life With C.F.

My own experience, albeit second hand, of cystic fibrosis has powerfully influenced my life. My childhood best friend, Libby, and her older sister, Sam, are in their mid-30s and living with cystic fibrosis. Memories of my time with Libby and her family are the ones that burn the brightest from my childhood, the ones I return to again and again.

As an elementary school kid, Libby would come over for dinner at my house, toting a baggie of enzyme pills. I remember her licking her fingers and dipping her hand into the bag. A capsule would stick to each finger. She would lick them all off and swallow them down with a single gulp. There was not a hint of embarrassment or self-pity. Libby was not her cystic fibrosis, she was Libby, mature and independent, joyful and loving. A force.

Our culture can make illness or disability worse by reducing inherently valuable and irreducible human beings to their diagnoses. Multiple lines of research demonstrate that schizophrenics, for example, have better outcomes in non-Western countries, where their treatment options are limited but the culture is more accepting. In places like Ethiopia, people experiencing psychosis often remain in their communities as eccentrics, instead of being exiled as outcasts. In other words, it is easier to heal when you are not treated as a leper. Cystic fibrosis is a terrible disease. We should want to treat and cure it. But Libby, like Dudley, was not and is not her disease. She is Libby.

Libby and I had a happy childhood. We had sleepovers at each other’s houses and sold lemonade on the corner. We wrote plays about twin sisters separated at birth and

acted them out for our parents. We put on music and choreographed dance routines.

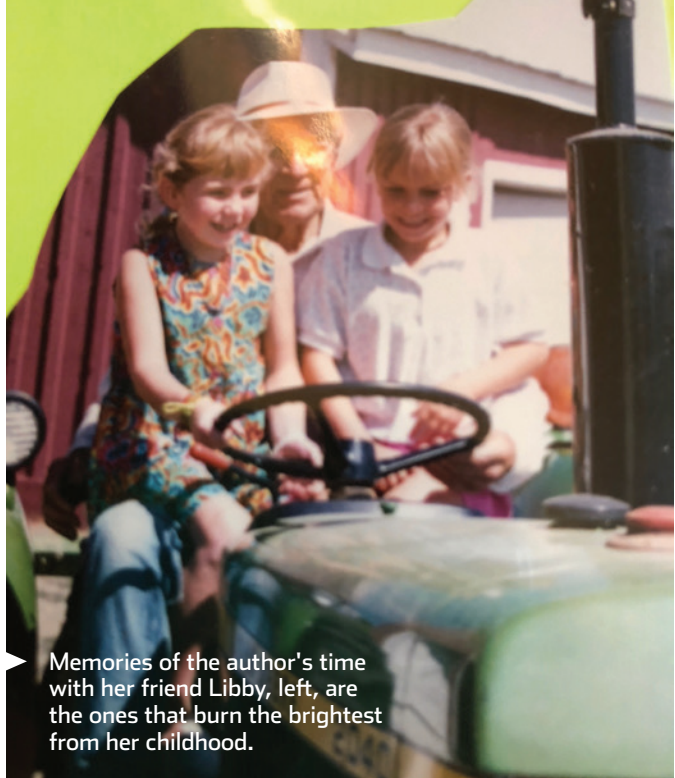
One summer, when Libby had to go to the hospital for a weeklong “tune up,” my dad dropped me off at her room every morning on his way to the office and picked me up every evening at dinner time. Libby knew all the nurses and doctors and would walk around with her IV pole as if she ran the place. We played checkers and ate the snickerdoodles my mother had sent. Libby says of the hospital, “My thought was, I get to hang out with people who really care about me, but of course the other piece of that is that you’re in the hospital enough to have friends there.”

I remember sitting with Libby while she did a nebulizer treatment or her parents gave her “Pat Pat” (manual percussion on her chest to strategically rattle the mucous in her lungs). Afterward, we went horseback riding in the mountains. In the open spaces, we were allowed to gallop. It was thrilling to be 8 years old, your seat out of the saddle, your hair flying in the wind. Libby’s determined and phenomenal parents fought to make the life she and her sisters had beautiful.

Libby was diagnosed with C.F. at birth and given a 50 percent chance of making it to 18. Her parents already had a daughter with C.F. and knew there was a 25 percent chance of another baby with the same disease, but her mom thought it would never happen again. When it did happen, she thought, “Well, she’ll have a sister who understands.” She was an amazing working mother of three. Always “making lemonade out of lemons.” She now tells other parents of sick kids, “Focus on what they can do, not what they can’t do. Treat them like they’re living, not like they’re dying, and savor every day.”

Libby has indeed savored more days than not. She is now 33 and a bilingual speech pathologist. She spends two days a week making home visits, helping parents create language-rich environments for at-risk kids. She has been married to her college sweetheart for nine years and has two adopted children (4 and 15 months). With C.F., two kids and a job, her days are full, but they are not all hard work. She just got back from a family vacation in Mexico, and the day after we talked she planned to go skiing with her mom. These are not activities in the price range for every family, of course, but her life is hardly one of the unending “pain and disappointment” Jen Gann describes.

I believe Libby’s life would be valuable even if she could not do all the extraordinary things she does. And I do not want to romanticize my childhood experiences with her



Memories of the author's time with her friend Libby, left, are the ones that burn the brightest from her childhood.

family. Libby remembers seeing tears in her mother’s eyes when she was watching her play at the park. And her mom says she kept her part-time job both because it paid well and had health insurance and also because working outside the home gave her “a break from the pain.”

I do not want to instrumentalize people with health issues. Yet, the fact remains that I had this friend who was and is an amazing person, who has done and continues to do amazing things, and she has cystic fibrosis.

Libby says, “Growing up, I understood that C.F. was something really serious, but at the same time I was just normal. I had best friends and went to sleepovers and felt loved. C.F. was always put in such a nice perspective by my parents. I don’t think I was ever angry or even terrified. I understood it was serious, I never skipped treatments, but somehow, I never thought, ‘I’m not gonna live.’”

Jen Gann cannot imagine people who have two children with the same genetic disease. For her, their sin is multiplied. But Libby thinks having a sister with the same illness “normalized it” and was key to her well-being. She was never alone. She was a part of an “us.”

She says: “My parents made choices when I was young to balance normalcy with the innate caution that goes with C.F. They would teach me proper handwashing but then say, ‘Oh sure you can have a sleepover.’ They had this philosophy of, ‘Yes, you’re living with this disease, but you’re *living* with this disease.’ My mom had an obsession with making our lives as wonderful as possible.” The culture of Libby’s home and access to good health care made it possible for her to imagine and live a lovely life.



Libby has been married to her college sweetheart for nine years and has two children.

Libby is not afraid of obligations or hard work. She says, “Part of having C.F. is this desire, this intention, to make every moment worth it.” She always wanted to get married and have a family. She says, “I remember those conversations that my husband and I had before we got married, that nobody wants to have. I told him, ‘I have a greater chance than other people of not having a full life expectancy.’ And I still remember when he said, ‘The number of days I have with you would be worth it.’ That’s when I knew he was the person I wanted to spend the rest of my life with.”

Libby’s situation is unique. She and her older sister have a rare genetic disease, and yet it is also universal, because none of us knows if the people we love will live to old age or not, will experience a chronic health condition or not, will become

Our individual choices collectively create a culture that is more or less accepting of difference, more or less tolerant of human beings, burdens and blessings both.

dependent on us or not. That is the risk you take when you love someone.

When Libby and I were little, we rode inner tubes down the irrigation ditches at her grandparents' farm. At the end of the ditch there was a barbed wire fence. Her sister would throw us a rope and we would have to catch it—just in time. Part of the thrill was the risk. Maybe the same is true of life.

In the Face of Suffering

Prenatal testing is used to eliminate the “unfit” in utero. As a Catholic, my fears about prenatal testing being used to eliminate the “unfit” in utero will surprise no one. Part of being Catholic is hearing that vulnerability and suffering are a part of human life and that human life is sacred. Jesus stands with the rejected and tells his followers that they, the widows and the orphans, are to be favored. Being religious means believing that, despite appearances, no human life is worth more than any other. I dread the cross, but I was also raised to expect it.

Jesus is a strange God who chooses to come into the world, not with a show of force, but with a whisper. As Caryl Houselander writes in her book *The Reed of God*: “The psalmists had hymned Christ’s coming on harps of gold. The prophets foretold it with burning tongues, but now the loudest telling of His presence on earth was to be the heartbeat within a heartbeat of a child.” Why come into the world as the tiniest and most vulnerable of humans?

My friend Libby was raised Episcopalian, but does not subscribe to any particular religion now. She is “faithful” but not religious, and politically progressive; yet she too is uncomfortable with the way prenatal diagnoses are sometimes used to hastily label a child. She has come to these conclusions from her lived experience, not from some inherited or handed-down tradition.

When it came time for Libby to start her own family, though she could have conceived, she chose to adopt. She says of prenatal testing for genetic abnormalities: “It just feels wrong. You’re looking at this in a one-dimensional

way, rather than understanding that this will be a *part* of a person’s story, rather than someone’s *whole* story.”

Ms. Gann seems to see it from the opposite side, that Dudley’s diagnosis is his whole story, or at least a large enough portion of his story to justify his termination. That perspective, frightfully, leads us to the position of antinatalist philosophers like David Benatar, who argues in his book *Better Not to Have Been: The Harm of Coming Into Existence*, that it is immoral to have children at all. Mr. Benatar writes, “While good people go to great lengths to spare their children from suffering, few of them seem to notice that the one (and only) guaranteed way to prevent all the suffering of their children is not to bring those children into existence in the first place.” Mr. Benatar’s answer to the problem of human suffering is not love, it is non-being.

Of course, people who differ from others often experience suffering in the form of bias and discrimination: African-Americans, gays and lesbians, intersex people, people with learning disabilities. If we follow Mr. Benatar’s logic, who is to say which “types” of biological and cultural diversities are worth preserving and which should be exterminated?

Even newborns with diagnoses that are “incompatible with life”—do these children not have the same right to love and hospice as children who will have an average life expectancy? As Tom Stoppard writes of the death of a child: “Because children grow up we think a child’s purpose is to grow up. But a child’s purpose is to be a child. Nature doesn’t disdain what only lives for a day. It pours the whole of itself into each moment.”

As an adoptive mother, Libby was faced with these questions before she even met a birth mom. She says, “We had to check *yes* or *no*—would you accept a baby with this condition, everything from a missing digit to really serious stuff. But growing up with my experience of having one of those things that’s listed as a possible condition made me look at that list and say, ‘Absolutely, we would love a child with any of those quote unquote special needs.’ It becomes personal. I could absolutely love a child who has some kind of cloud over their existence.”

It would be understandable if Libby wanted an easier path, given all she has had to go through, but Libby is not a normal person, she is an exceptional one, more resilient, more empathetic, more joyful than many who have never been sick a day in their life.

She says, “Of course, I’m as healthy as I am because of



Libby, now 33, is a bilingual speech pathologist. She remains ready for adventure.

the changes and advances in science, and yet that same science can be applied in ways that cause harm. My parents had my sister first, who was diagnosed with C.F., and they knew there was one in four chance of me having the disease, and of course they hoped that wouldn't happen again. But thank goodness they would have never terminated a pregnancy with C.F., because I wouldn't be alive. And now 33 years later, people—and not just myself—say, 'What a beautiful thing.' I think testing takes away this opportunity for people to find their strength. I don't think you know how strong you are until you don't have another choice. If we make choices to override that, then we miss out on an opportunity for things that grow us and change us for the better."

The Pressure for Perfection

Libby's story is not intended to take one instance and use that to gloss over the complexities of a very difficult issue. It is not meant to minimize the real suffering and pain that others do experience. One thing that is clear in all of this is that Jen Gann is suffering too. And unfortunately, part of what she is suffering from is shame. Our culture's ideas

about perfection through technology run so deep that they become difficult to examine. Ms. Gann blames herself for the stigma of parenting a sick child. She writes, "I feel a deep responsibility." Ms. Gann has been deprived of the ability to succeed as member of her peer group, a peer group that does not see sickness, frailty or interdependence as part of the human condition. She details the hours every day lost to Dudley's care. She is not part of a community that shares the load.

What has helped make Libby's life so beautiful is the culture of love and acceptance that her parents and her sister and her community have created. This is often not the case. With genetic counseling, elective abortion for the full 40 weeks and a culture that is uncomfortable with human weakness and difference, parents of ailing children suffer twice—once from their child's pain, and again because they are seen as responsible for it.

In 1999 Robert Edwards, who helped perfect in-vitro fertilization, said: "Soon it will be a *sin* for parents to have a child that carries the heavy burden of genetic disease. We are entering a world where we have to consider the quality of our children." We are back to the logic of eugenics

of “fit” and “unfit” humans. In 1957 Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, used the same language of social sin. She said, “I think the *greatest sin in the world* is bringing children into the world that have diseases from their parents.” In this culture, the parents most in need of support and assistance are not honored and sustained by networks of care but are isolated and blamed.

In the United States, the consumerist notions of choice, efficiency and convenience run deep. We used to debate the morality of terminating anencephalic babies (those born without parts of the brain or skull); now, as the logic of the human as the ultimate consumer continues to unfold and we see ourselves acting as the final arbiter and curator of our own lives, are we going to start debating the morality of terminating babies in utero if, for instance, they have a genetic predisposition to obesity?

We say, “I don’t want my child to suffer,” and we mean it. But what we do not say is that “*I don’t want to suffer.*” In our country, suffering is not seen as redemptive; winning is. As President Donald Trump reminded us when he mocked a reporter with disabilities, ours is a country divided into winners and, as he calls them, “losers.” We may criticize such outright cruelty and prejudice against people with disabilities or those with chronic illness, but there is a slippery slope between making fun of people with disabilities or illness, dehumanizing them and killing them before they are born. How different are political conservatives and liberals on this issue, when, according to Kaiser Permanente, 94 percent of pregnancies in the United States with a C.F. diagnosis end in abortion? Of course, there are partial political solutions: universal health care, a robust social safety net, laws restricting late term abortions. These are all good things. But real change would also require a change of heart.

In *Far From the Tree*, Andrew Solomon writes that affluent parents are more likely than poor parents to abort a child with a prenatal diagnosis of disability or chronic illness. The pressure parents face is related not only to resources, but also to the fact that it can feel like nearly everyone in one’s peer group thinks that abortion is the most humane option. David Dobbs writes this way about people fighting the stigma and isolation around mental illness: “Culture profoundly shapes every aspect of how an illness develops, from how the afflicted experience it, to how others respond to it, to whether or not it destroys you or leaves you whole.”

As the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre reminds us,

there are not actually two classes of people, healthy and unhealthy, fit and unfit. We are all lacking in some way. All of our bloodlines carry blessings and burdens. And the line between troubled and untroubled is porous. Each of us is just one diagnosis, natural disaster or accident away from hard times. Perhaps there is nothing for it except communities of people who embrace us, all of us, knowing where the journey leads; people who promise to bring us soup and take us to the mountains, or sit with us when we are suffering and distract us a little from the pain; people who promise not to leave us or blame us for being human, which is to say contingent and not ultimately in control.

In the end, our medical and reproductive choices are not simply private and personal. They do not affect only ourselves. We look around at other people to figure out how to live, even who should live. Libby’s life makes me want to be more generous and courageous. Ms. Gann’s essay makes me afraid. Our individual choices collectively create a culture that is more or less accepting of difference, more or less tolerant of human beings, burdens and blessings both.

As an adult and a working mom with cystic fibrosis, Libby says she has learned the “importance of being willing to accept help.” Something as simple as letting a stranger hold the door if she is juggling a million things or having her mom come once a week to help with the kids. She says: “My husband, Will, does the lion’s share of the nighttime duty. It’s not tit for tat. It’s everybody doing everything they can.” It’s not 50/50. It’s 100/100. It’s not, “This is my body.” It’s, “This is my body given up for you.”

Anna Keating is the co-author of *The Catholic Catalogue: A Field Guide to the Daily Acts That Make Up a Catholic Life* (Penguin Random House). She co-owns Keating Woodworks, a handmade furniture studio in Colorado Springs, Colo., and is a chaplain at Colorado College.

What is the official church teaching on homosexuality?

By James Martin

Responding to a commonly asked question

Since *Building a Bridge*, a book on ministering to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Catholics, was published, I have been asked—at Catholic parishes, retreat centers, colleges and universities and conferences—a few questions that recur over and over. The most common are: “What can we say to gay people who believe that God hates them?” “How can we help young people who feel tempted to suicide because of their sexual orientation?” And “What can we say to gay or lesbian Catholics who feel that their own church has rejected them?”

Another common question is about the church’s official teaching on homosexuality, homosexual activity and same-sex marriage. Usually these questions are asked not by Catholics who are unaware of the church’s teaching (for most Catholics know the teachings); rather they are asked by Catholics who want to understand the basis for the church’s teachings on those topics.

Building a Bridge intentionally steered clear of issues of sexual morality, since I hoped to foster dialogue by focusing on areas of possible commonality; and the church hierarchy and the majority of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Catholics remain far apart on these issues. It also makes little sense to begin a conversation with topics on which the two sides are the farthest apart. Overall, the book was about dialogue and prayer, rather than moral theology. (As a Catholic priest, I have also never challenged those teachings, nor will I.)

But for a meaningful encounter to occur between

the church hierarchy and any community, it’s helpful if both groups understand one another as much as possible. As I mentioned in the book, good bridges take people in both directions.

So it is important to ask: What is the church’s official teaching on these issues? As an aside, since the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, a compendium of church teaching on various topics, does not address bisexual or transgender persons but rather “homosexual persons,” I’ll refer here to “gay and lesbian people” to be more precise.

Church teaching at the most basic level is contained in the Gospels and, even more basically, in the revelation of the Father’s love in Jesus Christ. So the most fundamental of all church teachings about gay and lesbian people is this: God loves them. They are beloved children of God, created by God and in need of God’s loving care and mercy—as all of us are.

Moreover, in his public ministry Jesus continually reached out to those who felt ignored, excluded or marginalized, which many gay and lesbian Catholics do. In fact, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Catholics are probably the most marginalized group in the church today, and so I believe that Christ loves them with a special love.

When it comes to gays and lesbians, then, the Gospel values of love, mercy and compassion are the building blocks of all church teaching.

To that end, it is important to state that in the eyes of the church simply being gay or lesbian is not a sin—contrary to widespread belief, even among educated



Pope Francis attends an encounter marking the 25th anniversary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* at the Vatican on Oct. 11.

Catholics. That may be one of the most poorly understood of the church's teachings. Regularly I am asked questions like, "Isn't it a sin to be gay?" But this is not church teaching. Nowhere in the catechism does it say that simply being homosexual is a sin. As any reputable psychologist or psychiatrist will agree, people do not choose to be born with any particular sexual orientation.

But when most people ask questions about "church teaching" they are referring not to this question, but to restrictions on homosexual, or same-sex, activity as well as the prohibition on same-sex marriage. Homosexual acts are, according to the catechism, "intrinsically disordered" and "contrary to natural law." (The bulk of the catechism's attention to homosexuality is contained in Nos. 2357-59.) Consequently, the homosexual orientation (and by extension, any orientation other than heterosexuality) is regarded as "objectively disordered."

Where does this teaching come from, and what does it mean? While this teaching has some biblical roots (Gn

19:1-29; Rom 1:24-27; 1 Cor 6:10; 1 Tm 1:10), we can perhaps best understand it from the church's traditional reliance on natural law, which was itself heavily influenced by the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas (who himself drew on Aristotle).

Natural law is founded on the idea that God's divine will and divine plan for the world and for humanity are not only revealed in the natural world but are, perhaps more important, self-evident to the human mind. During my philosophy studies, the Catholic sister who taught us medieval philosophy told us, "Aquinas wants us to see that the world makes sense." One can understand God's plan, says Aquinas, not only by observing nature but also by using our reason.

We can begin with the Thomistic idea that the world "makes sense." From that starting point, Aquinas would say it is clear that everything is "ordered" toward something. Its Aristotelian *telos*, or endpoint, should be obvious both to our eyes and to our reason. For example, an acorn

is quite obviously “ordered” toward becoming an oak tree. A child is “ordered” toward becoming an adult. Likewise, every act is judged according to whether it is properly oriented toward its proper end. In terms of sexuality, all sex is “ordered” toward what are called the “affective” (love) and “generative” (having children) ends, within the context of a marriage.

Consequently, according to the traditional interpretation of natural law, homosexual acts are not ordered toward those specific ends and so they are deemed “disordered.” Thus, “under no circumstances can they be approved,” as the catechism states. Consequent to that, the homosexual orientation itself is viewed as an “objective disorder” since it can lead to “disordered” acts.

Here we need to make clear that the phrase “objective disorder” does not refer to the person himself or herself but to the orientation. The term is also not a psychological description but comes from the perspective of philosophy and theology. Moreover, it does not detract from the inherent dignity of any human being, since God creates all human beings equal and good.

This leads to the church’s official teaching on chastity for “homosexual persons.” Since homosexual activity is not approved, the person may not engage in any sort of sexual activity: “Homosexual persons are called to chastity.” Here the catechism means celibate chastity, since every person is called to the chaste expression of love—even married couples. (Broadly speaking, chastity, in Catholic teaching, is the proper use of our sexuality.)

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* also states that gays and lesbians can and should approach “Christian perfection” through chastity, with such supports as “the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace.” In other words, gays and lesbians, the catechism states, can live holy lives.

Needless to say, all these considerations rule out same-sex marriage. Indeed, official church teaching rules out any sort of sexual activity outside the marriage of a man and a woman—thus the church’s prohibitions on activities like premarital sex, adultery and masturbation.

But there is more to the church’s teaching on this topic in the catechism. Perhaps mindful of the specialized philo-

sophical and theological language, the church teaches that “every sign of unjust discrimination” against gays and lesbians (again, here “homosexual persons”) must be avoided, and gays and lesbians must be treated with the virtues of “respect, compassion and sensitivity.” In my experience, this is the section of the catechism’s teaching on homosexuality that is the least known by most Catholics.

Beyond the catechism, in his recent apostolic exhortation “*Amoris Laetitia*,” Pope Francis made three points related to the issue of homosexuality. First, the pope reiterated the church’s opposition to equating same-sex marriage with traditional marriage between a man and a woman. Second, he repeated the prohibition against “unjust discrimination.”

The third point Pope Francis makes is representative of his approach to pastoral practice and moral guidance. Francis notes that we must recognize the good at work in every person, even in situations that fall short of what the church proposes as the fullness of Gospel living. He says that Jesus expects us to enter into the reality of people’s lives; “accompanying” them as we can, helping to form their consciences, the final arbiter of moral decision-making; and encouraging them to lead faithful and holy lives.

Part of that accompaniment is dialogue. That is one reason it is important for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to understand the church’s teaching in its totality—the Gospels, the tradition of natural law and its roots in Thomistic and Aristotelian reasoning, the catechism, “*Amoris Laetitia*” and other documents—in their desire to become good Catholics.

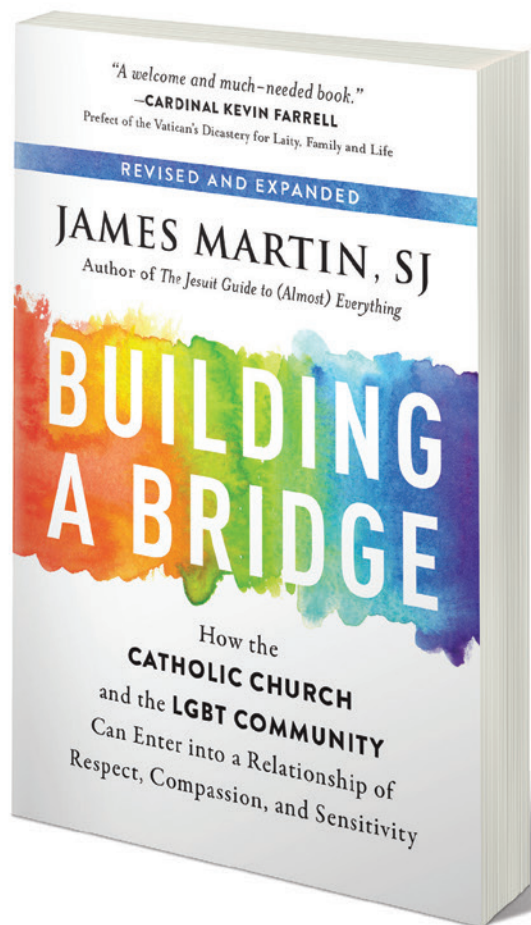
As *Building a Bridge* mentions, it is important for the institutional church to understand the lived experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Catholics. It is also important for this group of Catholics to understand what the church believes and teaches.

James Martin, S.J., is editor at large of *America* and the author of *Building a Bridge: How the Catholic Church and the LGBT Community Can Enter Into a Relationship of Respect, Compassion and Sensitivity*, just released in a revised and expanded edition.

FATHER JAMES MARTIN

Deepens His Groundbreaking Call to Welcome LGBT Catholics with a Revised and Expanded Paperback

Includes 40% New Material
with a New Introduction, Stories, and Spiritual Resources



“One of the—if not the—foremost evangelizers in the church, especially with youth.”

—**CARDINAL BLASE CUPICH**, Archbishop of Chicago

“Provides us with the language, perspective, and sense of urgency to undertake the arduous but monumentally Christlike task of replacing a culture of alienation with a culture of merciful inclusion.”

—**ROBERT W. McELROY**, Bishop of San Diego

“Necessary reading for all who wish to build up the Christian community and to give witness to the Gospel message of inclusion.”

—**JOHN C. WESTER**, Archbishop of Santa Fe



HarperOne

An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers
www.harperone.com

Learn More at JamesMartinSJ.com

I joined the Jesuit Volunteer Elder Corps at 68 —and never looked back

By Helen Donnelly Goehring

“Mom, you’re running away,” my son said. “I thought you were happy with your life.” As I packed my china, closed my Chicago business and sold my car, his take on my decision to join the Jesuit Volunteer Elder Corps unsettled me. I did have a good life. “I’m answering the call,” I replied sheepishly, hoping the casual tone would conceal my fear. In fact, I was responding to several calls.

The first call was from my friend Jeanette, who had just seen an ad for the Elder Corps: “It says right here: ‘Recruiting those over 50 for a year of service in Portland, Seattle or Alaska. Deepen your spirituality, live in community, work for social justice and live simply. Perks include an \$80 per month stipend, room and board and spiritual direction.’ Helen, this is for you.”

Her idea struck me as absurd, considering what the roaring ’90s stock market had done for me. I lived in a high-rise apartment on Lake Michigan. I was 10 minutes from the Art Institute and Symphony Center. My siblings and two of my children were steps away. As I hung up, I wondered who in the world would give all of this up after years of financial challenges from a divorce and paying college tuitions. But my inner voice surprised me with the next idea: “Test the waters. Call for an application.” That same voice, as if knowing I needed an out, added:

“You’re safe; they will never accept you.”

The second call came from the Jesuit reviewing my application. “What are your ministries?” he asked. Ministries? I had not dared to call my small local efforts a ministry. I told him I raised funds for kids on Chicago’s impoverished South Side where bullets fell like rain. I believed in the work.

“Is there anything else?” he asked.

I took a deep breath. “In my 20s, I seriously considered the convent,” I said. “Is this God’s second call? I am sure there’s much to learn from others who also are serving the poor.”

When the acceptance letter arrived, I was elated. But doubts were close behind. Would I be able to give up my antiques, the moon on Lake Michigan, the symphony? I read, wrote and ruminated all night without getting any answers. But the next morning I awoke to a question so pronounced it may as well have been uttered out loud: “Are you going to say no to God again?”

Two months later I was living with six strangers in Seattle.

•••

A teacher, a legal assistant, a salesman, a poet, a realtor (and former member of the Israeli army), a development director and a woman who had been homeless formed a community. We prayed together weekly. We related stories of our clients—the abused,



**Annual
Pilgrimage/Retreat
TO CENTRAL AMERICA
FOR BISHOPS,
PRIESTS, BROTHERS
AND DEACONS**

January 14—25, 2019

We invite you to pray with us at the shrines of modern-day martyrs in the lands where they gave their lives: Blessed Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador; Bishop Juan José Gerardi of Guatemala; Servant of God Father Stanley Rother, diocesan priest from Oklahoma City who served in Guatemala; the four churchwomen and six Jesuits and their companions murdered in El Salvador.

Contact:
Claudia Velardo
Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers
P. O. Box 302
Maryknoll, NY 10545-0302
Telephone: 914-941-7636, Ext. 2689
cvelardo@maryknoll.org
For further information
and to apply online:
MaryknollPilgrimage.org



Even two decades later, I cannot help but reflect on saying yes to the journey of heart and faith. 🍯🍯

incarcerated, homeless, mentally ill and unemployed. We practiced compassionate listening with each other. It was hard and humbling work.

My assigned ministry was the Plymouth Housing Group, an agency that provides safe, stable housing to people experiencing homelessness. I took short-of-breath adults to the emergency room and elderly men and women with depression to the symphony. I shopped for furniture with people getting their first home in years—or ever.

In our community house, my closet was narrow. I recycled, composted, used coupons and embraced the grace of downsizing. But “simple living” meant something entirely different to my J.V.C. housemate Gretchen. She would lock her bedroom each time she left it, to guard her scant possessions. She had been homeless for three years. Her action reminded me each day of the luxury of the lock.

Once a month I met with a spiritual director. When my sister shared the grim news of her pancreatic cancer diagnosis, it was my spiritual director who guided my meditations on Christ’s passion. As I expressed regrets for the past, she encouraged me to stay in the present, reminding me that we are called to liberation and freedom. She urged me to focus on graces I received.

On retreat, I learned to pray and meditate in the way of St. Ignatius. Practicing *lectio divina* helped me appreciate the word of God, and praying with my imagination brought Jesus to life. The examen, St. Ignatius’ way of examining his conscience, asked me, “Where did I find God today? Where did I miss him?”

As the year ended, it was clear that the Northwest’s brand of spiritual energy had nestled into my soul, so I stayed in Seattle and became the director of philanthropy for a retirement community. The skill of compassionate listening I had developed as a volunteer continued to serve me and those I loved. When my former husband became critically ill, I traveled to Florida to be with him, 30 years after our divorce. After all, we had raised three kind, decent

children together. We had been reconciled years before, but when I newly apologized for the ways I had hurt him, he responded with his own tender regrets. Would I have walked through this healing door without the tools from my volunteer experience?

...

Seventeen years later, I live in another multi-floored apartment building—this one with a view of Mount Rainier. My neighbors are accomplished beneficiaries of Seattle’s tech boom. But just outside the door another reality confronts me. There I meet our other neighbors. They hear voices, sleep on benches and struggle with addiction. I remind myself that they are as much my neighbors as are the residents of my building. They have been brought low by rising housing costs, domestic violence, lack of mental health care and opioid addiction.

Early on, I wondered if I was alone among my neighbors in seeing the contrast. So I asked them, and the response was overwhelming: “What can we do?” “Endow a bed in a shelter?” “I’ll write a check.” Residents began to tutor children and make sandwiches for hungry outsiders. We formed a committee on homelessness and gave our surplus possessions to the poor. Our building sponsored an agency that serves children without homes. Even my spiritual director recruited an officer from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to speak to 200 concerned citizens on the crisis of family homelessness in Seattle and King County.

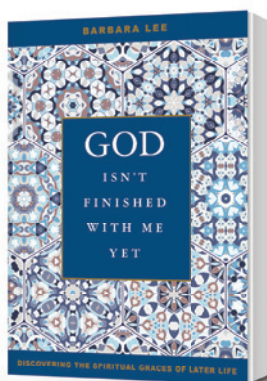
I am discovering compassionate listeners everywhere. At my parish, St. James Cathedral, I hear it when my fellow committee members address homelessness and juvenile detention issues. In my building, a neighbor who is a psychiatrist visits St. James, where 150 homeless are fed every night, “just to listen to their stories.”

Even two decades later, I cannot help but reflect on saying yes to the J.V.C. journey of heart and faith. There is no denying the physical, emotional and financial challenges of aging. But in the midst of all that, pursuing St. Ignatius’ path has enriched my life, opened me to growth and made my senior years among my best. At 85, I feel my life matters. What was once a casual defense of the seemingly absurd has become a practical guide for a personal brand of discipleship. To paraphrase St. Ignatius, carry God in your heart, and you will bear heaven with you wherever you go.

Helen Donnelly Goehring is a writer in Seattle and a retired development director for nonprofits. For information about service opportunities, contact the Ignatian Volunteer Corps at ivcusa.org.

Where are the guideposts for the spiritual life of aging?

As we see fewer years ahead than behind, it can be easy to question what we have left to contribute to our communities.



In *God Isn't Finished with Me Yet*, Barbara Lee is living with the reality of finding her purpose during her later years, and she describes the intersection of aging with the timelessness of Ignatian spirituality.

PAPERBACK | 4661-6 | \$12.95

For a limited time, use promo code **4845** to receive **15% OFF** *God Isn't Finished with Me Yet*.

Visit www.loyolapress.com/Lee to learn more and order your copy of *God Isn't Finished with Me Yet*.

Offer expires 6/30/18. Shipping and handling are additional.

LOYOLAPRESS.
A JESUIT MINISTRY



Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth

Enjoy our 240 acres of natural beauty, welcoming quiet, and spiritual sustenance to enhance your journey...

REGISTER TODAY!

May 14 - 22	7-Day Directed Retreat
June 15 - 17	Weekend Directed Retreat
June 25 - July 1	5-Day Directed Retreat
July 7 - 15	7-Day Directed Retreat
July 20 - 26	5-Day Directed Retreat
July 30 - Aug 5	5-Day Directed Retreat
Aug 10 - 12	Weekend Directed Retreat
Aug 20 - 26	5-Day Directed Retreat

www.JESUITCENTER.org



For our complete schedule or to register, visit www.JesuitCenter.org and if you have any questions, please contact Melinda Leonowitz at Mleonowitz@JesuitCenter.org or by calling 610.670.3642.

Rejoice and Be Glad!



*Following the release of “Gaudete et Exsultate,” Pope Francis’ new apostolic exhortation on holiness, **America** asked several contributors to reflect on the document. Their full responses can be found at americamagazine.org.*

Called to be Saints

“Rejoice and be glad!” is what Jesus said on the Sermon on the Mount. It is also the title of Pope Francis’ new apostolic exhortation on holiness in everyday life. Why should we “rejoice and be glad”? Because God, as Francis reminds us, calls us all to be saints. But how can we respond to that call?

You do not need to be a bishop, a priest or a member of a religious order to be holy. Everyone is called to be a saint, as the Second Vatican Council reminded us—a mother or a father, a student or an attorney, a teacher or a janitor. “Saints next door,” Francis calls them. All we need to do is to “live our lives in love” and “bear witness” to God in all we do.

That also doesn’t have to mean big, dramatic actions. Francis offers examples of everyday sanctity, like a loving parent raising a child, as well as “small gestures” and sacrifices that one can make, like deciding not to pass on gossip. If you can see your own life as a “mission,” then you soon realize that you can simply be loving and kind to move towards holiness.

You also do not have to be “swooning in mystic rapture” to be a saint or walking around with “lowered eyes.” Nor do you have to withdraw from other people. On the other hand, you do not want to be caught up in the “rat race” of rushing from one thing to another. A balance between action and contemplation is essential. —*James Martin, S.J.*

An Ignatian Approach

Though other of Pope Francis’ writings and homilies manifest the imprint of his Ignatian spiritual tradition, perhaps none does so in such a striking manner.

Francis does not mince words. “The Christian life is a constant battle,” the pope writes. “We need strength and courage to withstand the temptations of the devil and to proclaim the Gospel. This battle is sweet, for it allows us to rejoice each time the Lord triumphs in our lives” (No. 158).

Christians ineluctably confront two standards, two ways: the way of Christ, whose apparent darkness is a prelude to eternal light, and the way of the enemy, whose false light leads only to darkness and despair. And our choice is made not once for all but requires daily renewal and recommitment. Hence, according to the pope, the urgent need for discernment.

He immediately cuts to the chase: “How can we know if something comes from the Holy Spirit or if it stems from the spirit of the world or the spirit of the devil?” (No. 166). Discernment then is not primarily about the decision to be made. It involves the more difficult and laborious process of discerning what spirit is moving us. Thus discernment requires much more than native intelligence or mere common sense. True discernment is a grace, “a gift which we must implore” (No. 166).

For we are all prone to self-deception. No one is immune. Thus the pope urges: “I ask all Christians not to omit, in dialogue with the Lord, a sincere daily examination of conscience” (No. 169). —*Rev. Robert P. Imbelli*

Warnings on Heresies

For anyone who has spent much time in church communities or even on so-called “Catholic Twitter,” the behaviors of the faithful that Pope Francis describes in “Gaudete et Exsultate” are not unfamiliar. What may not be so familiar, however, is Francis’ description of these tendencies as contemporary manifestations of the ancient heresies of Gnosticism and Pelagianism.

What exactly is at stake here and why does Francis devote such a large chapter in “Gaudete et Exsultate” to the dangers posed by these ancient heresies?

In many ways, Gnosticism and Pelagianism are two sides of the same coin. For contemporary forms of Gnosticism, the temptation is to reduce Christian holiness to a set of abstract ideas detached from the flesh. As “Gaudete et Exsultate” correctly points out, this is somewhat attractive in that a “strict and allegedly pure...[faith] can appear to possess a certain harmony or order that encompasses everything” (No. 38). Ultimately, however, this approach fails to engage the messiness of real life and the fact that God is a mystery that cannot be domesticated or understood easily.

Perhaps more prevalent in the church than an arrogant Gnosticism are the many new forms of Pelagianism. Here, salvation and holiness are reduced to our own powers, success and outward actions, which lead individuals to “feel superior to others because they observe certain rules or remain intransigently faithful to a particular Catholic style” (No. 49). This outlook can be a temptation both for those obsessed with the church’s liturgical rubrics as well as for those who may be consumed by the outcomes of a social justice program. Without allowing ourselves to be led by grace and the Spirit, we easily shift our gaze from God to ourselves. —*Kevin Ahern*

Building the Kingdom

There is a deep simplicity at the heart of Pope Francis’ new exhortation: We are called to become more fully who we are, the people of God. The call to holiness is at once personal and communal—pushing us to actively build the kingdom of God.

The intimacy of its message is striking. “The important thing,” Pope Francis explains, “is that each believer discern his or her own path, that they bring out the very best of themselves, the most personal gifts God has placed in their hearts” (No. 11). Who is God calling you to be? How is God calling you to holiness?

We hear the personal call to holiness in the seemingly mundane reality of our everyday lives, and it is in the simple witness of those everyday relationships, of our “next door neighbors,” in which one is confirmed and strengthened on one’s path (No. 7).

But if the call to holiness is deeply personal, it does not

come to us in isolation. We are called together. This is the central thrust of salvation history; God enters into relationship with the people.

This is the radical communitarianism and intimacy of Jesus’ prayer in John 17:21, “that they be one as we are one.” Pope Francis reminds us: “We are never completely ourselves unless we belong to a people. That is why no one is saved alone, as an isolated individual.

“Rather, God draws us to himself, taking into account the complex fabric of interpersonal relationships present in a human community” (No. 6). And he returns to this message toward the end of the document, reiterating that “growth in holiness is a journey in a community, side by side with others” (No. 141). —*Meghan J. Clark*

Holiness Online

Stop trolling, resist gossiping and consider putting down your device altogether. That is Pope Francis’ advice for how to be holy online. The pope takes on “verbal violence” that is common on “the internet and various forums of digital communication.”


“Even in Catholic media,” he says, “limits can be overstepped, defamation and slander can become commonplace, and all ethical standards and respect for the good name of others can be abandoned.”

Francis refrains from offering specific examples, of course, but it is not difficult to imagine what he has in mind. In North America alone, there are many well-funded Catholic sites and numerous Catholic blogs whose aim is often to slander and malign fellow Catholics who, in the eyes of these writers, believe or live the Catholic faith incorrectly.

“The result is a dangerous dichotomy,” Francis writes, “since things can be said there that would be unacceptable in public discourse, and people look to compensate for their own discontent by lashing out at others.”

He takes special aim at online behavior that is misleading, either through innuendo or tenuous ties to suspect people or ideologies. “It is striking, at times, in claiming to uphold the other commandments, they completely ignore the eighth,” he writes, “which forbids bearing false witness or lying, and ruthlessly vilify others.”

“Here,” the pope says, “we see how the unguarded tongue, set on fire by hell, sets all things ablaze.” —*Michael J. O’Loughlin*



The Enduring Catholic Imagination of Bruce Springsteen

By Brian P. Conniff

Back in 1988, in an article in *America*, the Rev. Andrew M. Greeley, the author and sociologist, described and celebrated the “Catholic imagination” of Bruce Springsteen. With characteristic exuberance, even moments of panache, Father Greeley referred to Springsteen as a “Catholic Meistersinger,” a liturgist and a troubadour—making sure to point out that troubadours “always have more impact than theologians or bishops, storytellers more influence than homilists.” He

suggested that the recent release of the album “Tunnel of Love” might very well have been “a more important Catholic event in this country than the visit of Pope John Paul!” Even more significant—and with the inevitable reference to James Joyce, the archetypal literary-genius-as-lapsed-Catholic—Greeley claimed that Springsteen exemplified a “more primary, a more pristine and, yes, a more powerful and more benign version of Catholicism” than the one presented by

the institutional church.

Biographically, Greeley hedged his bets, repeatedly stating that Springsteen might not have been aware of just how Catholic he really was. Theologically, however, Greeley had bigger points to make about the imagination (“the imagination is religious”), about religion (“religion is imaginative”) and about the seeming inability of Catholics, Springsteen included, ever to leave the church. Greeley would expand on some of these Big Ideas in his book *The*

The last 30 years have made it much clearer just how fully Springsteen's imagination aspires to "a message of hope and renewal."

occasional essay or blog post exploring the religious themes and qualities of Springsteen's music. Yet for all its grand gestures, the essay is also dated and severely limited: As far as Springsteen's music goes, it is really just a brief review of "Tunnel of Love." Now, in the past year or so, Springsteen has completed The River Tour, the culmination of an extended celebration of that album's 35th anniversary. He has also published his autobiography—called *Born to Run*, of course—and this past October he began a series of solo performances at the Walter Kerr Theatre, "Springsteen on Broadway," which are now scheduled to run through December. So it is a particularly good time to revisit Greeley's argument that, for all its shortcomings, turns out to be remarkably prescient, especially regarding the enduring influence of Catholicism on Springsteen's career and on the evolution of his public role and his iconic cultural status.

Greeley's insights and limitations derive largely from his generational perspective. He is careful not to "claim Springsteen as Catholic in the way we used to claim actors and movie stars and sports heroes," disavowing the kind of mid-20th-century cultural appropriation by which, in his view, many Catholics of his own and earlier generations, often raised in immigrant enclaves and eager for a place in the American mainstream, identified deeply with public figures like the once-famous "jungle doctor," Tom Dooley, or Bing Crosby (particularly in his role as Father O'Malley in

"Going My Way" and "The Bells of St. Mary's"), or perhaps most of all President John F. Kennedy. Instead, Greeley looks for "symbols" of Catholicism that can serve a more contemporary and more expansive role. He suggests that his "troubadours," like Springsteen, are "only implicitly Catholic (and perhaps not altogether consciously so)." He is compelled to note that they will not serve the church in the most obviously pragmatic ways: "they will not increase Sunday collections or win converts or improve the churches [sic] public image."

In short, Greeley is so eager to disclaim Catholic stereotypes and provincialism that he protests far too much. Nonetheless, his various disclaimers help him clear the way for a point that is ultimately more significant: "But those are only issues if you assume that people exist to serve the church. If, on the other hand, you assume that the church exists to serve the people by bringing a message of hope and renewal, of light and water and rebirth, to a world steeped in tragedy and sin, you rejoice that such a troubadour sings stories that maybe even he does not know are Catholic."

The last 30 years have made it much clearer just how fully Springsteen's Catholic imagination aspires to "a message of hope and renewal" at the same time that it is "steeped in tragedy and sin." Beyond that, it is in his profound reconceptualization of the relationship between "the people" and "the church" that his music has taken on its most consequential role in our culture.

Catholic Imagination (2000), but by then he had left Springsteen far behind, focusing primarily on "works of high culture... permeated by Catholic sensibility" as they might somehow "predict the ways ordinary Catholics behave." Yet, for all the genius and accomplishments of the great artists he mentioned, from Bernini to Verdi, none of them ever gave a world tour, filling stadiums night after night, playing for four hours a shot.

Almost 30 years later, Greeley's essay remains a point of reference in the

Photo: AP Images



The Catholicism of Springsteen's childhood has generated some of the most compelling features of his music.

Photos: AP Images

ACATHOLIC CHILDHOOD

In *Born to Run* (the autobiography), Springsteen shows that he is a far more reflective and deliberate artist than Greeley imagined. He turns out to be particularly thoughtful about his Catholic upbringing and its continuing importance to his life's work. In one of the book's earliest passages, he remembers standing with his sister "like sideshow gawkers peering in through the huge wooden doors of our corner church, witnessing an eternal parade of baptisms, weddings, and funerals." The Springsteen family lives "literally, in the bosom of the Catholic Church, with the priest's rectory, the nun's convent, the St. Rose of Lima Church and grammar school all just a football's toss away across a field of wild grass." At St. Rose, he proves to be a highly inept altar boy, yet he still absorbs Catholicism deeply enough "in his bones" that he would later conclude, just like Greeley, "that once you're a Catholic, you're always a Catholic.... I'm

still on the team."

Springsteen quickly comes to understand that this childhood, surrounded by "lives inextricably linked with the life of the Church," taught him how faith can be nurtured in community and how to draw meaning and dramatic force through an ongoing sequence of familiar rituals. At the same time, he learned a great deal about how faith and hope can be expressed and sustained through performance.

Not surprisingly, even in these earliest passages, Springsteen is also keenly aware that his autobiography is a performance in its own right, of a kind with his recordings and concerts. Fittingly, the first chapter of *Born to Run* echoes both a common rally cry at Springsteen concerts and a revival meeting:

Here we live in the shadow of the steeple, where the holy rubber meets the road, all crookedly blessed in God's mercy, in the

heart-stopping, pants-dropping, race-riot-creating, oddball-hating, soul-shaking, love-and-fear-making, heartbreaking town of Freehold, New Jersey.

This same passage also dramatizes some of the characteristics of Springsteen's imagination that would prevail well beyond its mid-20th-century Catholic origins: it is rich and nuanced, ironic and self-aware, expansive and improvisational, comic and tragic.

Moreover, Springsteen's autobiography shows how the Catholicism of his childhood has generated some of the most compelling features of his music, most of all its appeal to a common humanity and its capacity to generate a sense of shared ritual. At the same time, over the course of his career, "the people" have become only more desperate for hope and redemption, just as his music has developed a complex dynamic for meeting this need.



Springsteen has emerged as a new kind of minister—of remembrance, repentance, recovery and redemption.

innocent, the lost and the redeemed, the sinners and the saints.

This imagination is also playfully and productively ironic. Consider, for instance, “Thunder Road,” the classic power ballad (and standard concert encore). Springsteen reduces his narrative to a few essential elements, focusing on a moment in which, for better or for worse, a character stands on the verge of transformation. In this case, the scene opens on a seemingly ordinary occasion, when a young man arrives at a romantic vision of his future. Apparently he does not have much else, except a car. Nonetheless, he begins to imagine that he can escape his “town full of losers,” if only he can convince a girl (of course) to join him in the front seat (at least). She is named Mary (of all things) and his moment of possible enlightenment occurs when he sees her dancing across her front porch to the sound of Roy Orbison singing for the lone-

ly. Suddenly, redemption seems just that simple. Yet in Springsteen’s New Jersey that is usually how dreams get made. In such a moment, a world, or at least a highway, seems about to open. The long-term prospects might be dim (he does not seem to have a reliable source of gas money). He is “no hero,” as anyone can tell, and the only “redemption” he can offer is beneath his car’s “dirty hood.” The path to salvation might turn out to be nothing more exotic than the New Jersey Turnpike. Yet in this moment, hope is enough. In fact, it is everything. It is time to take a chance.

The basic narrative and thematic structure of “Thunder Road” is a familiar Springsteen prototype, and not much different than that of hundreds of other songs of youthful hope and rebellion. Yet Springsteen almost always uses this structure for something more, at times because he adapts it to songs of friendship, like “Bobby Jean”

and “No Surrender,” at times because he expands it into urban epics like “Rosalita” and “Jungleland,” and at times because he follows it into the struggles of men and women whose aspirations have nearly been destroyed by adult disillusionment and economic scarcity, as in “The River” and “Racing in the Streets.” Yet there is often a religious quality to the imagery, and almost always to the narrative structure—sustaining hope, in one of Springsteen’s most American tropes, that somewhere down the road there might really be a “promised land.”

Mostly, that is the early Springsteen of *The Stone Pony* and *Madame Marie’s*, of crossing the river into New York City, of being sprung from cages on Highway 9. Of course, regarding these songs, Greeley is correct enough to describe these early Springsteen themes as a part of his role as a troubadour rather than a theologian. He dramatizes lives lived in the shadows



Photo: AP Images

of Manhattan's skyscrapers, in working class neighborhoods and suburban developments built on reclaimed swampland, and he gives these lives, even in their most desperate moments, a sound of their own with a visceral sense of dignity. Still, in separating these roles, Greeley misses the ways in which these songs find their way into the foundation and everyday practice of personal and communal faith.

THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC REMEMBRANCE

Over the years, Springsteen's Catholic imagination has continued to evolve. In its best known cultural roles, his music has come to serve as a vehicle for revival, particularly in the aftermath of catastrophe. By now, it might seem almost inevitable that a song like "My City of Ruins," written in 2000 for a benefit to aid the revitalization of Asbury Park, would become after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, a touchstone for our most prominent national trauma.

In very different ways, songs like "Land of Hope and Dreams" and "The Ghost of Tom Joad" are animated by the same rallying of communal spirit and affirmation of common dignity, while drawing upon traditions of social justice including the civil rights movement ("People Get Ready"), Woody Guthrie and John Steinbeck. These same qualities also give shape and power to "The Rising," which began as the story of a firefighter climbing one of the World Trade Center towers, as it burns, wearing a cross.

Writing in *America* in 2011, on the tenth anniversary of the attacks, Christopher Pramuk revisited "The Rising" as a public remembrance, grounded in Catholic ritual, which opens a "space for critical self-reflection on our actions as a nation." In this respect, Mr. Pramuk argues that this song—especially in Springsteen's "stark, even prayerful renderings," which often build toward a concluding gospel chorus—provides a necessary antidote to American jingoism and to our gradual acceptance of a continuous state of war, as well as a sense of communion among the living and the dead. Yet "The Rising" builds toward a vision that is also profoundly aesthetic. Its narrative and musical structure lead to a central image as explicitly Catholic as any Greeley finds either in high culture or popular devotion—Mary in "the garden of a thousand sighs" surrounded by "holy pictures of our children/ Dancin' in a sky filled with light"—which invokes at once the firefighter's wife, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene in a modern reliving of the crucifixion and the resurrection.

Especially in recent years, one

of the most remarkable features of Springsteen's Catholic imagination is his recognition that this public role requires an ironic self-awareness, mostly to cultivate a humility grounded in gratitude. In this regard, "Springsteen on Broadway" is the culmination of his career's steadiest and most logical progression. Now, five nights a week, Springsteen performs on his own (other than harmonies with Patti Scialfa on a couple of songs), in a 960-seat theater, with nothing but a collection of guitars and a baby grand piano, with a remarkably spare stage and lighting design, and with the songs interspersed with spoken passages mostly adapted from the autobiography.

One more time, it is an original, authentic Springsteen. In a recent interview, he has said that this project recaptures his earliest performances at clubs like the Bottom Line and Max's Kansas City, which involved "a lot of storytelling" in an intimate setting and, on a good night, an audience of around 200. It also draws elements from the acoustic tours following the release of "The Ghost of Tom Joad" in 1995 and "Devils & Dust" in 2005, as well as a 2005 VH1 Storytellers segment. After that performance, Elvis Costello told Springsteen that he had created a "third element," distinct from both his recordings and his concerts. Then, in January 2017, in the last days of the Obama presidency, Springsteen performed an acoustic concert at the White House as the president's "parting gift" for 250 staffers. Driving home with his wife, Patti Scialfa, and Jon Landau, his manager, Springsteen decided to create the production that would soon become "Springsteen on Broadway."

*This isn't just
about coffee!
It's about
helping people!*

Our freshly roasted organic Arabica Colombian coffee is a wonderful side benefit. All profits go to our Catholic missions for projects to help impoverished people around the world. Your cup of Saint Basil coffee can help change a life. Join our all-volunteer team by purchasing your coffee at:

saintbasilcoffee.com

or call 1-800-491-9319



*Our coffee is certified
"fair trade."*

Cup is not available for purchase



Springsteen has arrived at a more mature, compelling understanding of our collective need for a communal expression of struggle and hope. ●●

This long artistic development has been informed by—and has in turn fostered—the distinctly Catholic characteristics of Springsteen's music. The New York Times theater critic Jesse Green has described "Springsteen on Broadway" as an "overwhelming and uncategorizable Broadway show." Tellingly, Green also compares the audience's experience to being in church, even as a matter of decorum (sitting on hands, no clapping). At the same time, he describes "Springsteen on Broadway" as an "anti-hit" concert, focusing on less familiar and more meditative songs, along with significant reinterpretations of some of his best-known "hits," so that "Dancing in the Dark" no longer seems to be "a casual invitation to sex" but becomes "a parable about the nihilism underlying such invitations," and so that Springsteen recovers "Born in the U.S.A." as a protest song dwelling on the struggles of damaged veterans, and perhaps finally exorcises Ronald Reagan's bizarre attempt to appropriate it as an anthem of optimistic jingoism.

Springsteen has arrived at a more mature and more compelling understanding of our collective need for a communal expression of struggle and hope and, at the same time, his own

need as an artist for the ultimately solo act of stark reappraisal, in a continuing and partially ritualized return to the origins of his dreams and his beliefs. Ultimately, "Springsteen on Broadway" is subtly yet determinedly confessional. At our current moment in history, this quality might be the last thing we expect, in any serious way, from such a public figure. But it is also the latest and seemingly inevitable stage in the continuing evolution of Springsteen's Catholic imagination.

Most of all, "Springsteen on Broadway" shows that Springsteen has been much more than a national "troubadour." Yes, he is "still on the team." More important, he has emerged from the shadow of St. Rose of Lima as a new kind of minister—of remembrance, repentance, recovery, resolve and redemption—in a church that serves the people even more profoundly than Father Greeley would have imagined.

Brian P. Conniff is dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of English at the University of Scranton.

Larry Kudlow & Chris Matthews: Civility in America



A conversation on the polarization of American society, the importance of a free press, and the power of the media to build both walls and bridges between communities

FEATURING: **Larry Kudlow**, Director, National Economic Council; Contributor, CNBC
Chris Matthews, Host, *Hardball with Chris Matthews* on MSNBC

MODERATOR: **Matt Malone, S.J.**, editor in chief of *America* magazine

WHEN: Wednesday, May 2, 2018 | 7 p.m.

WHERE: Sheen Center for Thought & Culture
18 Bleecker St.,
New York, N.Y. 10012

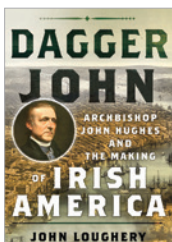
TICKETS: sheencenter.org/shows/media
(required)

With Archbishop John Hughes, it can be hard to separate fact from fiction.



An archbishop fit for a Scorsese film

By Anthony D. Andreassi



Dagger John
Archbishop John
Hughes and the Making
of Irish America
By John Loughery
Cornell University
Press. 420p \$32.95

Born in Ireland in 1797, John Hughes was fond of saying that for the first five days of his life, he enjoyed social and civil equality with the most favored subjects in the British Empire. But that status ended on the day of his baptism. Hughes went on to spend much of the rest of his life fighting for this lost equality with and respect from the Protestant elite, both for himself and the various Catholic flocks he would lead as a priest and bishop in the United States. Because of his larger than life personality, his position as the archbishop of New York and the stories of his often very

public battles with government officials as well as other clerics, Hughes not only captured the attention and imagination of his contemporaries but has also continued to fascinate people down to our own day.

In his 2002 film “Gangs of New York,” Martin Scorsese included a scene in which a fictionalized Hughes rallies a crowd of Irish toughs armed to the teeth to protect his cathedral from a nativist mob threatening to burn it. When Scorsese was a student in a Bronx Catholic high school in the late 1950s, he had learned about the real Hughes and his supposed threat in 1844 to the city’s mayor that he would tell the Irish “to turn New York into a second Moscow” if one of his churches was damaged. (Napoleon had burned Moscow to the ground in 1812.)

None of the churches were dam-

aged. The diocesan priests who taught Scorsese (and also wrote the church history textbook he used) were still fiercely proud of their former archbishop and his championing of the rights and dignity of their forebears at a time when Catholics were still often marginalized by the Protestant establishment.

When a historical figure has a reputation as large as Hughes’s, it can be hard to separate fact from fiction, as is the case with the possibly apocryphal tale of Hughes’s threat to the mayor. But, in this new biography of the most significant U.S. Catholic leader from the mid-19th century, *Dagger John*, John Loughery not only handles the historical record prudently but also mines the data of the life and times of Hughes with verve and just enough detail to keep the reader moving eagerly forward to the next chapter.

Loughery is not the first to try his hand at a life of Hughes. In 1866, just two years after his death, John Hassard, the archbishop's lay private secretary, wrote Hughes's life story. Given the proximity of the author to his subject (both in time and relationship), the book has all the strengths and shortcomings one would expect. In 1977 Richard Shaw wrote a second and quite respectable biography, but he based it almost exclusively on secondary sources, which limits its value. In this new attempt, Loughery not only has the benefit of distance, for a more comprehensive view of his subject, but also did the hard and often tiresome work of archival research using scores of handwritten letters as well as other primary source material available in the United States.

In academia today, biographies of bishops attract little interest (especially for a young professional seeking tenure in a history department). Nevertheless, there is still a demand for episcopal biographies among educated readers, especially when the subject's impact extended beyond his priests and people. Part of what makes this biography relevant outside the field of American Catholic history is that Hughes was the first U.S. Catholic bishop to become a national figure, with connections and interactions stretching at times all the way to the White House.

In May 1846, for example, just a month into the Mexican-American War, President James Polk asked to meet privately with Hughes to build Catholic support for the war effort. In addition to getting two Jesuits from Georgetown College to serve as chaplains for the U.S. forces, Hughes

also used the opportunity to build his own reputation as a major player by offering to serve as an emissary to the Mexican government. Although this never came to pass, 15 years later at the start of the Civil War, Secretary of State William Seward (with whom Hughes had developed a good working relationship when the former was governor of New York) did ask him to travel to several European capitals "to promote healthful opinions" about the justice of the Union cause.

While there is some question as to whether Hughes really did whip up a mob of Irishmen to protect his churches in 1844, there is no doubt that he most certainly did address a crowd of his fellow countrymen in July of 1863, which also turned out to be his last public appearance. This time, however, he was trying to calm the Irish, not incite them. The occasion was the New York City draft riots, in which mobs of poor Irish immigrants reacted violently to the imposition of conscription to bolster the Union forces.

Since wealthy men could hire replacements for themselves, the discontent was fueled both by anger toward this favoritism and by antipathy toward the city's growing black population, whom many of the Irish resented for both racial and economic reasons. Quite ill by this summer, Hughes addressed a relatively small crowd on the fourth day of the unrest, when the rioters had spent most of their force. When order was restored by the end of the week, it is clear that it had less to do with Hughes's intervention than with the arrival of federal troops, some of whom had recently fought in the

Battle of Gettysburg.

Hughes had the descriptor "Dagger" placed before his name in his own day (and ever since) because of his fiery personality (and because of the small cross Hughes put before his signature, identifying him as a bishop), which blazed at times at those both within the church and without. In more recent years, some have criticized him for his bluster and street-fighter tactics, citing the effects they may have had on fanning the flames of nativism while also encouraging Catholics to remain in their ghetto rather than engage with the dominant Protestant society.

In 1966 John Tracy Ellis offered a more nuanced (and arguably more valid) assessment of Hughes and his style of leadership. The former dean of U.S. Catholic history pointed out that American Protestantism of the 19th century was by no means as open and irenic as it has been for the last half-century. For this reason, according to Ellis, "there were times when [Hughes's] very aggressiveness was about the only approach that would serve the end he was seeking, viz., justice for his people."

Rev. Anthony D. Andreassi, a priest of the Brooklyn Oratory, teaches at Regis High School in New York City.

America's holy experiment

Germantown Avenue in Philadelphia is one of the birthplaces of American religious freedom. First settled by German immigrants in 1688, the neighborhood around the avenue has been a site of worship for waves of immigrants embracing the “Holy Experiment” of religious tolerance. Today the avenue connects some of Philadelphia’s wealthiest neighborhoods to some of its poorest.

Katie Day became fascinated with the avenue because of its “living, moving, changing ecology.” With impressive attention, humility and perspicacity, Day and a team of her students have studied the 83 congregations that worship on the avenue. The result is a scholarly but textured look into the diversity of religious life in the city. Day observes that places of worship influence and are influenced

by their contexts. On the one hand, she writes, *place matters*: religious practice is influenced by the cultures, issues and history of a congregation’s surroundings. On the other hand, *faith matters*: congregations are part of the physical space and local economy and can bridge sacred and secular.

Congregational life fulfills many needs, and places of worship that integrate and serve these needs are the most successful. Congregations along the avenue offer services such as food pantries, classes and child care and addiction counseling, and incorporate these into their prayer, sermons and community life.

Places of worship, in turn, improve their community by providing these services. They foster local businesses and can often anchor the life of the surrounding area. Despite these tangible effects, places of worship are often “invisible” to urban planners when

they should be invited into community discussions.

Much of Day’s analysis of these findings is excellent, but occasionally it slips into platitudes. At one point, she muses that differences in theology and ritual pale in comparison to “building connections across social boundaries to work for a common good.” Sometimes Day seems to forget that theological differences are meaningful.

But overall, *Faith on the Avenue* is an excellent study that offers a deep look into a fascinating city street and shapes a new way of thinking about the way places of worship interact with their surroundings regardless of location. Day hopes that congregations “could develop a more realistic sense of who they are, and could be.” This book is a useful tool for pursuing a worthy goal.

Regina Munch is an assistant editor at *Commonweal*.

More Catholic than the pope

With *Vatican I: The Council and the Making of the Ultramontane Church*, John O’Malley, S.J., the worldwide dean of church historians, has completed his trinity of works on church councils. His books on Trent (2013), the Second Vatican Council (2008) and now the First Vatican Council are all inspired by the course he taught for years called “Two Great Councils,” and by friends who urged him not to overlook the “middle child” between Trent and Vatican II. As usual, his history never forgets the story: We hear the yelling and strategizing on stage and off as proponents and opponents of infallibility virulently used the popular press during Vatican I to make their partisan cases. These fights reso-

nate in today’s church: Just imagine if Döllinger and Newman had been able to tweet.

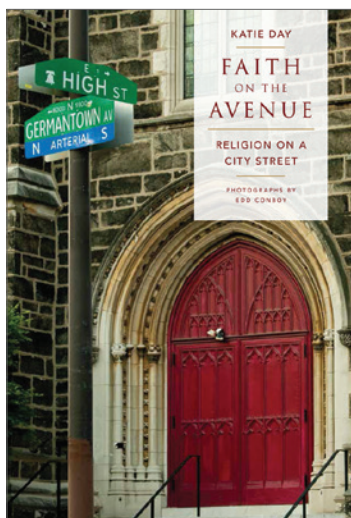
Discussions in Rome in 1870 about power and authority, rooted in the first era of the church and wrangled over during its medieval centuries, hardened positions about loyalty to the very person of the pope. This conception of the papacy clashed with Gregory the Great’s model of a servant leader who holds an office that is always greater than any particular successor of Peter, as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI demonstrated with his resignation in 2013.

O’Malley notes the fuel that kept ultramontanism simmering beneath infallibility debates was the loss of the papal states. At the same time, the global authority and prestige of the pa-

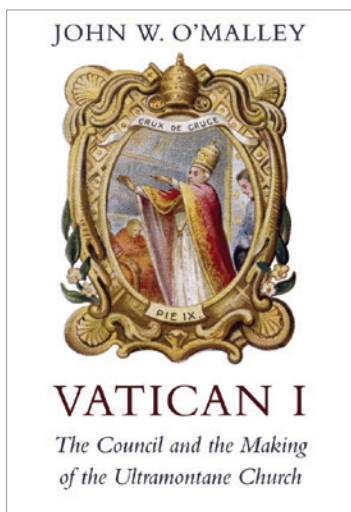
pacy rose, culminating in what the papal historian Eamon Duffy described as the pope’s role as the oracle of God.

But in promulgating the doctrine of infallibility, what did Pius IX and Vatican I really accomplish? In the end, is not soft authority in place of hard, defined power more lasting, loving and evangelizing, because it invites by witness rather than imposing and demanding? Vatican I introduced disillusion more than clarity and led to the language of crisis, even fear-mongering and character assassination at its worst, that were as dangerous in the 19th century as they are today—ironic for a faith whose central belief in the Resurrection preaches hope and communal love.

Christopher M. Bellitto is a professor of history at Kean University in Union, N.J.



Faith on the Avenue
 Religion on a City Street
 By Katie Day
 Photographs by Edd Conboy
 Oxford University Press. 264p \$33.95



Vatican I
 The Council and the Making of the Ultramontane Church
 By John W. O'Malley
 Belknap Press of Harvard University
 Press. 320p \$24.95

Sex and sexuality on campus

Risk vulnerability. This is what many millennials are unwilling to do in their sexual relationships, despite the fact that good sex, from a Christian perspective, requires it. Vulnerability is also required of readers who engage Jennifer Beste's *College Hookup Culture and Christian Ethics: The Lives and Longings of Emerging Adults*, which brings us unabashedly into the social and sexual lives of students at two unnamed Catholic universities. Beste incorporates and examines the reflections of students in her courses, some of whom functioned as ethnographers, whose fieldwork required (sober!) observation of students at college parties.

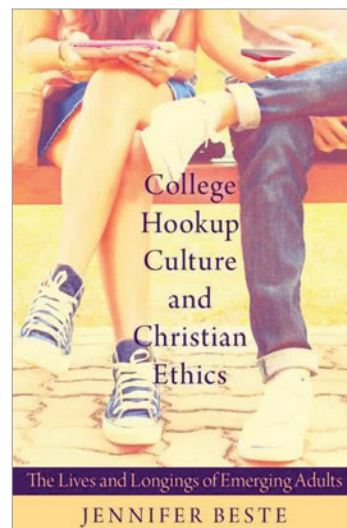
Student revelations present a discouraging, even frightening, picture: drunken sex, purposefully devoid of personal and emotional connection, social and sexual interactions plagued by distorted gender norms, widespread consumption of pornography that intensifies hypermasculine attitudes and behaviors, sexual assault and rape (though too often not named as such) and acute social pressure to participate in the party and hookup culture at the risk of social exclusion. Thankfully, Beste courageously delves into this messiness with her students, inviting them—and, in turn, us—to think critically about it, analyze it from a theo-ethical perspective and move toward more promising ways of being in relationship.

Student testimony discloses mixed thoughts about party and hookup culture. On the one hand, drinking and flirting at parties and hooking up are identified as ways to blow off steam amid daily pressures, garner attention and feel wanted, (sometimes) have pleasurable sexual experiences and (again, sometimes) attempt to find someone to date. On the

other hand, drunken hookups often leave students feeling used, regretful and disingenuous. Students both willingly participate *and* wish things were different, recognizing social and sexual pressures on them that they feel ill-equipped to escape.

Beste creatively uses the work of theologians like Johann Baptist Metz and Margaret Farley to help students consider how Christian discipleship opposes many of the values and behaviors of hookup culture. She provides careful theological analysis of the reflections of her students and of the social and sexual realities of college students more broadly, providing a valuable resource for anyone interested in creating safe and just campuses or supporting emerging adults in families and church communities.

Bridget Burke Ravizza is an associate professor of theology and religious studies at St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wis.



College Hookup Culture and Christian Ethics
 The Lives and Longings of Emerging Adults
 By Jennifer Beste
 Oxford University Press. 376p \$35

‘Angels in America’ takes flight in a new political age

By Rob Weinert-Kendt

The two-play cycle “Angels in America” was conceived in the late 1980s and premiered in the early 1990s, as AIDS raged and the Cold War ended.

This history may form the backdrop for Tony Kushner’s seven-plus-hour epic, to which he gave the subtitle “A Gay Fantasia on National Themes.” But on the evidence of a smashing new Broadway revival, “Angels in America” has flown blessedly free of its period to claim a place in the momentous, disorienting history unfolding before us now. It does not hurt that one of the subjects is the moral rot of the Republican Party, a topic that could not be more topically relevant; or that the real-life lawyer Roy Cohn (portrayed brilliantly by Nathan Lane), who declares himself “the heart of modern conservatism” as AIDS ravages his body, represents a rapacious, zero-sum worldview clearly shared by his onetime client, Donald Trump.

But these resonances hardly explain why “Angels” feels both timely and timeless, or why this revival soars so high and lands so hard. Part of the cycle’s enduring power is simple entertainment value. Its inimitable mix of camp, politics, science fiction and melodrama makes its nearly eight-hour run time glide by.

Its subjects are dark and vast, but its sheer human vitality—with some superhuman assistance—shines so brightly it is almost blinding. And funny: You wouldn’t know it from the HBO movie version, or from a somber, miniaturized 2010 Off Broadway revival, but “Angels in America” has more laughs than many ostensible stage comedies.

The laughs don’t come cheap, though, and many of them cut as deep as the dramatic turns. When Joe Pitt (Lee Pace), a closeted gay Mormon lawyer being mentored by Roy Cohn, fights with his Valium-addicted wife, Harper (Denise Gough) in the first play, “Millennium Approaches,” she strikes back with acid wit. The play’s two main magnetic poles are its two AIDS-afflicted characters: the aforementioned Cohn, a sputtering vindictive viper to whom Lane lends full gravity without stepping on his jokes, and Prior Walter (Andrew Garfield), a young gay man as stocked with one-liners as eyeliner who becomes, miraculously, an oracle and a prophet of the impending millennium.

If that sounds like a left turn, it is the play’s signature move: The merely earthly becomes the cosmological, as a literal Angel (Amanda Lawrence) bursts

through Prior’s apartment ceiling and demands that he bring a new epistle to humankind. Her message is unlike anything delivered in any known scripture: God has left heaven because humans will not stop migrating, mingling and progressing. To bring back order to creation, humans must simply stay put. Fluttering her wings angrily, she exclaims to Prior: “Hobble yourselves! There is no Zion save where you are.”

The new production on Broadway, which is directed, as it was at London’s National Theatre, by Marianne Elliott, reimagines the Angel as a sort of junkyard eagle, a feral scrapper held aloft by bodysuited supernumeraries rather than suspended by wires. It is a strong choice, but it skirts the edge of silliness, as do several of Elliott’s style choices: blasts of orchestral music that smother many scene transitions, neon bars around half-finished set pieces.

Some of these choices seem to pay off in the more fantastical second play, “Perestroika.” It is also in the second play that Garfield’s Prior comes into his own, and his guilt-wracked ex-lover, Louis (James McArdle), comes into sharper focus. In the first play, “Millennium Approaches,” Louis ostensibly

“Angels in America” has flown free of its period to claim a place in the history unfolding before us now.



abandons Prior as his AIDS symptoms grow, but neither Prior’s terror of the disease nor the self-loathing required for Louis to commit such a senseless personal crime are entirely convincing. But in “Perestroika,” Garfield is positively ebullient, as much tour guide as protagonist through matters both romantic and spiritual. Likewise, the hair-trigger sensitivity that made McArldle unbelievable as a jerk makes him an involingly tortured soul in the second play.

Ultimately, “Angels in America” may have held up so well after a quarter century because Kushner has given full value to all the parts of his subtitle: gay, fantasia and national themes. He might just as easily have said “universal themes,” since the subjects the play so heartily makes a meal of—freedom, responsibility, dignity, faith, sexuality—are hardly the exclusive properties of Americans. “An angel is a belief, with wings,” says Hannah (Susan Brown), a stoic Mormon matriarch. Kushner’s “Angels” is a play of ideas made flesh.

Rob Weinert-Kendt is an arts journalist and editor of *American Theatre* magazine.

Honoring Jean Vanier and the people he serves

To characterize a film as “feel-good” is usually to dismiss it as butter for the brain—slick, smooth, eminently palatable but probably better in limited servings. “Summer in the Forest,” which is a fittingly unorthodox documentary, as well as a résumé of the case for canonizing the Catholic philosopher Jean Vanie, is a feel-good film in the sense that it reaffirms one’s faith in humanity and maybe even in what Vanier contends is a common human instinct for peace and universal justice—an instinct, Vanier concedes, that is too often “very, very quiet.”

Few know that quietude better than the inhabitants of Val Fleuri, a country house northwest of Paris, in the village of Trosly-Breuil, where Vanier founded L’Arche—an organization that now has 151 facilities in 30-odd countries, community homes for the people formerly dismissed as idiots and relegated to insane asylums or, at least, what might charitably be called uncharitable institutions. The film, in its way, does what Vanier did—honors its subjects’ humanity, explores their uniqueness

and changes the way we, the so-called normal ones, see them.

“Summer in the Forest” provides, obliquely, a slim biography of Vanier himself. He is Canadian, 89 years old and served as an officer on a British destroyer during World War II. He knows the human capacity for horror and for love. But the film is more about the inhabitants of Val Fleuri, and in making it the director Randall Wright dispenses with many of the formal constraints that documentary makers so often impose upon themselves. There is no pretending to either a participatory chumminess or a fly-on-the-wall observational invisibility. It’s obvious that scenes were set up and shot from different angles; they know it, we know it. No one cares; the filmmakers stay out of the way, but their presence is implied. Regardless of it all, the characters are so uninhibited and candid they achieve, without effort, a naturalism that would be the envy of any method actor.

John Anderson is a television critic for *The Wall Street Journal* and a contributor to *The New York Times*.



“Summer in the Forest” is a feel-good film that actually deserves that title.

Photo: R2W FILMS

Experience and Understanding

Readings: Acts 10:25-48, Ps 98, 1 Jn 4:7-10, Jn 15:9-17

Many people experience God at work in the world, but they lack the words to understand that experience. In this Sunday's first reading, for example, Cornelius had already encountered the Spirit before he was baptized. Paul gave him the words he needed to understand this encounter. In this, Paul was living out the resurrection. He became an icon of the risen Christ as he shared his knowledge of the loving work of God.

Throughout John's Gospel, the Evangelist affirms that loving words and deeds make God present. The Father told the Son the whole truth of existence before sending him to earth (Jn 1:18). The Son is the only one who knows the Father and is the only one who has heard the whole truth (Jn 6:46, 12:49). The possession of this truth makes the Son a perfect image of the Father (Jn 14:9). As this Sunday's Gospel reveals, Jesus gave us the ability to become such an image. He told the disciples everything the Father had told him (Jn 15:15).

Jesus sent the disciples out to share this truth with others. He gave them the Spirit to guide them in this task and strengthen them in the face of opposition (Jn 14:26). Disciples who live in the Spirit and hold to the truth became, like the Son, an icon of the Father (Jn 17:20-23). As they shared that truth with others, they gave any who believed the power to become an icon of the divine (Jn 20:21). Jesus uses two symbols to communicate what it means reveal God at work: He washes the feet of his disciples and he teaches them the commandment, "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another." In John's Gospel, these two actions contain the entirety of the truth that God wants us to know.

Throughout all the writings attributed to John, love is the surest sign of God at work. "Everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love" (1 Jn 4:7-8). God saved the world through love by sending his Son as an expiation for our sins. Just so, when Christians act in love, they not only make God present; they allow Christ to continue his ministry through their actions.

'I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.' (Jn 15:15)

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

How do you make Christ's love present?

What loving words can you speak to help others understand God's presence?

This is especially clear in this Sunday's first reading. The Holy Spirit was already at work in Cornelius's household even before Paul arrived to share the Gospel and offer baptism. Paul's preaching helped Cornelius and his family put words to their experience of God's presence. Paul's actions allowed the Spirit, which had been working in subtle ways, to become fully manifest.

Disciples today must continue the same task. The Spirit fills the world, and many feel the presence of God but lack the words to understand what God is doing. We who know Christ must, like Paul, help others understand their experience. We can do that only when we live by the Gospel that Jesus learned from the Father and passed on to us. We make the risen Christ present whenever we seek out the world's broken places and, trusting in the Spirit already at work, speak of the love of God. Then we are rightly called his friends.

Michael Simone, S.J., teaches Scripture at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.

CLASSIFIED

SENIOR PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Do you have a passion for helping Catholic leaders realize their full potential and, in turn, helping the Catholic faith thrive in the United States and beyond? If you have the experience and expertise to deliver management and leadership training to the most senior leaders in the Catholic Church in the U.S., this is an exciting opportunity to impact how the church functions and how effective it is in delivering its critical ministries. Learn more at www.leadershiproundtable.org/jobs



WANT YOUR AD HERE?

E-mail: karko@americamagazine.org

Call: 212-515-0126 or visit americamedia.org

Print versions of classified ads are \$2 per word.

Visit the digital classified section at americamagazine.org/classifieds and place a digital ad for \$175 per month.



Catholic
Theological
Union

A GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY

ctu.edu



Are you ready for Practical Theology?

This flagship program invites experienced ministers to wed their rich experience with advanced theological work in collaboration with co-learners literally from around the world. Cosponsored by Catholic Theological Union, the Lutheran School of Theology, and McCormick Theological Seminary, this ecumenical and interfaith immersion in practical theology prepares leaders to shape other leaders contextually for the 21st century. From Pakistan to Australia, Ireland to the Philippines, our graduates have assumed leadership in teaching, formation, advocacy, and administration across the globe. Considering joining this one of a kind ministerial adventure. Concentrations include:

- *Hispanic Theology and Ministry*
- *Liturgy*
- *Educating for Witness*
- *Intercultural Studies and Ministry*
- *Spirituality*



Why is Pope Francis making Oscar Romero a saint?

Read the words that cost him his life.

140 pages • \$8

Plough

Read a sample:
plough.com/Romero

Still at Work

Readings: Acts 1:1-11, Ps 47, Eph 1:17-23 or Eph 4:1-13, Mk 16:15-20

On its own, the Ascension is difficult to understand. Only Luke speaks of it, although all the New Testament writers agree that Jesus ceased appearing at some point. The only comparable biblical ascensions are those of Elijah and Enoch. About the latter, Scripture gives no details (Gen 5:24). Elijah, meanwhile, ascends to heaven in a fiery chariot and whirlwind (2 Kgs 2:10-11). In both cases God is at work, rewarding someone for his service. This is less clear in Jesus' case. Luke mentions that Jesus was "lifted up," hinting that someone other than Jesus was at work, but Luke does not mention God's involvement. He gives the impression that Jesus was in charge throughout.

In its larger context, however, the Ascension makes more sense. Just before the Babylonian exile (586 B.C.E.), the divine presence that had resided in the Jerusalem Temple left the Temple and ascended over the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem (Ezek 11:23). Although this was a punishment for the priests who had introduced foreign worship into the temple, it was a blessing to the Jews who had been scattered by war. God now resided high over Jerusalem, and they could direct their prayers in that direction from any point on earth, confident that they would be heard (Dan 6:10). In portraying Jesus' own ascent, Luke implies

that Jesus is divine and that he was going up to join that divine presence over Jerusalem. From the Father's right hand, he would guide the church throughout the world.

The ending of Mark's Gospel, which the church reads this Sunday, gives several signs of Christ's continuing presence in the Christian community. Christians will drive out demons in Christ's name, they will speak new languages, dangerous things will not hurt them, and they will heal the sick. The textual history of the ending of Mark's Gospel is complicated. Ancient manuscripts attest to multiple variants, so it is difficult to express with confidence what Mark had in mind with these signs. Nonetheless, the canonical ending that we read this Sunday provides a fitting end to Jesus' "rescue mission." The disciples are now the rescuers, going out into the world with Christ's power behind them, to deliver humanity from death.

In this Sunday's second reading, Paul provides other signs that Christ is at work. The Christian community was Christ's body on earth, and from heaven Christ continued to equip it with the charisms necessary for its health. When someone showed the ability to be an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor or teacher, that person gave evidence that Christ remained at work in the Christian community. Those who received the grace to build up the body of Christ in any way became a sign that Christ was still active.

This remains the case today. Jesus still stands at the Father's right hand, guiding the Christian community and empowering it with the Spirit. Although the signs are different from those that accompanied early Christians, evidence remains that the divine Christ continues to act through his human disciples. In a violent world, Christians preach peace. Among those who hate, Christians act in love. In the face of greed, Christians give from their poverty. Among the proud, Christians remain humble. These are signs of the risen Christ still at work.

Michael Simone, S.J., teaches Scripture at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.

*'Go into the whole world
and proclaim the Gospel to
every creature.'* (Mk 16:15)

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

How do you seek signs of Christ at work?

How can you be a sign for others?

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



CATHOLIC
INITIATIVES

Invest in *America* today!



Father Matthew Malone, S.J., president & editor in chief, engages panelists during a live-streamed conversation about immigration, education and incarceration and the U.S. Hispanic experience, hosted in the studios of America Media.

A gift to **America** will ensure that we will continue producing high impact, groundbreaking news and analysis across multiple media platforms.

Will you join us?

Consider supporting *America* today
at www.americamagazine.org/donate

This Place We Call Home

Learning to be neighbors in a changing society

By Hosffman Ospino



My wife and I bought our first home about seven years ago, after William, our first child, was born. We had loved the small and cozy apartment that we rented only a few blocks away from Boston College, where I teach. Yet by week two, William had taken over the place.

A crib, a changing table, a diaper disposal, gadgets that I did not know existed, and toys of all sizes and colors now occupied almost every corner. We procured a large chest for the countless little pieces of clothing floating around. How many clothes and artifacts does an eight-pound human being need? Apparently, a lot!

Three months later, we were moving into our first home. We searched for a neighborhood that was family-friendly, close to work and with a high concentration of Catholics. We wanted a place that was safe and clean. After doing the usual research, we found our house and fell in love with it. That was it! We were homeowners. Victoria, our daughter, was born two years later. Our children were growing up in their own place.

This house belongs to us, and we love it. We own a piece of this country—small, for sure, yet ours.

Homeownership has always been an important marker of belonging in this country. The promise of owning a parcel of land attracted millions of people from around the world to the United States. The idea of home-

ownership is deeply ingrained in the American Dream.

About two-thirds of people born in the United States live in their own homes. Immigrants also have a strong record of homeownership: About half of the 42.3 million foreign-born people in our nation live in their own homes. This is a remarkable record worth celebrating. It holds promise for the stability and integration of our society.

Except for two other immigrant families, all our neighbors are Euro-American. White. When we moved here, we did not mind this at all; my family is bilingual, English and Spanish. However, after several months, only the two immigrant families and one Euro-American neighbor from across the street had befriended us. We reached out to others but did not get beyond formal greetings. Almost seven years later, things have not changed much.

Not long ago I was standing outside our home. One of our neighbors came over decidedly. I stepped forward and, without giving me much time to utter a sound, she said, “It is people like you and your family that are bringing this country down.” Then she turned around and has not spoken to me since.

I still wonder what prompted her. Did others share her feelings? Is distrust the default mode to treat the immigrant among us? My wife and I have

talked and prayed a lot about this incident. It is interesting that the adults in the three immigrant families in our neighborhood have graduate degrees and hold professional positions. We all have young families. If anything, we bring the American Dream to life.

My wife and I continue to discern whether this is still the best neighborhood to raise our children. They will soon reach the age where they will need to join these conversations. In any case, the place where we live is our home and the families around it are our neighbors.

While we ponder this, millions of immigrants will continue to search for their first home in family-friendly, close-to-work, safe and clean environments. They will call those places home. Their mere presence will challenge their neighbors to practice the virtue of hospitality. I believe that there needs to be room for this conversation in our faith communities. Authentic Christian discipleship requires welcoming our neighbors—literally.

Hosffman Ospino is an associate professor of Hispanic ministry and religious education at Boston College, School of Theology and Ministry.



Informed. Inspired. Enriched.



Choose your preferred digital format or paperback book.



Evangelizing our Catholic Faith with the Vincentian Priests and Brothers and the Missouri Knights of Columbus Religious Information Bureau since 1944

Since 1941, millions of people have benefited by Catholic Home Study's faith education books.

Now, it's your turn to deepen your understanding of Jesus Christ and the Roman Catholic Church.

Take part in this study from the comfort of your own home, at your own pace. Nine lively, engaging books explain the basic teachings and beliefs of the Catholic church. Simply enroll online (or write to us) and choose your first book.

catholichomestudy.org

P.O. Box 363, Perryville, MO 63775



THE JESUIT RETREAT CENTER OF LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA

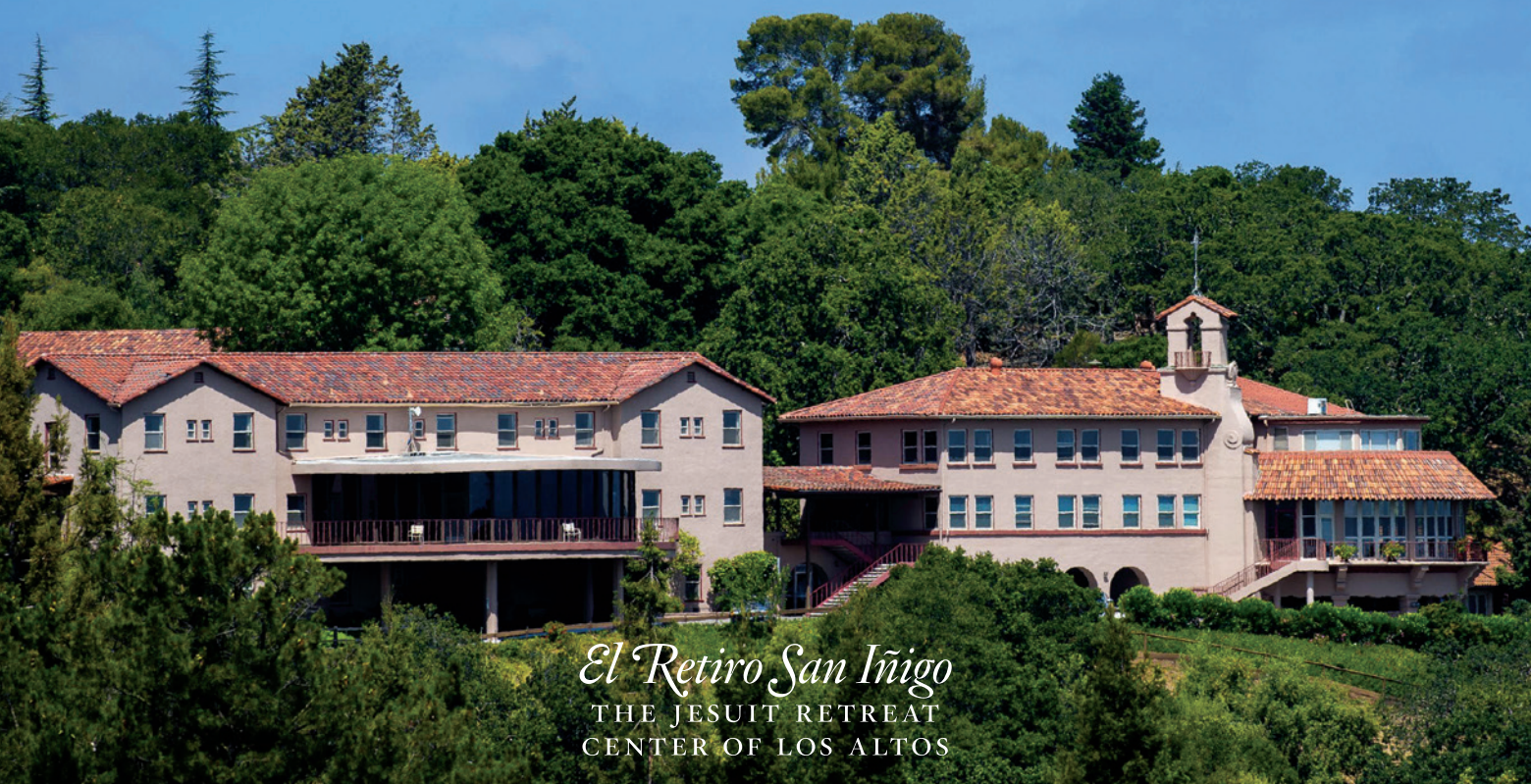
Weekend Retreats with topics such as Ignatian Spirituality, Science and Religion, Grief, Prayer, and more

Individually Directed Retreats

Summer 30-Day and 8-Day Retreats

- Conference Facilities for Outside Groups
- Located 40 miles south of San Francisco
- Private en suite rooms
- 38 hilly acres with trails and vistas

www.jrclosaltos.org
(650) 917-4000



El Retiro San Inigo
THE JESUIT RETREAT
CENTER OF LOS ALTOS