A Review of Religion, Politics & Culture

Commonweal

SEPTEMBER 26, 2014

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

JOHN WILKINS ON THE UPCOMING SYNOD
MOLLY FARNETH ON WOMEN & THE HIERARCHY

James Sheehan on Mussolini & the Vatican
Agnes Howard on modern parenthood
Richard Alleva reviews 'Calvary'

THE EDITORS ON THE CIA

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Catholic Social Teaching and the Financial Crisis

November 12, 2014

Catholic Social Thought and the Financial Crisis
The Most Reverend Diarmuid Martin
Archbishop of Dublin
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The Economy of Grace and the Church of the Poor: Papal Responses to the Financial Crisis
Drew Christiansen, S.J.
Georgetown University
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Commonweal

SEPTEMBER 26, 2014 • VOLUME 141 • NUMBER 15

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Subscription Information
855-713-1792
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Publisher
Thomas Baker

Commonweal [ISSN 0010-3330], a review of public affairs, religion, literature, and the arts, is published biweekly, except in April, July, August, and November, when it is published monthly, by Commonweal Foundation, 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 405, New York, NY 10115. Telephone: (212) 662-4200. E-mail: editors@commonwealmagazine.org. Fax: (212) 662-4183. POSTMASTER: send address changes to *Commonweal*, P.O. Box 3000, Denville, NJ 07834-9982.

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, and Book Review Index. *Commonweal* articles are available at many libraries and research facilities via ProQuest and OpinionArchives. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional offices. Single Copy, $3.95. Yearly print subscriptions, U.S., $65; Canada, $70; other parts of the world, $75. Special two-year rate: U.S. $98; Canada, $108; other parts of the world, $118. Add $45 for airmail. For digital and online subscription options visit www.commonwealmagazine.org/digital.

Cover design: Cecilia Guerrero Rezes

LETTERS

Poetry & politics, a common tongue, etc.

CHECK PAGE FIFTY-ONE

I am grateful for Bernard P. Prusak's close attention to my book, *Rekindling the Christic Imagination* ("First Things," August 15). I need, however, to call attention to one significant lapse.

Prusak writes: "Imbelli appears sympathetic to Benedict's perspective on this issue, but he does not note that Benedict routinely celebrated the Eucharist in St. Peter's Basilica facing the people!" Though I am indeed sympathetic with Pope Benedict's underlying concern regarding liturgical celebration, I explicitly state in the book that "he celebrated the Eucharist at the papal altar in St. Peter's Basilica *versus populum*."

I join with Prusak in commending Liturgical Press for their skill in bringing out this "handsomely produced book"—as he says—and at a moderate price!

(REV.) ROBERT P. IMBELLI
Bronx, N.Y.

POLITICAL ANIMALS

Patrick Ryan's piece on the poetry of Yeats and Heaney ("When a Deeper Need Enters," August 15) is terrific. Since Seamus Heaney's passing nearly a year ago, I've been revisiting his work and recalling his impact on me as a younger man, my sense of the necessary relationship between the aesthetic and the political. His poetry calls to mind the politics of local details and patterns, personal memories, stresses, and joys. These are dynamic moments in the lives of persons—and in the life of the body politic. They form us even as we form one another.

In this sense, Yeats's effort to exclude politics from his poetry during his later career was an impossible task. Inasmuch as poetry and language inform our self-understanding and the way we relate to one another, they are necessarily political.

This is a deeply humane notion of the political, though it is often neglected. We too often use the term "political" with reference to the cynical intrigues of politicians and candidates. Heaney's politics, however, encompass a nobler notion. They issue from the lifeblood of ordinary things and relationships. His faith in the "trustworthiness" and "travel-worthiness" of immediate things, as he put it in his Nobel Lecture, enabled him to engage audiences far afield from the Irish setting of his memories and experience.

JONATHAN CURRIE
Basking Ridge, N.J.

UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR

Peter Farley's letter ("Bad Language") in the August 15 edition awakened memories of Sunday school and Sr. Mary Emerentiana.

Sister explained to us that "catholic" means "universal," and that Latin is the universal language of the universal church. So, Sister told us, wherever we wandered in after years, the Mass would be celebrated in the very same language as it was that very morning long ago.

And Sister was right. In later years, whether at sea, or in Japan, or even in Texas, I found solace and comfort and hope in hearing those familiar words even while I was far from familiar places.

Sigrid Undset—who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1928—speaks to that very point in her novel *The Master of Hestviken*, set in fourteenth-century Norway. The hero, Olav Audunsson, sails to England. Lonely, homesick, ignorant of the

continued on page 29

From the Editors

Unaccountable

The story of how the Central Intelligence Agency came to operate a secretive program of rendition, detention, and interrogation under President George W. Bush has been made public by a number of investigations into the abuses that resulted. In 2007, the Red Cross detailed the methods used to interrogate suspects at CIA-run "black sites." In 2010, the Justice Department's Office of Professional Responsibility strongly criticized the Bush administration lawyers who wrote the legal memos permitting the CIA to use torture. And last year, the Constitution Project Task Force on Detainee Treatment—a nonpartisan group that included a number of former military and intelligence personnel—analyzed what is known about mistreatment of detainees and the policy decisions that led to such ugly consequences.

Now a new report is expected from the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, which is charged with overseeing the activities of the CIA. Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), the committee's chair, launched an investigation into the CIA's detention and interrogation program in 2009 after learning that the agency had destroyed videotapes of "enhanced interrogations" and had misled Congress about its activities for years. The committee reportedly concluded that the CIA's use of torture was broader and more brutal than had been acknowledged, and that agents continually lied about the significance of information obtained through torture in order to justify its use. The senators' report was completed in 2012, but its release has been held up by the CIA's own "classification review." Citing security concerns, the agency returned the report's executive summary with about 15 percent of the text redacted. According to Feinstein—who has long been known as a staunch supporter of the intelligence community—those redactions "eliminate or obscure key facts that support the report's findings and conclusions." She asked President Barack Obama to address her concerns, pledging not to release the report summary "until it is readable and understandable."

It is hard to have faith in the CIA's judgment about its own secrets, especially given the agency's recent and flagrant violations of trust. Agents accused intelligence committee members of illegally obtaining an internal agency report, known as the "Panetta review," that is said to confirm the committee's findings and contradict the CIA's official response. Attempting to validate this accusation, CIA personnel illegally searched and read the e-mail of Senate committee members and, when questioned by the agency's inspector general, "demonstrated a lack of candor about their activities." After Feinstein decried the intrusion, agency director John O. Brennan expressed outrage at the "spurious allegations." "My CIA colleagues and I believe strongly in the necessity of effective, strong, and bipartisan congressional oversight," he insisted.

The CIA's obstructionism makes a mockery of Brennan's stated commitment to upholding "the core values that define us as Americans," not to mention the president's pledge of "an unprecedented level of openness in government." On taking office in 2009, Obama declared, "The government should not keep information confidential merely because public officials might be embarrassed by disclosure, because errors and failures might be revealed, or because of speculative or abstract fears." That, Feinstein and others allege, is precisely the CIA's motivation for suppressing information in the committee report. As the Constitution Project Task Force found in 2010, "The high level of secrecy surrounding the rendition and torture of detainees since September 11 cannot continue to be justified on the basis of national security." The price of keeping such secrets, the task force warned, is high: "Ongoing classification of these practices serves only to conceal evidence of wrongdoing and make its repetition more likely."

Though an intelligence agency operates largely in secret, its credibility depends on respect for the law and clear standards of accountability. Yet, when the CIA breach of Senate computers was confirmed—and Brennan was compelled to apologize—Obama not only voiced "full confidence" in the CIA head, but went on to scold anyone still seeking accountability for torture and other documented human-rights abuses. "It's important for us not to feel too sanctimonious in retrospect about the tough job that those folks had," he said, adding that those who tortured "were working hard under enormous pressure and are real patriots."

The president's impulse to excuse abuses that occur in the process of preventing terrorism is alarming, given the renewed threat from Islamist extremists in the Middle East. As ISIS continues its campaign of terror in Iraq—making deliberate reference to the CIA's history of torture—and Obama looks to advisers like Brennan for guidance, careful oversight of the CIA's counterterrorism activities will be crucial. The Senate intelligence committee is supposed to provide that oversight. But if the CIA can control whether its past transgressions are exposed, then there is no check on its power—and nothing to guarantee that, in the face of new pressure, America's "core values" will prevail. ■

September 9, 2014

Charles R. Morris

Buoyant Billionaires

WHY ONLY THE RICH HAVE BOUNCED BACK

Frances Trollope *by Auguste Hervieu, circa 1832*

Frances Trollope, mother of the novelist Anthony, was one of the wittiest and most observant of the early travelers to the United States. After two years pursuing a business venture in Cincinnati, broke and nearly fifty, she wrote *The Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832), which was a bestseller on both sides of the Atlantic and launched a brilliant writing career.

Cincinnati was an ideal keyhole for examining the American Zeitgeist. It was one of America's fastest-growing cities, the "Queen City of the West," dominating shipping, trade, and manufacturing for nearly the entire region bounded by the Appalachians and the Mississippi above the Mason-Dixon Line.

Compared with Boston and New York, Cincinnati was nearly free of class distinctions. During her stay there, Trollope "neither saw a beggar nor a man of sufficient fortune to permit his ceasing to pursue it." She admired an illiterate young farmer who, besides tending to his farm, opened a store, built houses, split logs, and sold lumber. She "had no doubt that every sun that sets sees him a richer man than when it rose." The farmer hoped his son would become a member of Congress, and Trollope was sure he would, and "the idea that his origin is a disadvantage, will never occur to the imagination of the most exalted of his fellow-citizens."

If one sets aside the massive exception of slavery, early-nineteenth-century America may have been the most egalitarian of any sizeable society in history. Abraham Lincoln liked to point out that farm laborers and factory hands worked harder in America because they knew they could one day own their own farm or machine shop. Britons who came to appraise the competitive threat from America agreed. While British workers tended to sabotage new machinery, Americans helped the shop owner improve it.

The post–Civil War Gilded Age created a moneyed royalty of sorts—the Vanderbilts, the Rockefellers, the Astors—that was force-fed by a wave of corporate mergers and buyouts. The research of economists Thomas Piketty, Emmanuel Saez, and their colleagues tracks upper-class incomes from 1913 on. In that year, just after a peak in big financial transactions, the top 1 percent of earners accounted for 18 percent of the nation's personal income. That zoomed even higher during the 1920s boom, until by 1928, the top 1 percent was taking nearly a quarter (23.9 percent) of personal income, an all-time high.

It was not a good omen. The implosion of the stock market in the 1930s, and wartime price controls and high taxes, brought the top 1 percent's income share down to about 9 percent by the end of the war, and it stayed there until the late 1970s. The Reagan and Thatcher revolutions and the mesmeric rise of extreme free-market "Chicago School" economics engineered a steady diversion of income to the very top of the economic ladder. By 2007, the income share of the top 1 percent had climbed to 23.5 percent, or just a hair below its 1928 level.

Once again, it was not a good omen, triggering the Great Recession of 2008. But this time, unlike the 1930s, when President Franklin Roosevelt's opposition was on the left, demanding even more radical steps, President Barack Obama is trapped by the hard-right antigovernment wing of the Republican party. So the very rich are almost alone in achieving their pre-crash eminence, with the 1 percent's share of personal income climbing all the way back to 22.5 percent.

We can put some dollar signs around that number. In 1975, the income share of the top 1 percent was 8.9 percent. How much extra cash did their new income share generate in 2012? The answer is about $1.6 trillion—in just that one year. That's more than annual outlays for Social Security payments, and about twice as large as budgeted Defense Department appropriations. It's enough to pay off the federal debt held by the public in about seven years.

The aristocratic credo holds that all of society benefits from a well-fed superrich. They are the ones who supply the high-octane financial fuel to maintain America's advantage in high technology and keep its job-creation machinery humming. But that is hardly the recent experience. The private-equity and hedge funds that cater to the super-rich have been in the vanguard of outsourcing American production to low-income countries, creating "flash trading" protocols to collect a miniscule cash toll on other people's trading, and building a wall of cash around their tax breaks and other special privileges.

American politics turns in slow-motion cycles. Millions of people have recently discovered the benefits of government-funded health care. Millions more baby boomers are realizing that their 401(k)s aren't nearly large enough to finance a decent retirement. Change will come when the mass of Americans understand that the antitax and antigovernment anthems of our new aristocracy do not speak to their best interests. ■

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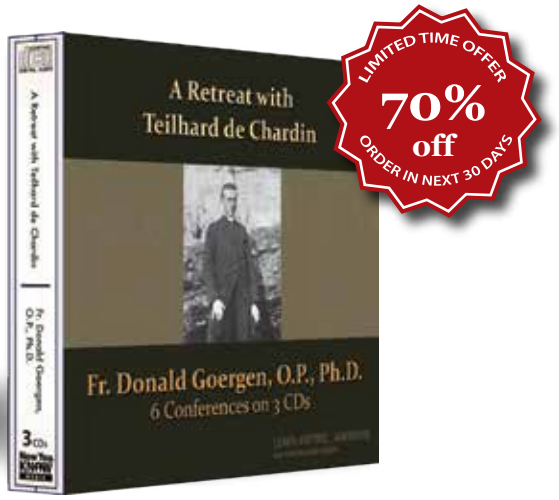

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Daniel K. Finn

Smart Money

THE ECONOMIC CASE FOR FUNDING PRE-K

When Bill de Blasio made universal pre-kindergarten a cornerstone of his campaign for mayor of New York, his message drew widespread national attention. And even though since taking office he has tussled with New York Governor Andrew Cuomo over how best to fund universal pre-K, they haven't argued over whether it was the right thing to do—both for New York City and the state as a whole. With $300 million in state money ultimately allocated for it, universal pre-kindergarten in New York is beginning this fall.

Of course, such approaches are generally in keeping with the historic liberal tendency to endorse government spending on programs for the poor—not just preschool education, but food, housing, income support, and job-skills training. All are seen as ways to address systemic causes of poverty like racial discrimination and the lack of employment opportunities. Conservatives, on the other hand, argue that government spending actually hurts, as it feeds "the culture of poverty," the ethos regnant in poor families that don't teach their children the value of hard work, punctuality, persistence, and other virtues basic to success in both school and the workplace. Even highly touted programs like Head Start are fruitless, they say, since evidence shows that the IQ advantages gained by poor four-year-olds disappear by age ten.

But in fact there is new evidence that government-funded, early-childhood interventions can actually help instill many of those virtues—what economists call "psychological skills"—whose absence conservatives lament. It comes from University of Chicago economist and Nobel Prize–winning econometrician James Heckman, in an October 2013 article in the *American Economic Review* co-authored with Rodrigo Pinto and Peter Savelyev, which re-examines the much-studied, mid-1960s Perry Preschool Project in Ypsilanti, Michigan. The ideological history of the Chicago school and Heckman's impeccable statistical credentials mean that the conclusions drawn about the fruitfulness of carefully crafted intervention in the lives of preschoolers cannot be dismissed as just another liberal argument for more government spending. The article is replete with equations and tables showing regression coefficients, p-values, and Cronbach's alphas, and the authors' strategies for coping with multiple hypothesis testing and compromises in the randomization protocol. Their results, however, are plain, and easily accessible to a general audience.

Heckman has written more than a half-dozen papers over the past decade investigating what does and doesn't work in preparing the poor for a successful work life. In

WOODLEYWONDERWORKS

this most recent paper, he employs newly developed (though somewhat esoteric) statistical methods to squeeze from the data conclusions not simply about the success of the Perry program, but also about how various positive outcomes in the lives of program participants at age forty (measured by such factors as number of arrests, income, use of drugs, length of marriages, etc.) are attributable to particular "psychological skills" learned at age three or four.

The Perry program enrolled low-income, low-IQ African-American children who began the two-year experience at age three. The children attended five two-and-a-half-hour sessions each week during the school year, with a teacher making a single ninety-minute visit to each child's home each week to engage mothers in the social development of their children. The curriculum was founded on the principle of "active participatory learning," treating children, teachers, and mothers as partners. Children were taught to plan, carry out, and evaluate tasks, with a stress on such social skills as cooperation with others and the nonviolent resolution of interpersonal conflict.

The study followed both the Perry program and a control group, an identical group of children from the same community who were not involved in Perry. Information on a number of measures was collected from both groups, annually at ages three through fifteen, and then later at ages nineteen, twenty-seven, and forty: IQ as measured by the Stanford-Binet instrument; academic motivation, which kept track of such attributes as "shows initiative," "alert and interested in school work," and "hesitant to try, or gives up easily"; and externalizing behavior, such as "disrupts classroom procedures," "swears or uses obscene words," "steals," "lies or cheats," "influences others toward troublemaking," "aggressive toward peers," and "teases or provokes others."

Heckman's work has demonstrated statistically what experts in early-childhood education have long known but have had trouble proving to others: that "the Perry program significantly enhanced adult outcomes, including education, employment, earnings, marriage, health, and participation in healthy behaviors and reduced participation in crime." As other studies have found, the IQ gains from two years of participation at ages three and four were significant at age five, and by age eight had largely faded. But IQ isn't everything.

The improvements in academic motivation led not only to the improved scores on achievement tests throughout the schooling years, but also to a significant reduction in long-term unemployment. Improvements in externalizing behavior brought lower rates of crime and better results in employment, income, and health.

One of the most important findings for public policy in Heckman's work on the Perry Project concerns the financial impact of the program. Government projects often aim to meet a need without a concern for whether the money spent will lead to measurable financial improvements. However, cost-benefit analysis is nearly universal in policy circles, and conservative budget hawks have often employed a standard of fiscal efficiency (will the program "pay for itself"?) to screen out social programs. Thus it's telling that Heckman finds that the Perry Project produced a 6 to 10 percent internal rate of return per year. This measurement simply compared the costs of the program to the monetizable effects in participants' lives concerning earnings, tax payments, and the cost to society of criminal behavior and reliance on welfare programs.

The Heckman estimate on return on investment per year is lower than those found in some other studies (one of which estimated return as high as 16 percent). But two things are noteworthy here. The first is that this return still makes preschool investments highly attractive for the nation; the rate of return to equity in the stock market since World War II has not done as well—only about 7 percent per year. The second is that we know that the real benefits of the Perry Project significantly exceeded what Heckman's estimate reports. He acknowledges this in his observation that without reliable data on better health outcomes, better marital and parental outcomes, and self-reported increases in quality of social life, these quite real benefits of preschool education were ignored in the calculation.

Head Start is the current version of government-supported preschool education. But severe underfunding has left the typical Head Start classroom with more students and less-qualified teachers than did the Perry Project, and there is insufficient program-wide supervision and experimentation. A recent bipartisan budget agreement in Congress increased funding for Head Start programs by 15 percent, largely replacing losses from the sequester, but funding still covers fewer than half the children who are legally eligible for the program.

No academic study will turn around a public-policy debate single-handedly. But Heckman's impeccable credentials mean that conservative politicians and think tanks that espouse the "culture of poverty" analysis can no longer credibly claim that the government only makes the problem worse. ■

Daniel K. Finn *teaches economics and theology at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University. His most recent book is* The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life: An Extension and Critique of *Caritas in Veritate (Oxford, 2012).*

Jane Costlow

Russian Spring

HOLY-WATER ECUMENISM

Vast open fields stretch for miles toward the southern horizon, dark brown, waiting to be sown with wheat or rye. A river winds lazily along, its thickets of willow and oak sheltering nightingales. It's a landscape that might be Minnesota, except for the particular histories that so deeply mark it (and those nightingales, which aren't found in the Americas). This is central Russia, and I'm traveling with a dozen undergraduates from Bates College in Maine. Our destination today is a natural spring that flows from limestone outcrops toward the river below. What makes the visit more than a geology excursion are our guides, who move gingerly down a well-trodden path ahead of us: both in black cassocks, each equipped with a cell phone and a cross. Fathers Oleg and Zbigniew—one Orthodox and the other Roman Catholic, one a Russian seminary graduate nearing forty, the other a Polish transplant in his fifties—will tell us briefly about the history of the spring, before we retire for lunch and longer conversation at a nearby café.

Holy springs are as much a part of this landscape as oaks and willows, or the occasional trenches that are reminders of the great tank battle fought here in 1943. Orel is a sleepy provincial city of just over three hundred thousand, whose natives take great pride in their literary progeny (Ivan Turgenev the "westernizer" and Nikolai Leskov, one of whose novels depicts the life of provincial clergy), but also in their resilience during World War II. The city was occupied by Nazis for nearly two years; when the end of the war is celebrated each May 9 there is no family that does not feel some intimate link to its losses.

The course I'm teaching is loosely organized around the theme of "Environment and Culture": it includes visits to writers' homes, a national park, a monastery. Along the way we talk with agronomists developing cold-resistant apples and an oncologist who has tracked thyroid cancer in the wake of Chernobyl (there are fewer cases than initially anticipated). The spring at Saltyki is part of the complicated, scarred, often beautiful landscape I want the students to experience and maybe even come to understand. Frs. Oleg and Zbigniew are the best possible guides to its history.

In the headlines and beyond, these are fraught days; May 2014 hardly seems an auspicious time for cross-confessional dialogue in southwest Russia. Throughout the month the state-run news media is dominated by allegations of atrocities perpetrated against Russian speakers in Ukraine; a nightly talk show whips viewers into a frenzy of indignation at "fascists" in Kiev. Ukrainian-Russian politics are deeply intertwined with culture, language, and religion: western, primarily Catholic Ukraine leans toward Europe; eastern, Orthodox Ukraine has strong historical ties to Russia. But the friendship between these two men manifests the possibility of quite different relations between Orthodoxy and Catholicism in easternmost Europe.

Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Moscow

The two met in 2000, when Fr. Zbigniew first arrived in Orel. Fr. Oleg took the initiative, and over time they've became close enough friends that they attend each others' services on religious holidays and feast days. Fr. Zbigniew is the sole priest at the Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, Orel's only Roman Catholic parish. He is by training a builder (at one point during our conversation over lunch, he ponders the restaurant's beams and says they're probably plastic), and has been intimately involved in the construction of his congregation's building. Fr. Oleg, on the other hand, serves with four other priests in a parish that nominally has eighty thousand parishioners—although at most five hundred attend services. Both men have come to the priesthood in a period of religious renewal in Russia, after seventy years of Communism. The religious repressions of the Soviet era affected all traditions and denominations; the Orthodox Church, however, particularly in the postwar period, was granted limited ability to train priests and keep churches open. Catholics, a tiny minority historically associated with immigrant groups (Germans brought to Russia in the eighteenth century by Catherine the Great, Polish residents of the Russian Empire, Ukrainians), were allowed only two churches throughout the whole of the U.S.S.R.

There was no Catholic priest in Orel in the Soviet era; but, remarkably enough, Catholics were baptized by Orthodox clergy—and at this very spring, which served as site of clandestine services after a small chapel on the bluff above

EJEVICHKA

had been destroyed. The small grotto from which the water flows is shaded now by a towering willow; small icons are set into rough niches in the limestone, and the willow itself is tied with multicolored scraps of cloth and ribbon—an essentially pagan practice, Fr. Zbigniew suggests, a way of saying "I was here." We stand in the willow's shade, across from a hand-lettered sign that reads "Please Don't Litter," and listen as both priests offer prayers. Fr. Zbigniew explains how we might drink or wash our faces—crossing ourselves or offering prayers in silence. As we're listening to his explanation, a couple finishes collecting drinking water in large containers; they stand politely and then the man tells us that the water is among the purest in the region—he works for the local Environmental Protection service and has seen the data. The couple drive off up the dusty embankment in their Russian four-wheel drive, and we're left in the cool quiet of noonday.

As we settle in at the café for mushroom soup and garlicky eggplant, Frs. Zbigniew and Oleg bless our meal and invite questions. This is not a conversation among students of religion but among undergraduates whose own religious background (if it even exists) is unknown to me. One never knows just what they'll ask. This isn't their first encounter with religious issues on the trip: from our first walking tour of Moscow we've heard about the role of Orthodoxy in post-Soviet life, as a fundamental part of Russian culture and identity, and an increasingly prominent aspect of official rhetoric. We saw the churches of the Kremlin and later visited Optina Pustyn, a monastery south of Moscow that has repeatedly played a key role in Russian intellectual life. And our first exposure to a sacred spring came at the convent of Shamardino, where one of the sisters offered us a ladle of "living water" with a radiant smile. Throughout these excursions I'd been chagrined to realize how little my students know about religion, and how opaque the liturgical traditions can be to them. Four of them managed to stand through much of the Optina service, but at dinner their stories were filled with awkward jokes: "Some people were making bread"; "the guy with the holy smoke came around."

In this conversation, as in an earlier visit in 2006, students' questions for the priests are wide-ranging: Will the unbaptized and non-Christians go to hell? How did they come to be priests? What's the hardest part of their jobs? What is it they most wish for? How were they trained? How many churches are there in Orel? They ask, too, about how they pray, how they communicate with God, what their favorite books are (other than the Bible!), and whether all Orthodox priests have such wonderful voices. Both men respond with generosity and humor, but also with a directness that for some reason surprises me. Responding to one young woman's question about whether it's possible to be both Catholic and Buddhist, Fr. Zbigniew says no, not if you take seriously the difference between a profession of faith in God and a tradition that knows no God. I admire his candor, the way in which he's taking the young woman's question seriously. For all the informality and touristic aspects of our visit, both men have approached this encounter as an occasion for what I can only call religious education.

And education, it turns out, is a key concern for both of them. For Fr. Oleg, there is palpable excitement in welcoming a new generation of believers to the post-Soviet church, but also the challenge of working in what he calls two different cultures. In the late Soviet era, virtually anyone who presented himself could enter the priesthood, and many had no formal religious education. He longs to find time to educate his parishioners about Orthodoxy, particularly since the language of the service is incomprehensible to many Russians—it is "ninth-century Bulgarian"—and they need to be taught what happens during the liturgy and what it means. The demands of liturgy and embedded assumptions make undertaking the work of education difficult, however.

And both men have dreams for their respective churches: Fr. Zbigniew's is to open a home for abandoned children—to begin his own "adopted family." Fr. Oleg dreams of going out one day and discovering that there is no more poverty—no more beggars, no more abandoned children digging through dumpsters. He dreams of a Mother Teresa emerging in Orel. He feels how little he himself can do. It is, he says, a drop in the ocean.

And as I reflect on the broader contexts of our conversation, I think about drops in the ocean of political hostilities and misunderstanding. These two men make tiny but significant steps toward mutual respect and understanding. They attend each other's services; they see each other frequently and, Fr. Zbigniew says, "without obstacles"; they find time to have lunch with a group of American students and their professor. As Fr. Zbigniew puts it, "This is the basis for our ecumenicity. Among our parishioners we have mixed Russian Orthodox–Roman Catholic families. This is the future of the church, it rests on this elementary level—the level of ordinary people, our parishioners. As I said once in a sermon, this is what the unity of our church is founded on, that is in the family, where people live together, pray together, celebrate holidays together."

For a few brief hours, my students and I get a glimpse of that family, so wholly unlike the images being endlessly replayed on official Russian media. Both men operate in the rich terrain of ancient traditions seeking to open dialogue with youth and with a society in the throes of enormous change. They are acutely aware of the historical terrain in which they operate—a terrain of violence, repression, and hostility, but also of intermarriage, communication, and shared concerns. One can only hope and pray that such friendships become the soil of broader understandings—that tiny drops might keep flowing from small springs. ■

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Great Expectations

Pope Francis & the Synod on the Family

John Wilkins

A "reforming pope" was the hope of some of us in the long years from 1978, after Paul VI, when the Catholic Church seemed to shelve Vatican II's progressive prescriptions about governance. Instead of the council's college of pope and bishops on the pattern of the Apostles around Peter, an absolute monarchy reasserted itself in Rome with the papacy of John Paul II. Centralized rule, the historian Eamon Duffy has regretfully observed, is by now a part of the Catholic Church's DNA.

As John Paul II's long reign unfolded, followed by Benedict XVI, none of us actually thought we would see any such reforming pope in our lifetimes. But, we suggested, were he to appear, the place for him to start would be the synod of bishops. He should transform that body from functioning as a rubber stamp on decisions taken in Vatican offices to an active governing structure in its own right. This move, we thought, would surely receive massive support from the worldwide episcopate as its members found themselves restored to being vicars of Christ in their dioceses as well as sharing in the care of all the churches.

Enter Pope Francis and, indeed, he has started with the synod. In a typically shrewd pastoral stroke, he has chosen for its meeting in October a subject that concerns the whole people of God—the family. This synod is not just about bishops meeting in Rome. It is about all of us—at a time when a huge gulf has opened up between the teaching of the church on sex, marriage, and the family and the practice of many Catholics. In the council's slipstream, the *conspiratio* or unified breathing that according to John Henry Newman should characterize the relations between pope, bishops, priests, religious, and lay men and women has been disrupted, to the detriment of the flourishing and evangelizing power of the whole church.

But will the bishops stand up, and if so what will they say? Francis has picked out for special attention the exclusion from Communion of Catholics who have remarried after divorce and whose previous spouse is still living. For thirty-five years, however, such matters have been off limits. Bishops have been chosen who will unwaveringly defend the most restrictive Catholic moral teaching. Far from qualifying candidates for episcopal rank, an openness to discussion and debate has ruled them out.

At the previous synod on the family, held by John Paul II in 1980, the two foremost leaders of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, Cardinal Basil Hume and Archbishop Derek Worlock, did their best. They had just come from a National Pastoral Congress in Liverpool masterminded by Worlock and attended by two thousand delegates. They had been mandated to raise questions in the synod about the ban on contraception and the exclusion of divorced and remarried Catholics from Communion.

Before the synod met, the two visited John Paul II. Cardinal Hume had with him a copy of the congress report, in which he had marked key sections with stickers. Opening it at his chosen place, he gave it to the pope and asked him

CNS PHOTO / PAUL HARING

John Wilkins, *a frequent contributor, is the former editor of the Catholic weekly the* Tablet. *Funding for this article has been provided by a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation.*

to read just the passage about contraception. Yes, yes, said John Paul—and put the booklet aside.

He had long ago made up his mind.

In the synod itself, a handpicked group of lay people extolled the virtues of natural family planning. For his part, Hume told the synod that he had dozed off during the proceedings and had had a dream. The pilgrim church was limping along a road, following weather-beaten signposts on which the paint was fading. He saw that Paul VI's insight in his 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae* against contraception was right, but the paint on the signposts was misleading.

The dream is susceptible of various interpretations, but at the very least Hume meant what his colleague Cardinal Carlo Martini stated in a 1993 interview, that the teaching of the encyclical should be better explained. Later, having retired from his see of Milan and taken up residence in Jerusalem, Martini was explicit. He was convinced, he said, that "the church leadership can show us a better way than *Humanae Vitae* has managed to do." The pope could probably not take the encyclical back, but "he can write a new one."

It fell to Archbishop Worlock to address the synod on the subject of divorced and remarried Catholics. Across the years the honesty, clarity, and courage of his presentation still stand out. The breakdown of a marriage was a tragic misfortune, he said, demanding from the church a "special healing ministry of consolation." Catholics whose first marriage had perished could find themselves in "a second more stable and perhaps more mature union," which might have "many of the desirable qualities of the Christian family." Though acknowledging that their union was irregular in the eyes of the church, many nevertheless did not feel that they were "living in a state of sin" but rather "that they love God and may in some mysterious way be living according to his will, even if against, or outside, the church's legislation." Many of them "long for full eucharistic communion."

Worlock dealt with the accusation that a relaxation of the rule would encourage infidelity. That was not the opinion of most married couples, he pointed out. They saw fidelity as a Christian value in its own right that did not need to be bolstered by sanctions. The synod should listen to them.

Hume and Worlock got nowhere. The synodal machine, directed by the Roman Curia, rolled over them. When John Paul II's reflections on the event appeared in 1981 in the apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, most commentators thought the contents would have been the same if the synod had never met.

As the long and historic papacy of John Paul II unfolded, the church's teaching on sex, marriage, and the family became ever more closely bound up with papal authority. There was speculation that the pope had wished to invoke infallibility with regard to the teaching on sexual ethics. Instead, his right-hand theologian, Joseph Ratzinger, developed a category of "definitive doctrine," which is not infallible yet is irreformable. The Jesuit canon lawyer, Ladislas Orsy, who entered into a published dialogue with Cardinal Ratzinger on the subject, says today: "Not infallible but can't be changed? Figure that out!"

This new doctrinal category is above all a defense of the doctrine in *Humanae Vitae*, though Paul VI made it clear at the time through his spokesman that his encyclical was not infallible. Therefore it can be revised. But that would mean overturning the recently imposed category of definitive teaching.

One could ask by what authority was the existence of "definitive teaching" first asserted? Infallible authority? Definitive authority? Non-definitive authority?

Pope Francis is inviting the bishops to come with him on a different route. It is not his mission, he repeats, to change doctrine. "The teaching of the church is clear, and I am a son of the church," he told Antonio Spadaro, editor of *La Civiltà Cattolica*, in the first of the riveting interviews he was to give. Rather, "the first reform must be the attitude." From his first moments as pope, he set about this transformation, overturning the general expectation that church news would always be bad news and ushering in the longest media honeymoon on record. His guiding principle was that "the proclamation of the saving love of God comes before moral and religious imperatives," whereas "today sometimes it seems that the opposite order prevails."

Here he becomes like an evangelical preacher: "The most important thing is the first proclamation: Jesus Christ has saved you." He wants the church to reflect the mercy that he himself has experienced. At a book presentation in 2001 while cardinal archbishop of Buenos Aires, he made a startling assertion. "Only someone who has encountered mercy, who has been caressed by the tenderness of mercy, is happy and comfortable with the Lord.... I dare to say that the privileged locus of the encounter with the Lord is the caress of the mercy of Jesus Christ on my sin."

It is obvious how this priority of mercy could bear on the forthcoming synod's deliberations. If the church is a "field hospital after battle," in Francis's words, it must bring healing, as Archbishop Worlock urged back in 1980. Francis wants the bishops to speak up for their people. He likes to use the analogy of Abraham and Moses pleading to God for Israel.

Francis's approach is not along the line of abstract theorizing. He is a pastor dealing with the realities of human lives. His preferred image of the church is precisely the one that Vatican II also preferred: that of "the People of God," which virtually disappeared from view after the 1980 synod, since the authorities thought it too democratic.

The pope envisages structural and organizational reform as well, and he has already taken steps to make the synod of bishops more effective. There are to be two linked back-to-back meetings: the first this October ("extraordinary," comprising mainly the presidents of bishops' conferences, Vatican officials, some papal appointees, and nearly forty observers, more than half of whom will be married couples),

and the second in October 2015 ("ordinary," gathering a wider representation of the episcopate).

In an interview with Catholic News Service in Rome, the synod general secretary, Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, has disclosed that the procedures have been reformed. Instead of reading set speeches to each other during the first phase, voting members of the synod will submit papers at least two weeks beforehand. The initial report compiled by Cardinal Péter Erdő, Primate of Hungary, will now be based on those submissions instead of on the preparatory document released earlier this year, the *instrumentum laboris*.

Bishops will then make brief presentations, picking out one theme from their papers, and perhaps taking into account the contributions of others. Meanwhile, Erdő as rapporteur will adjust his initial summary of the issues accordingly. When the bishops subsequently divide up into small language groups for the second phase, they will not as before hammer out propositions for the pope to take up, but will work on amendments to Erdő's survey, which may then become the working document for the 2015 synod.

One of Francis's bombshells in the run-up to the synodal meetings was to launch an unprecedented worldwide survey of Catholic experience of family life today, distributed in October 2013. The questionnaire touched on the whole gamut of sex and marriage, including matters that had previously been regarded as taboo. But its questions were addressed to bishops, asking them to describe the opinions and practices of the people in their dioceses as well as their own catechesis initiatives. ("How successful have you been in proposing a manner of praying within the family which can withstand life's complexities and today's culture?") The means of gathering that information was left up to individual bishops, and they were asked to respond on a tight deadline that left little time to develop a version of the survey addressed directly to laypeople. Some dioceses made the original questionnaire available through parishes or solicited responses online. Those who responded knew that at last they were being given a chance to make their views heard and have them count, and they seized it.

In many countries, the findings were kept under wraps, but the German bishops' conference published a lengthy summary through their press office. It is remarkably exhaustive and frank. According to the press release, the responses showed that most Catholics in Germany accepted marriage as a sacrament that they expected and hoped would be a bond for life. In German society, couples with a family living successfully in a stable relationship continued to be "greatly appreciated." Perhaps unexpectedly, the church's offers of counseling services on marriage, the family, and life situations were highly valued.

But people felt alienated from the church by the rules and laws hedging marriage and sexual morality. The church's statements on premarital sexual relations, on homosexuality, on divorced and remarried people, and on birth control were "virtually never accepted" or were "expressly rejected" even in circles where church teaching was known. Outside the church, Catholic sexual doctrine was seen as being "a morality of prohibition" that was judged to be "incomprehensible and unrealistic." The natural-law basis of Catholic sexual morality, connecting love, sexuality, and procreation, played almost no role within the church or in the larger society, according to the press release.

The church's refusal to recognize the legal and social standing of same-sex unions was seen as discrimination. While Catholics in Germany largely rejected "the opening of marriage as such to same-sex couples," they tended to regard the legal recognition of same-sex civil partnerships, and their equal treatment vis-à-vis marriage, as "a commandment of justice."

Cohabitation before marriage was reported to be "almost universal." Almost all couples who wished to marry in the church had been living together beforehand, often for some years. Many considered it "irresponsible" not to do so.

Committed members of the church who were divorced and remarried often experienced "considerable suffering," in the words of the press statement. They felt that they were "discriminated against and marginalized" by being excluded from the sacraments and certain services and offices. Many decided to leave an institution they regarded as "unforgiving." Few thought that a simplified annulment process would be an answer. Most accepted that their marriages had failed, and thought it would be "dishonest" to pretend otherwise, as though they had never truly been married at all.

The press office's report underlined the adverse effect on divorced and remarried Catholic couples who were excluded from Communion. There was a "widespread impression" that their treatment was discriminatory and "merciless." The exclusion became "particularly painful" when their own children made their First Communion. The children frequently discontinued their practice, since "they have no parental example of a living eucharistic community."

The prohibition of contraception was not observed. The press release acknowledged that the younger generation knew nothing of *Humanae Vitae*, which split the Catholic Church when it was issued in 1968. Only the older generation remembered the battles of that time. The distinction between "natural" and "artificial" methods of birth control was "rejected by the vast majority of Catholics as incomprehensible" and was "not adhered to." A minority of fewer than 3 percent favored natural family planning, frequently for medical reasons. In society, the church's prohibition of condoms as a prophylactic against AIDS was regarded as "blatantly immoral."

Such findings should concentrate the bishops' minds as the synod approaches. Not that the European mindset is universal. According to one international poll, it is reflected in varying degrees in the United States and Latin America, whereas in Africa four out of five Catholics agree with the

A LIFE

Her sixteenth birthday party is tonight.
In the next room, the Lord lets there be light.

She earns a double English-French degree.
In the next room, the Hebrew slaves go free.

She hates her first job, finds a better one.
In the next room, the Son of Man is born.

She marries, gets promoted, buys a house.
In the next room, they nail Him to a cross.

The man departs, she finds a cat instead.
In the next room, He rises from the dead.

"My dreams were coming true—I knew they would.
But nothing has turned out the way it should."

She beats the cancer, builds a second story.
In the next room, He comes again in glory.

—Sarah Ruden

Sarah Ruden's most recent book is Paul Among the People *(Image Books). She has translated four books of classical literature (among them the* Aeneid*) and is the author of* Other Places, *a book of poetry.*

church's refusal of Communion to remarried divorcées. But the German bishops through their press release make it clear that new approaches in the field of sexuality and marriage are "indispensable." The church has to find ways to impart "in an appealing manner" its central message of "an unconditional affirmation of life and body."

Pope Francis's next move was to convoke a special consistory in Rome. Last February some 160 cardinals heard a two-hour address on "The Gospel of the Family" delivered at the pope's invitation by Cardinal Walter Kasper (subsequently published by Paulist Press as a booklet). His analysis and pastoral proposals drew lively reactions for and against, though many of the cardinals kept their counsel.

Kasper dwelt on the realities of modern living. The consumer culture and economic pressures were squeezing the family unit, the basic cell of society. He put at the center the family home considered as a "domestic church." He talked about how the church could help heal wounded families, but he also talked about how the church should treat Catholics whose marriages had failed for one reason or another.

Kasper distinguished between the law, which provides a general rule, and particular cases, each of which is unique. If a woman deserted by her husband remarried outside the church, perhaps for the good of her children, should the church tell her she could never again receive the Eucharist unless she ended her second marriage? Pope Benedict had declared that such persons could receive spiritual communion. But that meant that she was one with Jesus Christ: so why not sacramental communion, Kasper asked? Were they prepared to let human beings starve sacramentally—and for the church to lose their children too—as a sign for others? Was the Eucharist being presented as a reward for good behavior, instead of medicine for sinners on their penitential journey?

In an interview published in *Commonweal* ("Merciful God, Merciful Church," June 14), Kasper said:

> The fathers of the church had a wonderful image: If there is a shipwreck, you don't get a new ship to save you, but you get a plank so that you can survive. That's the mercy of God.... I respect those who have a different position, but on the other hand, they must see what the concrete situation is today. How can we help the people who struggle in these situations? I know such people—often women. They are very engaged in parish life; they do all they can for their children. I know a woman who prepared her daughter for First Communion. The parish priest said the girl can go to Holy Communion, but not mama. I told the pope about this, and he said, "No, that's impossible."

Francis was pleased with Kasper's presentation to the consistory. He confided that he had re-read the text one evening before falling asleep. He had been struck by its "serene theology." A thought had come to him—this was called "doing theology while kneeling." He reiterated: "Thank you, thank you."

His approval was not shared by the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Gerhard Müller, whose opinion, as so often in this papacy, was the exact opposite. "These theories are radically mistaken," the German cardinal declared in a long interview he gave in June, where he revisited and developed arguments he had made last year in an article in *L'Osservatore Romano*. He had witnessed, he said, "with a certain sense of amazement," the arguments of some that God's mercy should allow divorced and remarried people to receive the sacraments, as though God were not also inseparably the source of holiness and justice.

Circles in Rome and elsewhere are expecting a huge fight in the synod. As the church historian Massimo Faggioli pointed out in these pages ("The Italian Job," June 5), Francis has entrenched opponents among the bishops, especially "in his own backyard." Those who feel threatened by his new language and style include "the orphans of Joseph Ratzinger who see the conservative theological pushback

against modernity as the only chance to save the West."

Faggioli compared the challenges facing Francis to the hesitation and opposition that John XXIII encountered in various quarters when he called the Second Vatican Council. Of course, the difference this time, Faggioli pointed out, is that the previous pope is alive and well, wearing white and living in the Vatican. And Benedict's adherents now have social media at their disposal, where they can all post their opinions contrasting the two popes to Francis's disadvantage.

Outside the walls of the Vatican, the whole church is involved in this discussion. Francis has seen to that. Accordingly, Kasper issued a warning to his audience. They should not think, he told them, that everything could be decided by cardinals and bishops. All those who will participate in the consistory will be celibates, after all. But most of the faithful lived out their faith in families. Families often faced difficult situations that celibates must try to understand. Lay people have "something to say to us," Kasper insisted.

They do indeed. The former president of Ireland, Mary McAleese, has been resident in Rome for the past few years, where she has been studying canon law. In a public interview in Dublin, she used language that was remarkably outspoken, coming from such a source. She protested that there was something "profoundly wrong and skewed" in looking to a synod of bishops to rule on Catholic teaching about family life. She pressed home her attack. "The very idea of a hundred and fifty people who have decided they are not going to have any children, not going to have families, not going to be fathers and not going to be spouses—so they have no experience of family life as the rest of us know it—but they are going to advise the pope on family life, it is completely bonkers." She had replied to the worldwide survey of Catholic opinion with a question of her own for Francis: "How many of the men who will gather to advise you as pope on the family have ever changed a baby's nappy?"

She thought the chances of change were "very poor." Where were the women in the Vatican who would "end the old boys' club"?

It is no answer to protest that the Catholic Church is not a democracy and thus is above public opinion of this sort. It contains deep-rooted traditional democratic elements and it is not a dictatorship either. It is a communion. Therefore it has to take account of the views of Mary McAleese and others, which are part of the *sensus fidelium*, the instinctive sensitivity in matters of faith exercised by the whole body of believers. Though the church has always insisted that its teaching is made from above, not from below, yet it has always also acknowledged that the broad *sensus fidelium*, with the more specific doctrine of reception—closely associated with it—plays an indispensible part [see Molly Farneth, page 18].

For five years the International Theological Commission (ITC) has been studying the place of the *sensus fidelium* in the life of the church, and in June it released its report, signed by the CDF prefect, Cardinal Müller. It must be right to see the influence of Pope Francis between the lines of the final text.

The commission highlights the work of Vatican II in "banishing the caricature of an active hierarchy and a passive laity, and in particular the notion of a strict separation between the teaching church and the learning church." For the council, all the baptized participate in their own proper way in the three offices of Christ as prophet, priest, and king.

Both Kasper in his address to the consistory and the ITC refer to John Henry Newman's essay "On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine." Even today, Newman's bold analysis and brilliant exposition have not lost their capacity to shock. Focusing on the fourth-century Arian heresy, probably the most dangerous the church ever faced, Newman asserts that during this period the divine tradition committed to the infallible church was proclaimed and maintained far more by the faithful than by the episcopate; that the body of the episcopate was unfaithful to its commission, while the body of the laity was faithful to its baptism; and that it was the Christian people who supported great solitary confessors such as Athanasius, who would have failed without them.

Newman's controversial essay, which put him under a cloud in Rome ("the most dangerous man in England," said Msgr. George Talbot), is given full credit in the ITC study. Newman demonstrated, the commission says, that the faithful, as distinct from their pastors, have their own active role to play in conserving and transmitting the faith. For Newman, the commission notes, there is something in the shared life (*conspiratio*) of pastors and faithful "which is not in the pastors alone." And the commission draws attention also to the often neglected role of the laity in developing "the moral teaching of the church."

What if the faithful experience "difficulty" in receiving the teaching of the authorities and show "resistance" to it? Then there is an impasse. It can only be broken if both sides realize they have to think again. The authorities need to "reflect on the teaching that has been given and consider whether it needs clarification or reformulation in order to communicate more effectively the essential message."

The commission is concerned to lay out principles, not to apply them to specific issues such as the bishops will consider in the synod, but many readers of the text will do precisely that—and not only in the context of divorce and remarriage.

Kasper, for his part, was inspired by Newman's essay to his most eloquent reflections, with which he closed his address to the cardinals. He reminded them that there were "great expectations" in the church—and also, he might have added, in the world. If the church did not take steps but stayed where it was, it would cause "terrible disappointment." As "witnesses of hope," they must not be led by fear of change. Let them show "courage" and "above all biblical candor." He warned: "If we don't want that, then we should not hold a synod on this topic, because then the situation would be worse afterwards than before." ■

At Rome's Mercy?

How to Make the Hierarchy More Accountable

Molly Farneth

Peace in society cannot be understood as pacification or the mere absence of violence resulting from domination of one part of society over others. Nor does true peace act as a pretext for justifying a social structure which silences or appeases the poor, so that the more affluent can placidly support their lifestyle while others have to make do as they can.

—Pope Francis
Evangelii Gaudium

Anyone who has followed the headlines over the past year and a half knows how often Pope Francis has made news—exciting broad sympathies while raising hopes for new emphases and directions for the church and for the shaping of faith. Issued last fall, the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* ("The Joy of the Gospel") deploys Francis's typically straightforward language in addressing topics that range from "The new evangelization for the transmission of the faith" to "Some challenges of today's world." It is here, especially in the exhortation's call to establish just economic and political structures, that the pope has crafted what Italian theologian Massimo Faggioli calls "the manifesto of Francis"—a manifesto, Faggioli writes, whose "message on poverty sets Francis on a collision course with neoliberal Catholic thought, especially in the United States."

The pope's remarks on the economy in *Evangelii Gaudium* are part of the long tradition of Catholic social thought—including papal pronouncements on the church's solidarity with the poor. Francis's talk of "domination," however, and his view of it as an impediment to virtuous fellowship in society, goes much further, and represents a broad concern with unjust relations of many forms, not merely economic ones. To make sense of Francis's criticism of domination, we need to ask: What, exactly, is domination? Where do we find it, and what can be done to remedy it? These questions are especially pertinent in light of the forthcoming Synod on the Family to be held at the Vatican next month. Many of the initial steps taken by Francis as pope suggest that he understands that the problem of domination exists both inside the church and in the larger society.

More than a millennium-and-a-half ago, Augustine, drawing on classical Roman thought even as he criticized it, insisted that the *libido dominandi*—the lust for domination and the desire to bend the world's inhabitants to one's own will—is a feature of humanity's fallen nature, and depicted it as the Roman Empire's crucial vice. In society, as Augustine understood, the lust for domination must be restrained; freedom from domination depends on institutions that constrain the power that individuals and groups exercise over others.

To be dominated is to be at the mercy of arbitrary power. The paradigm case is the master-slave relationship. When the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, Pharaoh "made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor" (Ex 1:14). He ordered the midwives to kill the Israelites' sons; his taskmasters beat the slaves, subjecting them to cruel and arbitrary treatment so that they

Bishop speaks with lay women at the Second Vatican Council

CNS PHOTO / GIANCARLO GIULIANI, CATHOLIC PRESS PHOTO

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groaned and cried out to God (Ex 2:23). Scripture presents slavery in Egypt as a great evil and the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, their freedom from bondage, as a great good.

The evil of slavery lies not only in the cruel treatment to which the slave is subjected, but also in the persistent insecurity of living at the mercy of another. The master can coerce and manipulate the slave at will. There are no checks on his power; he can act according to whim. In a passage of intense interest to liberation theologians, Hegel, in his 1807 treatise on *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, characterized this relationship as one of drastic asymmetry in the distribution of authority and accountability. The master claims authority over the slave, but no accountability for his treatment of him. The slave, meanwhile, is accountable to the master, but has no independent authority, either in his own eyes or in the master's. This asymmetry characterizes domination, and does so whether or not it results in cruelty and abuse. The evil lies in the very structure of the relationship.

When Francis uses the word "domination" to describe those suffering under current economic conditions, he draws on this long tradition of thought about the evil of domination—a tradition in which the church's social teachings concerning the need for solidarity play a prominent part. But Francis recognizes that domination is not only a matter of slavery, empire, colonialism, and tyranny. Indeed, many of the central issues of modern ethics and politics, both inside and outside the church, address the meaning of domination and what should be done to secure people against it. Conflicts over the rights of workers, the treatment of prisoners, and the status of women in family, workplace, and church, for example, often hinge on whether people in these groups are being subjected to arbitrary treatment by others.

One question raised in such debates is whether hierarchical relationships and organizations are, in themselves, inevitably a source of domination. Does hierarchy necessitate domination? In my view, no. Yet it can be difficult to disentangle the two, and given the critique of domination coming from the highest office of the church, there is more to be said about the conditions under which hierarchy is compatible—or incompatible—with the ideal of non-domination.

In a 1996 essay in *Commonweal*, titled "A Modest Proposal: A Place for Women in the Hierarchy," the Catholic anthropologist Mary Douglas addressed the position of women in the church. Notably, Douglas did not argue for women's ordination or for the flattening of the church hierarchy. Instead, she proposed the inclusion of women in new decision-making structures, including a high-level Women's Commission on Doctrine that would have veto power over certain aspects of church teaching, effectively balancing the authority of pope, bishops, and priests, who of course are all men.

In that essay and throughout her work, Douglas evinced enthusiasm for role-differentiation and hierarchy. Hierarchically ordered social groups, as she described them, typically have strong external boundaries (a clear distinction between members and non-members) and sharp internal distinctions (for example, among priests, nuns, and lay people). When such a group's roles are clearly differentiated, and its decision-making authority divided and distributed in clear and appropriate ways, its members know both what is expected of them and what they should expect of others. The result, Douglas observed, is a welcome sense of meaning and belonging. The individual knows how she contributes to the whole. These observations informed Douglas's positive view of the Catholic Church and led her to criticize the student protest movements of the 1960s, which had nearly the opposite structure—fuzzy external boundaries and a flat internal structure. Those movements' embrace of leaderless egalitarianism made it difficult for anyone to make demands on behalf of the group, or for anyone to be held accountable. Douglas advised protesters to "get organized."

Hierarchically ordered groups are inherently non-egalitarian in that they distinguish between leaders and ordinary members, and accordingly distribute authority differentially. But this is not the same as domination. In an interview in these pages ("Anthropology with a Difference," August 17, 2001), Douglas explained that she supported "benign hierarchies," those in which leaders are answerable to the ordinary members of the group. It needs pointing out that the phrase "benign hierarchy" means much more than having virtuous people in positions of power; the real issue is whether a hierarchy possesses structures and practices of accountability sufficient to protect everyone from arbitrarily exercised power. Who gets to influence whom before decisions are made? Who gets to challenge those decisions once they are made? A non-dominating hierarchy must possess not only what Douglas called "movements of communication up and down," but also, I would add, patterns of accountability.

This is a challenge for hierarchies. In her 1994 book *Risk and Blame*, Douglas observed that "sending commands down is easier than receiving news from below, as a truly collegial hierarchy would require," and that this is why "the subversion of the hierarchy into tyranny is easy." Her proposal for a Women's Commission on Doctrine grew from these anthropological observations. It answered a question she had entertained a few years earlier, when she wondered about the "discrepancy in [Rome's] assurances of high respect toward women in the church on one hand and the lack of formal provision for their views to be heard and heeded." She went on to ask: "Where is the place of women in the magisterium?" The Women's Commission proposal was her attempt to describe concretely the sort of institutional structure that the church would need if it were serious about recognizing the authority of women.

Reading Douglas's proposal in light of Francis's recent pronouncements reminds us that the key issue pertains to domination—and again, that it is a structural matter, not merely a signal of the need for benevolent leadership. Though

the pope's concern with domination is more theological than anthropological, his social teaching and Douglas's anthropological account of social groups complement one another. "The pope loves everyone, rich and poor alike," Francis wrote, "but he is obliged in the name of Christ to remind all that the rich must help, respect, and promote the poor." His recommendation of solidarity with the poor is not only a call for benevolence, but also for accountability and transformation in economic structures and practices. And his attention to domination extends beyond the economic sphere. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Francis also criticized gender-based domination:

> The configuration of the priest to Christ the head—namely, as the principal source of grace—does not imply an exaltation which would set him above others. In the church, functions "do not favor the superiority of some vis-à-vis the others." Indeed, a woman, Mary, is more important than the bishops. Even when the function of ministerial priesthood is considered "hierarchical," it must be remembered that "it is totally ordered to the holiness of Christ's members." Its key and axis is not power understood as domination, but the power to administer the sacrament of the Eucharist; this is the origin of its authority, which is always a service to God's people. This presents a great challenge for pastors and theologians, who are in a position to recognize more fully what this entails with regard to the possible role of women in decision-making in different areas of the church's life.

If its members are to achieve virtuous fellowship, Francis suggests, the church cannot be organized in a way that places women at the mercy of arbitrary power. What this will mean for the organization of the church in the future remains an open question.

Francis appears to be a benevolent leader in a hierarchical organization. He has committed himself to realizing more fully the ideal of non-domination in society and in the church. If accomplishing this is a matter of structures and practices of accountability, rather than benevolence alone, what role might the pope play?

In her book *Emergency Politics*, the political theorist Bonnie Honig tells the story of Louis Post, who was assistant secretary of labor in 1919 when a series of bombings took place across the country. In what came to be known as the Red Scare, thousands of aliens were rounded up and detained as Communists, anarchists, and terrorists. Post had broad authority to decide whether or not to deport these detainees. With virtually no laws to bind him, and no formal accountability to those whom his decisions would affect, he stood in a position of domination. In this Wild West situation, however, Post chose to "bind himself by law," developing non-arbitrary decision-making procedures that he articulated and defended in public forums. Post reviewed each deportation case personally, applying high standards of evidence and due process. According to Honig, he "used all his powers of reasoning and all of the law's resources to find in favor of aliens marked for deportation whenever possible."

This perspicacity resulted in the release of several thousand detainees, and when Post was called before the House Committee on Rules to explain his decisions, he articulated a compelling rationale, calling on the ideal of freedom as non-domination. In the end, both Congress and the public found his arguments persuasive. In the terms of our discussion, we can say that Post transformed his office in line with the principles of accountable hierarchy. He maintained the authority to make decisions about the detainees, but he established procedures by which others could both influence his decisions and hold him accountable for them.

What are the implications of such an idea for the Catholic Church? First, those in positions of hierarchical authority must forge bonds of solidarity with the dominated—a solidarity that begins with listening to their experiences and working together to dismantle relationships of domination. Second, they must be answerable to the demands for justice from those below them in the hierarchical structure as well as those outside the structure altogether. Social ethicist C. Melissa Snarr calls this "preferential accountability." Catholics reflecting on these matters turn naturally to the example of Pope John XXIII. When John XXIII confessed the church's sin of anti-Semitism and sought reconciliation with the Jewish people, he practiced preferential accountability for those who have suffered under the domination of the church—in this case, to persons outside the church, to non-members. When he convened the Second Vatican Council, he sought (and achieved) a great transformation of church structures in the direction of greater transparency and accountability within the church.

What would preferential accountability look like today from the vantage of the highest office of the church? It would look like the conduct of Louis Post and Pope John XXIII. Like them, Pope Francis is in a position to make the structures of governance more responsive to those with little power. By combining love with prudence and justice, he can help change church structures, securing the less powerful from perpetual dependence on the benevolence of the more powerful. Francis has already shown himself open to bureaucratic changes that increase transparency and accountability in the operations of the Vatican and other church structures. He has suggested, for example, that the Italian bishops conference president be elected by the bishops rather than being appointed by the pope himself. A more radical reform would require the pope to seek the advice and consent of other bodies—perhaps from consecrated religious women—before appointing bishops, cardinals, or members of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Would it be surprising if Francis went that far? Perhaps. Yet he has already demonstrated interest in working toward non-domination in the hierarchy.

How creative and far-reaching will Francis's reforms be? He has opened a door and has begun to walk through it. Will his calls for a "culture of encounter" be actualized in a system of hierarchical accountability? ■

Richard Alleva

Ecce Sligo

'CALVARY'

Calvary belongs in that select company of films (*Diary of a Country Priest, I Confess, Under the Sun of Satan*, and a very few others) that deal powerfully with the plight of a priest who finds himself at odds with his community. Its achievement is all the more impressive when you consider how hobbled the movie is by its own gimmickry.

Fr. James (Brendan Gleeson) is the pastor of a village parish in County Sligo, Ireland. One day a shadowy figure enters the confessional and tells Fr. James that he has one week to wind up his affairs and make his peace with the Lord. The man says that a pedophile priest ruined his life by raping him for years, starting when he was seven, and he has decided that only the murder of a good priest will deliver the obscene shock to the church that it deserves. That good priest is Fr. James. Having designated the nearby beach as the place of execution, the man asks, "Have you got something to say to me?" The priest answers, "Not now, but I'll think of something by next Sunday."

That response and the steady tone in which it's uttered encapsulate Fr. James's character—his self-possession, faith, and grim humor. Given these qualities, it's not too surprising that he spends the next week not flailing in fear but simply listening to what his fellow villagers have to say, giving what advice he can, tending to his sick dog, and saying what could prove to be farewell to his daughter. (He's a widower who became a priest in middle age.) He knows he could go to the police, since death threats aren't covered by the seal of confession, but James has other plans: he'll try to work out the vengeance seeker's salvation by the time of the mortal appointment.

Now some might consider this premise gimmicky enough, but I think the seven-day time limit brings shape and suspense to the drama, while the priest's resolve certifies his heroic character. But, alas, writer-director John Michael McDonagh adds one extra twist: James makes it clear to his bishop that he knows exactly who has threatened him, though we don't find out who it is till the film's climax. This is an artistic mistake for two reasons. First, it's the device of a detective story, which *Calvary* isn't, not the device of a theological suspense narrative, which *Calvary* certainly is. It's as if a Graham Greene or François Mauriac novel got rewritten by Agatha Christie.

Second, in the scenes of Fr. James dealing with his flock, Gleeson has been directed not to show any unusual degree of emotion when he comes into contact with the one who threatened him, because that would give the game away to the viewer. But the drama would have been heightened, not deflated, if the priest and his menacer had silently acknowledged their sinister secret as each went about his daily business in full view of fellow villagers. The banalities of daily life would then be conducted under a sword of Damocles that only the priest and the vengeance seeker could see. Nor would this have eliminated the suspense since, as in Hitchcock's *I Confess*, we would be constantly wondering how this silent duel of devotion vs. evil would conclude. Would the would-be killer change his mind?

Despite this weakness in its plot, *Calvary* grips, and grips fiercely. As its title announces, the priest's journey through what might be his last week is a climb up Golgotha, and each contact with a villager is a kind of station of the cross. What infuses these modern encounters with painful power is the priest's bewilderment in the face of people who are sinning not for pleasure but to torment

FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

Brendan Gleeson in 'Calvary'

themselves. Fr. James may be struggling with his fear of death, but his bigger temptation is despair at not being able to save a single soul. Perhaps that's another reason why he seems to have so much sympathy for his would-be killer. Anyone who's desperate enough to plan a murder may be a better candidate for salvation than those merely playing with sin, which seems to be the major hobby of most of the villagers.

I once attended a party where a young woman, miserably drunk, kept laughing so loudly and joylessly that every laugh seemed a cry of pain. When our host finally stared at her in compassionate bemusement, her laughter grew even more hysterical, as if she were daring him to remonstrate. That's pretty much the relationship between Fr. James and the villagers. (It was never clear to me which villagers he could call parishioners since we never see how many of them attend Mass.) Nearly all of them—a promiscuous wife, her nervously flippant husband and sullen immigrant lover, a policeman paying for sex from a disturbed male prostitute, a rich man haunted by the financial ruin his wheeling-dealing has wrought, an atheistic doctor with no compassion for his patients, even a serial killer the priest visits in prison—are possessed by a hilarity devoid of joy and fueled by a false sense of liberation. With the crippling of the church's authority in a country where Catholic teachings were once (virtually) law, a clear moral criterion has been lost, resulting in spiritual vertigo. The quips, sarcasms, and tipsy blather directed at the priest seem just so many desperate efforts to provoke his censure, but why would anybody want to hear such censure? Nostalgia for the good old days when moral decisions were more important than lifestyle choices and a priest had the authority to tell you with certitude when you made the wrong one? In any event, it is Fr. James's confrontations with people boasting about the very conduct that makes them miserable that gives *Calvary* its haunting power, not the guessing game of who is gunning for the priest.

Unlike McDonagh's previous feature, *The Guard*, in which the good guys—Gleeson as an Irish cop and Don Cheadle as an American detective—had the majority of the wisecracks, *Calvary*'s hero gets lines so humdrum they verge on, and sometimes fall into, cliché. To the serial killer's query as to whether God understands him, Fr. James merely answers, "If God doesn't, nobody can." When the rich swindler declares himself a lost cause, the priest replies, "No one's a lost cause." It's as if, in the face of self-loathing, a spokesman for God can respond only with self-effacing plainness, rather like my host's taciturnity in the face of the young woman's battering laughter. Still, plainness has its limits, as does patience, and Fr. James's store of both qualities is getting low in the face of death. He almost hops a plane, but at the airport he runs into a French woman he had comforted a few days before after her husband died in a car accident. Their brief conversation—in view of baggage handlers smoking and chatting while they lean indifferently against her husband's coffin—pulls the priest back to his destiny.

Like Carl Dreyer's magnificent *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928), another cinematic climb up Golgotha, *Calvary* is a film of close-ups. Faces compose the real landscape here, and the camera examines them like a detective adducing clues. Does that smirk contain a glimmer of self-doubt? Does that frown include or preclude compassion? But unlike Dreyer, who shot indoors against minimalist backdrops, McDonagh has his talented cinematographer, Larry Smith, occasionally train his camera on the rocky Streedagh beach or on Ben Bulben, using nature as a breathtaking background against which the intrigues of village life can seem trivial. Still, no cliffside can hope to be as craggy as Brendan Gleeson's face, nor can any ocean rage as tempestuously as the emotions churning within his character. He's the right actor for a movie in which the past roils the present, and Yeats's "rough beast" slouches closer and closer. ■

James J. Sheehan

The Problem with Hindsight

The Pope and Mussolini
The Secret History of Pius XI and the Rise of Fascism in Europe
David I. Kertzer
Random House, $32, 549 pp.

When Jesus told the Pharisees that they should "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's," he seemed to sever the connection between political and religious authority that was a fundamental part of the ancient world. Thus began the complex history of church-state relations that the great nineteenth-century German historian Leopold von Ranke rightly called "the most deeply significant characteristic of the Christian era." The relationship between church and state was both complex and significant because, while religion and politics were no longer fused, they were never truly separate. Jesus' words left unresolved the key question of how to decide what belongs to God and what to Caesar. This question, posed again and again through the centuries, continues to perplex the pilgrim church as it moves through the world toward eternity.

Nowhere was the question of church and state more complex and conflict-ridden than in Italy, the institutional heartland of Western Christianity. For centuries, the pope was simultaneously the spiritual leader of the universal church and the secular ruler of a scattered collection of states that were governed, usually neither wisely nor well, by the papal court. After 1860, these papal territories were absorbed into a unified Italian nation state, whose army finally occupied Rome in 1870. Pope Pius IX responded by declaring himself a prisoner in the Vatican, excommunicating the king and his ministers, and commanding all Catholics to boycott Italian public life. From 1870 until 1929, no reigning pontiff would venture outside the confined precincts of the Vatican. Even the traditional papal blessing, once given to the city and the world from the balcony over the entrance to St. Peter's, now took place inside the basilica. The pope's act of self-imposed isolation had deeply unfortunate consequences both for the papacy, in which it encouraged decades of cultural agoraphobia, and for the new Italian state, whose legitimacy it significantly undermined.

Pope Benedict XV (1914–22) made some tentative efforts to renegotiate the papacy's relationship with the state, but these were swiftly overwhelmed by the turmoil of the war and its aftermath. Benedict's successor, who took the name Pius XI, signaled that he was ready to renew these efforts by blessing the crowd of faithful who had come to celebrate his election from St. Peter's balcony. The pope found a new and somewhat surprising partner when Benito Mussolini became prime minister in October 1922. Once a radical opponent of both capitalism and the church, by the time he took power Mussolini had begun to transform himself—and the fascist movement—into a defender of property, public order, and established religion. The papacy and the fascist regime needed seven years to negotiate the two agreements that were finally signed in February 1929: a political treaty that recognized the pope's sovereignty over Vatican City and a concordat that regulated the church's position in the Italian state. Both sides benefited from these agreements. His sovereignty restricted but secure, the pope was able to end his increasingly awkward isolation; Catholic institutions were guaranteed a privileged place in Italian political and social life. In return, Mussolini's regime acquired the church's moral and institutional support,

Pope Pius XI

frequently expressed in widely publicized official visits and liturgical celebrations of il Duce's accomplishments.

Although both sides recognized the advantages of cooperation, relations between church and state remained uneasy. Mussolini continued to feel pressure from the anticlerical elements within his own inner circle, including his formidable wife, Rachele, who never abandoned her deep disdain for the church. Pius XI, while applauding many aspects of fascism, was dismayed by Mussolini's war in Ethiopia, his increasingly racial anti-Semitism, and, most of all, his expanding cooperation with Nazi Germany. The pope's disenchantment with Mussolini grew in the final months of his life, leading him to instruct the American Jesuit John LaFarge to draft an encyclical denouncing racism in all its forms—this was the so-called hidden encyclical that was suppressed after Pius XI's death in 1939 by his successor, Pius XII.

In *The Pope and Mussolini*, David Kertzer traces the church's relationship to Italian fascism through a series of vivid biographical sketches. At the center of the story stands Achille Ratti, who had spent most of his career as a librarian, first in Milan and then in Rome; after serving briefly as a papal envoy to Poland in 1919 and, for a few months, as archbishop of Milan, he was elected pope on the fourteenth ballot in 1922. With strong opinions and an increasingly authoritarian manner, the pope shared the fascists' opposition to communism even as he continued to distrust their sincerity and press for greater influence over Italian society. Mussolini, Kertzer's other protagonist, was equally suspicious of, and impatient with, his erstwhile partner. Il Duce continually complained about the pope's ingratitude, ignored his calls for closer regulation of Italian morals, and increasingly devoted his attention to the foreign political adventures that would eventually lead to ruin. Around Pius and Mussolini were gathered a collection of minor players, including Italy's first ambassador to the Vatican, Cesare de Vecchi, described by Kertzer as "arrogant, petty, and thick-headed," and Pietro Tacchi Venturi, the Italian Jesuit who served as the pope's secret emissary to the regime and remained one of Mussolini's principal defenders. Among the supporting cast, one shadowy figure was of particular importance: Eugenio Pacelli, who was appointed Vatican secretary of state in 1930 and then elected pope nine years later. Pacelli, in Kertzer's account, appears in his familiar guise as conciliator-in-chief, eager to prevent, at virtually any price, the rupture with Mussolini that Pius XI seemed ready to make.

Kertzer's emphasis on personalities allows him to fill his pages with lively, sometimes fascinating, but frequently irrelevant details about Mussolini's energetic love life, a cardinal's alleged homosexual proclivities, and the pope's irascible disposition. I don't think all this adds up to the "secret history" promised in the subtitle. In fact, there was never anything secret about the Vatican's willingness to support Mussolini. Moreover, the relationship between the church and fascism has been explored in the recent work of scholars such as Frank J. Coppa, who has analyzed the 1929 agreements; Hubert Wolf, whose *Pope and Devil* provides the best analysis of Pius XII; and Emma Fantorini, whose book on Pius XI, Hitler, and Mussolini covers much of the same ground as Kertzer's. While all of these authors are critical of the Vatican, they show a rather greater sympathy for the difficulties facing the church as it struggled to come to terms with a new set of dangerous enemies and treacherous allies.

In *The Pope and Mussolini,* as in his *The Popes Against the Jews*, Kertzer places a great deal of emphasis on the role of anti-Semitism in shaping Vatican policies. Once again, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, the Jesuit newspaper published with papal approval, provides the primary source for his argument, although he also cites examples of deeply rooted hostility to Jews among such important figures as Włodzimierz Ledóchowski, the Polish aristocrat who served as superior general of the Jesuits from 1915 until his death in 1942.

There is no way to view these hate-filled diatribes against Jews as anything but shameful. When they are made part of the prehistory of the Holocaust, which is how Kertzer treats them, their sinister significance is necessarily magnified. It is not certain, however, that the Jewish question was as important to most of the leading men in the Vatican as Kertzer suggests; most of them, including the pope, regarded Jews, together with Communists, Masons, and a variety of other groups, as merely one—and not necessarily the most important—element in a broad and diverse coalition of hostile forces. To raise questions about the salience of Vatican anti-Semitism is not to apologize for the church's many sins of omission and commission. Although only a handful of leading churchmen espoused the most toxic brand of racial anti-Semitism, many others shared a traditional animosity to Judaism; too few protested attacks on Jews as vigorously and consistently as they should have.

The Pope and Mussolini deals with one of the darkest chapters in the long, frequently unhappy history of the church's efforts to determine what belongs to God and what to Caesar. Rarely has God seemed so far away from the world as in the first half of the twentieth century, and rarely have there been so many malevolent and energetic Caesars. Particularly when seen through hindsight's lucid lens, the church's response to these challenges often appears tentative and self-serving, too ready to overlook the brutality of its would-be allies and insufficiently alert to the suffering of innocents. But it is always important for historians to remember that we know both more and less than the people we study: we know more because we can see, as they could not, what is going to happen; we know less because we can never fully appreciate what it was like for them to act without this knowledge. ■

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Paul Moses

Sunday Obligation

The Eclipse of Equality

Arguing America on Meet the Press

Solon Simmons

Stanford University Press, $29.95, 320 pp.

With a history of nearly seventy years, *Meet the Press* has charted the inside-the-beltway conversation since well before the Capital Beltway was built. Solon Simmons, a professor of conflict analysis and resolution at George Mason University, has sifted through the program's archive to show how sharply Washington's conversation over economic equality has changed over the course of seven decades.

Simmons argues there has been an "eclipse of equality," with such matters as labor, collective bargaining, and class struggle—hot issues in the show's earlier decades—disappearing from mainstream political discussion. Equality has always loomed large in the American discussion, of course. Yet as Simmons notes, over the past thirty years conservatives have largely succeeded in framing questions about equality in libertarian terms. Meanwhile, liberals have increasingly looked at it through the lens of multiculturalism rather than as a question of social justice. These political developments, Simmons contends, have contributed to unfair economic policies that work against most Americans.

The strength of the book is the author's use of quotations from the more than thirty-five hundred episodes of *Meet the Press*, beginning with a radio broadcast in 1945 and televised by NBC starting in 1947. Especially interesting are the now obscure political figures who were once on the cutting edge of the national conversation.

Harold Knutson is one such example. Nearing the end of his three-decade service as a Republican congressman from Minnesota, he was interviewed in 1947 about GOP efforts to reduce the income tax. "Back in the '20s, we had four tax reductions, and each one resulted in increased revenues," he says.

U.S. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Eleanor Roosevelt on 'Meet the Press' in New York City, September 1956

Simmons sees in this a harbinger of Ronald Reagan's ascendancy. The New Deal seemed unassailable at the time, but one senses the tide already shifting *Meet the Press* shows from the late '40s. That shift is implicit in the hostility a panel of journalists showed to a member of President Harry Truman's newly created Council of Economic Advisors, Leon Keyserling. Moderator Larry Spivak opened by telling Keyserling, who appeared on the show five times, that a Republican congressman had called him "the most powerful and dangerous man in America today." A *Los Angeles Times* reporter asked if the new council was going to "tell Americans how to spend their money and make America over." And, with her voice rising, May Craig of Maine's *Portland Press Herald* warned, "If you forge the weapon of centralization, the dictator inevitably comes and grabs it; that's what happens everyplace else. It could happen here." Simmons contends that Craig's questions were a good barometer of where Middle America stood.

In its early years, *Meet the Press* was also filled with discussion about the confrontation between labor and management. Union leaders such as Walter Reuther and Mike Quill alternated appearances with frequent guests like Eric Johnston, the chairman of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and Sen. Robert Taft, a conservative Republican from Ohio. Ultimately, Simmons observes, anti-union forces triumphed in the show's debates as well as politically by using a narrative that portrayed organized labor as a force to be feared. Reporters, for example, often posed questions about labor in ominous tones, expressing concern over Communist infiltration and, later, organized crime, especially in the Teamsters Union. (Simmons acknowledges the role of political radicals in some unions but soft-pedals the mob influence.) In 1957, Sen. John McClellan, an Arkansas Democrat who headed a high-profile probe of the Teamsters, appeared on the show. In response to an assertion by May Craig that the union shop is "the root part of the evil" in unions, McClellan advocated state right-to-work laws. Thus Simmons sees a link between the labor-racketeering investigations of the 1950s and the success of today's "right to work" movement and the corresponding decline in union membership. Simmons himself sees the right to unionize as a matter of civil rights. In the '50s, he notes, collective bargaining was at least a subject of conversation, even if labor leaders were put on the defensive. From late 2003 to early 2011, there was just one reference to collective bargaining on *Meet the Press*—concerning a baseball strike. When unions were discussed at all it was usually with a negative view of their political influence.

As Simmons sees it, the *Meet the Press* archive reflects the story of how influential business figures, uncomfortable with the New Deal, sought after World War II to advance unrestricted private enterprise, taking advantage of Middle America's disquiet over government power. Anxiety over Washington's efforts to enforce the civil rights of minorities provided "Old Dealers" a wedge to oppose social programs generally, all in the name of smaller, less intrusive government. Republicans portrayed themselves as the party of freedom, and Democrats, the party of tolerance. For Democrats, this meant much less concern for class-based struggles between workers and business owners. "We're doing well with the race problem," Andrew Young said in a 1996 *Meet the Press* appearance. "We're not doing well at all with the class problem."

Democratic politicians, plied with campaign donations from many of the same interest groups as Republicans, were increasingly reluctant to portray the rich as the bad guys. Fast forward to 2012, when another African-American Democrat, Newark Mayor Cory Booker, criticized Obama campaign ads that attacked Mitt Romney for his role in the Bain Capital private equity firm. "It's nauseating to the American public," Booker said on a May 2012 show. To Simmons, that captures the change in Democratic rhetoric: Franklin Roosevelt would have approved of the Obama ad, he writes. Still, Simmons expresses his hope that the national conversation may turn back to issues of economic fairness, and that outrage over inequality will emerge more strongly, as it did in the Occupy movement.

Quoting *Meet the Press* broadcasts in a careful, evenhanded way, Simmons demonstrates that the show is indeed a wonderful historical archive, "a gold mine for the student of symbolic politics." It is history in the heat of the moment, and thanks to the camera we can observe not only the words but the gestures, smiles, and frowns of the actors. Simmons's approach has its obvious limits, though. However pointed reporters' questions may be, they can't replace behind-the-scenes investigation. We may know a politician's words, but not his campaign donors. If Al Gore's class-based critique failed to gain traction in the 2000 presidential campaign, as Simmons suggests, perhaps it is because his words seemed like empty political rhetoric, given that Democrats had rather cozy relations with big business in the 1990s. Needless to say, a truly comprehensive study of the "eclipse of equality" in American society would require sources beyond *Meet the Press* tapes.

Nor is the book a work of media criticism. Simmons provides insights into the assumptions behind the reporters' questions and their attitudes toward historical figures such as the red-baiting Sen. Joseph McCarthy, but he doesn't flesh that out into a full-scale critique of inside-the-beltway media.

Yet this is a valuable book. In an engaging and innovative way, Simmons shows how the current debate over economic inequality has developed. The passion and energy in his writing make *The Eclipse of Equality* interesting throughout. It is a provocative challenge to those on both sides of our political divide. ■

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Agnes R. Howard

Household Chores

All Joy and No Fun

The Paradox of Modern Parenthood

Jennifer Senior

HarperCollins, $26.99, 308 pp.

Jennifer Senior's *All Joy and No Fun* is much more serious than its playful cover—with the title spelled out in alphabet magnets—implies. Senior, a contributing editor at *New York* magazine, profiles parents and surveys family-related trends in sociology, psychology, and economics to contend that raising comfortable, happy children pummels the adults who do it. Her focus is middle-class Americans, by definition families with many things going well: parents have jobs, poverty is remote, kids go to college. But within these parameters, conditions for parents can be rough. Studies from as early as the 1950s find that parents are "considerably *less* happy" than nonparents. Why, then, do people have children at all, now that having them is not a necessity but a choice? Senior explains that though childrearing has disadvantages—no fun—there are some reasons—joy—to do it anyway.

Those measures are imperfect, incommensurate; "fun" has an easy tally of pros and cons; "joy" includes weighty but imprecise elements like meaning and purpose. The cons of childrearing are numerous, including sleep deprivation, marital strain, multiplied housework, expense, worry, and conflicts with teenagers, plus less time for adult pursuits and accomplishments. "Flow" is a catchall term Senior adopts to describe what parents lose; instead of enjoying "our own sense of agency, of *mastery*," adults who care for young children oscillate between poles of boredom and anxiety.

Parenthood in America has been dramatically reshaped by social and economic changes, especially since World War II. With impressive range, Senior manages to lasso just about every recent development into her argument. She surveys our shift from an industrial to an information economy, which has rendered children "economically worthless but emotionally priceless," in sociologist Viviana Zelizer's memorable language; the loss of family folkways, or "rigid, immutable social structures" dictating how children should be reared; globalization, that flat world filled with motivated foreigners and competitive Tiger Moms; women's increased workforce participation; preoccupation with kids' safety; mass electronic entertainment; new neuroscientific theorizing about kids' prefrontal cortex, whose immature structure makes attention short and risk attractive; emerging adulthood; homework demands; the disappearance of family dinner; and much more.

Senior is careful not to place guilt on working mothers, though she notes that they feel it anyway, continually worrying that they are not doing enough. Instead she explores how the increase in working moms—half of those with kids aged three to five worked full time in 2010—has led to significant changes in the division of labor between spouses, the need to outsource childcare, and the styles of mothering embraced by those who stay at home. Broader educational and professional opportunities have changed the job description of stay-at-home motherhood, as smart, skillful women who turn from the workforce to childrearing transform childrearing into a project to suit their abilities.

Some of Senior's sharpest critiques come in the chapter called "Concerted Cultivation," about parents' intense involvement in their kids' interests, academics, and social life. The families profiled here squeeze in scouting meetings around Sanskrit lessons, football, piano, tee-ball, gymnastics, and chess club—a "carpool Hades" for the parents who orchestrate it all. We behave this way, Senior ventures, because we lack both script and standard. Normlessness underlies the confused striving of middle-class neighborhoods. Nor do we have a bar to measure whether parenting has succeeded or failed. Ours is substantially a democratic problem.

PHOTO: EDWARD SHERIFF CURTIS

When children were useful

Absent long-held customs to dictate how nurturing should be done, class lines to lock children into—and out of—certain opportunities, and close relatives and communities to help, mothers and fathers individually have to figure out family life.

Some frustrations are generated not just by normlessness, but by the varied authorities who press priorities on families. Senior says surprisingly little about two powerful agencies nudging parents to do-this-not-that: schools and doctors. Doctors in particular do an outsized share of norm-adjusting. New parents often give their child's doctor the first and last word on correct care, concerning morals and manners as well as growth curves and eye charts. Our children's pediatrician served me with reprimands for consuming 2 percent milk, for applying too little sunscreen, for failing to keep an eight-year-old in a booster seat, and for refusing the HPV vaccine.

Senior regrets many trends, like the overscheduling of activities, superfluity of kids' toys, focus on happiness, and paranoia about safety, which together do seem to make parenting more arduous. I would tag other culprits as well. The expectation that everything for children be "fun"—not just playdates, vacations, and themed birthday bashes, but even things that are not really supposed to be delightful (teeth-brushing, shoe-tying, long division)—is what makes parenting *not* fun. Parents also have to deal with the lower behavioral standards of youth culture, which accords social permission to trash talk, eye-rolling, and sullenness. Concerted cultivation might yield more fun for children, but it comes at a high cost.

A problem Senior only hints at is the skewed balance of work and leisure in adulthood and childhood. If childhood is construed as a leisured stretch of school and play, adults are ordained as those who work. But overemphasis on kids' cultivation straitens their role in the family, making them consumers of others' labor rather than contributors to the family weal. Long hours devoted to special hobbies and structured amusements leave kids highly cultivated but helpless: See how many eight-year-olds at soccer practice, star athletes, rely on parents to tie their cleats. Meanwhile, the intensive focus on one's own brood can pull charity in too tightly, as families use up resources that might be directed to others.

Painstakingly, Senior keeps score in husband-wife chore wars—ratifying, as most studies do, that women still do too much—but her scorecard is wrong. Divisions of household labor are almost always toted up between mom and dad, with children only reckoned in as makers of messes. Having kids share housework communicates a few powerful lessons: they learn that they are part of a family rather than the center of its attention; that scrubbing toilets is not beneath their dignity, a duty reserved for mothers or poor people; that

human excellence is measured not just by report cards or trophies but by the ability to take care of oneself and have skill left over to lend a hand to somebody else.

Big questions roil just under the surface of Senior's brisk survey. What are children for? Where does the line fall between the physical (and often unpleasant) work of maintaining their bodies and the nurturing that is distinctive to a mother or father, the gift of self out of love? If having children is simply an option adults can choose or decline, with a package of harms and benefits to be known before it is chosen, parents feel pressed to justify childrearing on the basis of what it does for them. It should not be the job of individual moms and dads to invent reasons why their children are worth having.

Many reasons beyond enjoyment figure into the vocation of parenthood: longing for a kind of immortality, obligation to ancestors, or embodiment of a couple's own loving union. Though Senior has a lot to say about the effects of childrearing on marriage—tensions over work and disciplinary strategies—she acknowledges no organic connection between the two. That exuberant Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes* says this about the connection of marriage and childrearing: "By their very nature, the institution of matrimony itself and conjugal love are ordained for the procreation and education of children, and find in them their ultimate crown." What impresses me is the presence of "education" right there in the sequence—the idea that choosing to act on a romantic stirring may obligate you later to teach a child to write his name or sing a prayer or set a table.

Childrearing connected to conjugal love merits a place in the life of adults that has little to do with the fun kids might allow. The strongest reasons to have children are very different from the reasons one might like them after they've arrived. ■

Agnes R. Howard *is assistant professor of history at Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts.*

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local language, he wanders into a church where the Mass is being celebrated:

"So he listened...to the only voice that spoke to him in a tongue he understood—here in the foreign land, where all other voices shouted at him as though there were a wall between him and them. The voice of the church was the same that he had listened to in childhood....

"*He* had changed...but the church changed neither speech nor doctrine; she spoke to him in the holy Mass as she had spoken to him when he was a little boy.... And he knew that if he journeyed to the uttermost limits of Christian men's habitation...he would be welcomed by the same voice that had spoken to him when he was a child."

I am tempted to say to Mr. Farley, "Verbum sap"—but I am afraid he'd suppose I was calling names.

RICHARD WHITE
East Lyme, Conn.

A QUESTION OF JUSTICE

Regarding Gordon Marino's essay on the conflict in Gaza ("Fearful Asymmetry," September 12), it seems that the theory of a just war is no longer intelligible in our age of modern warfare.

In *Peace in the Post-Christian Era*, Thomas Merton writes: "One wonders at the modern Augustinians and at their desperate maneuvers to preserve the doctrine of the just war from the museum or the junk pile."

Does the doctrine of just war have any meaning, if it ever did, in an age of drones armed with Hellfire missiles, depleted uranium bullets, and white phosphorus bombs? The people of Laos are still being killed by bombs dropped fifty years ago, as are the people of Lebanon from cluster bombs dropped almost ten years ago. Just-war theory was clearly a justification for the perpetrators of war, but it has no meaning for the victims. Does a "just war" have any meaning for the Palestinian child on the cover of the September 12 issue?

JOHN F. IRWIN
Baltimore, Md.

EUGEN EDUARD SCHÄFFER AFTER PETER VON CORNELIUS: *DANTE IN PARADISE*

THE LAST WORD

Greetings, Citizen

Francis Kane

A prince, a philosopher, and a poet walk into a bar...or so I imagine. Specifically, a poet by the name of Dante Alighieri finds himself with a prince from Anjou, Charles Martel, in a church in Florence, where a Dominican monk and philosopher, Remigio dei Girolami, preaches. The church, Santa Maria Novella, had an inn attached to it where distinguished visitors stayed and where, we can assume, a drink could be had and conversation flowed freely. Scholars speculate that all three of these characters may have met there in 1294, and that encounter could have been the inspiration for a scene in Dante's great poem.

The scene occurs in the *Paradiso* section of the Divine Comedy, in the third circle of heaven, under the moon of Venus (i.e., human love), with Beatrice as our guide. The scene's thirty-nine tercets articulate a surprisingly astute concept of civic identity, well worth our attention in today's fevered political scene. This imagined encounter begins when three "stars" appear to the poet (no one seems to travel alone in heaven). To the star nearest him, the poet calls out: "Who are you?" and Charles Martel is immediately recognized. What a surprise: a politician in celestial beatitude.

Remigio, the philosopher, is not mentioned but it is his thought that reputedly inspires the conversation between poet and prince. What struck my fancy is a line from his work, *De Bono Communi* (*On the Common Good*). It is a bold claim boldly stated: "*Si non est civis non est homo*" ("Where there is no citizen, there is no human").

As the conversation proceeds, Dante speaks about the discouraging state of affairs in Italy and muses about the rampant evil in politics. No surprise there. The prince, in turn, asks the poet: "Would it be worse for man if he were not a citizen on earth, but left to his own sufficiency?" The poet replies: "Yes…and I do not need to ask the reason." The shared, self-evident truth for both was that humans are, by nature, political.

Now one person's self-evident truth is another's contested claim. Fortunately, the philosopher affords us "reason" to assent to our civic nature and he makes one argument in particular, a sort of *via negativa*, that might resonate with the turned-off "citizens" of today. He inquires: Where would we be without a city? Not only would we be bereft of a political identity, but soldiers could not soldier, merchants could not sell their merchandise, even families could not have households. His beloved Florence could no longer flourish. Elizabeth Warren, the senator from Massachusetts, argued similarly when she reminded us that the successful entrepreneurs who build factories rely on workers who are publicly educated and roads that are publicly financed and police and fire departments funded by citizens' taxes. Throughout his work, Remigio, no libertarian, appeals to the traditional Christian notion of the *ordo caritatis* (the order of love). We are defined by what we love, and love of the common good enhances and completes us in a way the individual, private good is unable to do. Think of the whole *Divine Comedy*: hell is populated with desolate individuals; purgatory with souls relying on others' prayers; and heaven with the communion of saints. The Trinity itself is a divine comedy of community.

How do we go wrong? Evil occurs, in Dante's words, when humans depart from the natural order, making of nature "a poor fist of things." The immigration debate in the United States is a case in point. Admittedly, the issue is complex but one governing principle might be stated fairly simply: Those who have to live in the shadows are deprived of part of their humanity. *Si non est civis, non est homo*. A path to citizenship would appropriately honor the principle and restore the *ordo caritatis*.

A number of years ago my family, out of town visitors, attended church in Washington, D.C. I held our first child in my arms and, when Mass was over, an old woman in front of us turned and greeted us with a warm smile. As she let our son grasp her finger, she asked: "And who is this citizen?" Her accent was European. Not knowing his name or his gender, she had called him, playfully, by a designation few of us would use today: "citizen." I imagined her as Beatrice. ■

Francis Kane *is author of* Neither Beasts nor Gods: Civic Life and the Public Good *(Southern Methodist University Press).*

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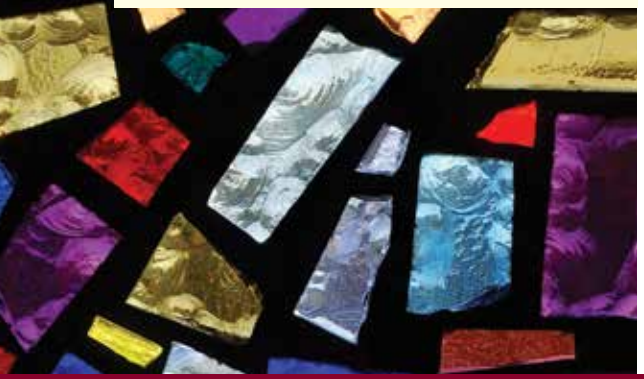

10th Anniversary Program of Events

Fall 2014 Highlights

Latino/a Spiritualities:
New Perspectives on Catholic Practice, Politics, and Experience
U.S. Catholic Cultures Lecture Series
Featuring a panel of experts on U.S. Latino/a faith and culture: Professors Ana Maria Diaz-Stevens, Anthony M. Stevens Arroyo, Kristy Nabhan-Warren, and the Rev. Jean-Pierre Ruiz
Monday, Sept. 29 | 6 p.m. | Lincoln Center Campus

Women and Christianity: Unsettled And Unsettling Questions
10th Annual Rita Cassella Jones Lecture on Women and U.S. Catholicism
Presented by Sidney Callahan, Ph.D., psychologist, theologian, and Distinguished Scholar at the Hastings Center
The Curran Center's 10th anniversary reception will follow the lecture.
Tuesday, Oct. 21 | 6 p.m. | Rose Hill Campus

***Stabat Mater Dolorosa:* Mary at the Cross in Early Modern Polemic, Art, and Literature**
Presented by Robert S. Miola, Ph.D., Gerard Manley Hopkins Professor of English, Lecturer in Classics at Loyola University Maryland
Thursday, Nov. 6 | 5:30 p.m. | Tognino Hall | Rose Hill Campus

Spring 2015 Highlights

The Search for Peace and Justice in a Post-9/11 World
Featuring the world premiere of In Our Son's Name, a film by Gayla Jamison with Orlando and Phyllis Rodriguez
Tuesday, Feb. 24 | 6 p.m. | Rose Hill Campus

Work and Human Flourishing: Economic and Catholic Perspectives
The Good Economy Series: Celebrating 125 Years of Catholic Social Thought
Panelists to be announced
Monday, March 3 | 6 p.m. | Lincoln Center Campus

The Rosary: Its Mysteries in Art and History
Presented by Esperanca Camara, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Art History at the University of St. Francis, Fort Wayne, Indiana
Tuesday, March 10 | 6 p.m. | Rose Hill Campus

Alternative Medicine: Poetry and Healing
An evening with Rafael Campo, M.D., of Harvard Medical School, award-winning poet and essayist, whose medical practice serves mostly Latinos, gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered people, and people with HIV
Thursday, April 16 | Location and time to be announced

Bad Economics? Interrogating Pope Francis' Economic Theory
The Good Economy Series: Celebrating 125 Years of Catholic Social Thought
An interdisciplinary panel of experts will critically consider Pope Francis' economic statements from the perspectives of economics, business, and Catholic social ethics.
Date and location to be announced

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