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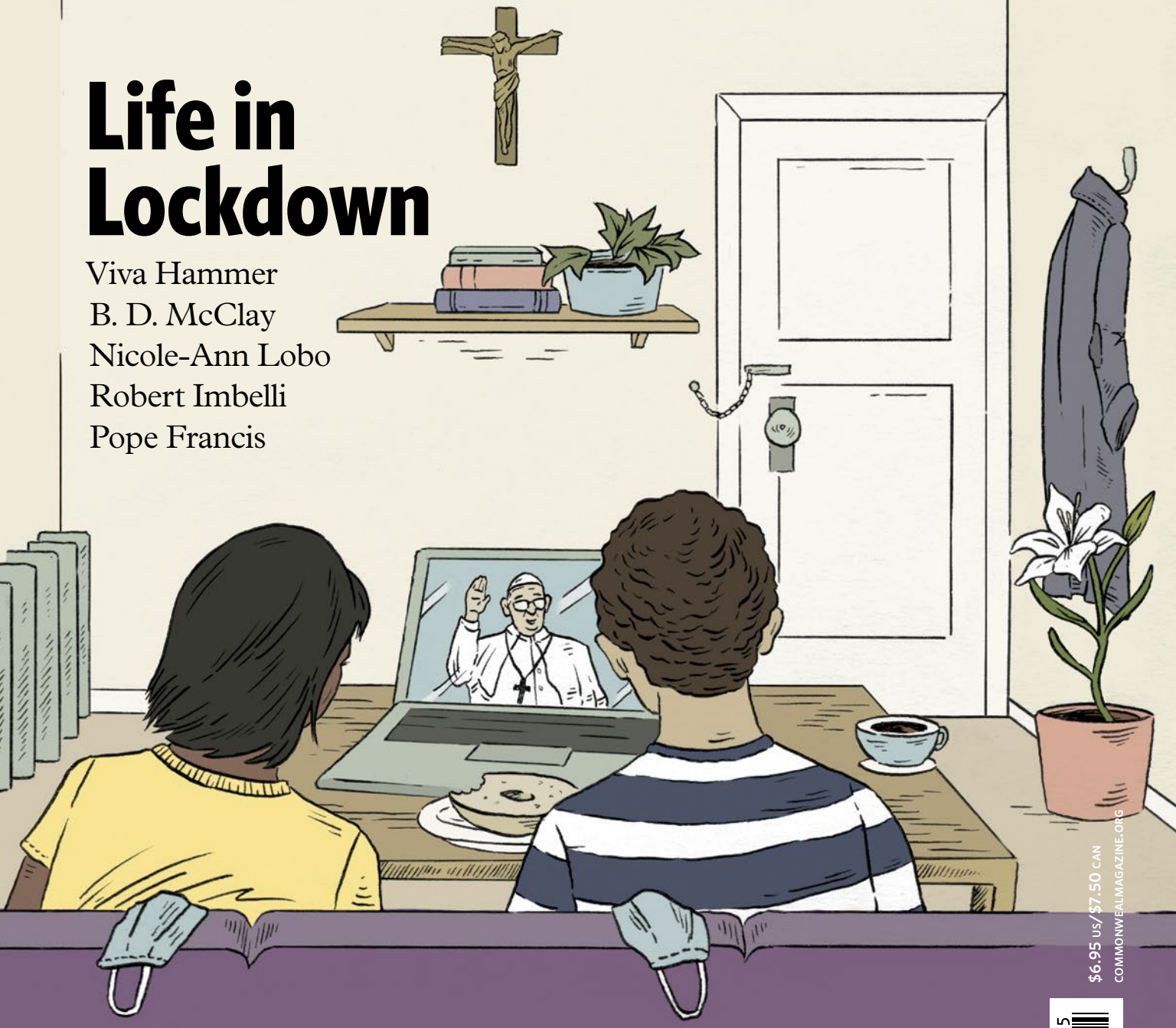

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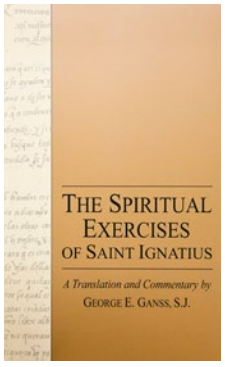

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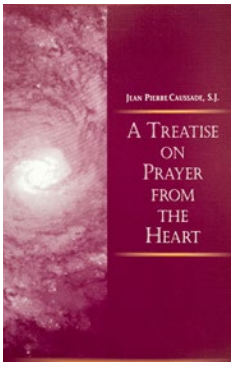

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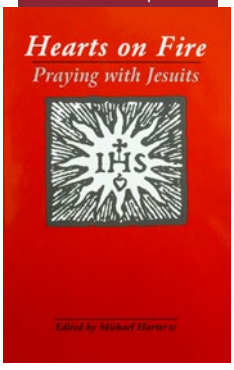

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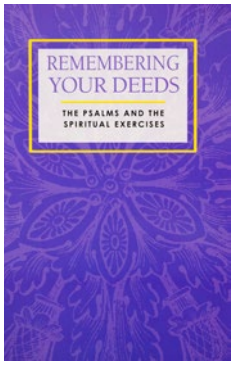

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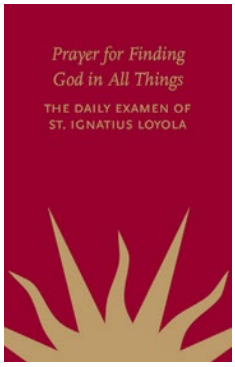

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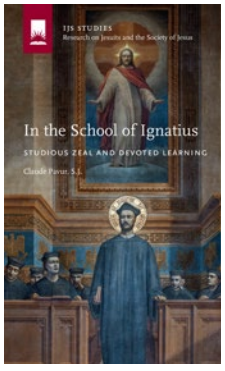

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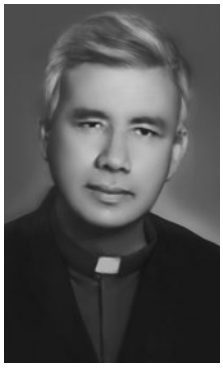

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LETTERS

Darwin's sins, Catholicism and philosophy, a consistent prolife agenda, etc.

DARWIN'S SINS

John P. Slattery is right to credit Charles Darwin's role in creating a scientific understanding of the mechanism of natural selection ("Evolution and Racism," March). As Slattery points out, Darwin "believed that humans shared a common descent" and "were one species." Yet, according to Darwin, while all races descend from the same ancestor, some are more descended than others. In *The Descent of Man*, he predicts a grim future for those at the bottom: "At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropological apes…will no doubt be exterminated. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilized state…and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of now between the Negro or Australian and the gorilla."

While Darwin didn't invent the term "survival of the fittest," he endorsed Herbert Spencer's formulation of "social Darwinism" as well as the eugenic theory of his cousin Francis Galton. Darwin was a man of his time. Honoring the greatness of his scientific achievement doesn't require ignoring the upper-class Victorian convictions he shared (and reinforced) about the poor as the cause of their own plight, and his colonialist indifference to the destruction of the "sub-species" occupying the space between Anglo-Saxons and apes. (My article, "The Gentle Darwinians," which contains a fuller discussion of this issue, appeared in the March 5, 2007 issue of *Commonweal*.)

Peter Quinn
Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y.

INSTITUTIONS MATTER

It is surprising that in Sarah Shortall's otherwise informative review of Edward Baring's *Converts to the Real: Catholicism and the Making of Continental Philosophy* ("God of the Continental Philosophers," March) there is no mention of the University of Louvain and its role in the development of continental philosophy since 1880.

According to Baring, the recent resurgence of interest in religion among many hitherto secular European philosophers may be accounted for at least in part by the fact that they work in the tradition of continental philosophy, and this tradition "was forged in important respects by Catholics in the early decades of the twentieth century." In particular, non-Catholic and Catholic philosophers shared "an engagement with phenomenology…that gave birth to a truly continental philosophic tradition. And it did so largely because of Catholic philosophers, who transported these ideas from their German birthplace" to many other countries.

No mention of the fact that in 1938, Herman Van Breda, then a twenty-seven-year-old graduate student from Louvain working on his doctoral dissertation on the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl in Freiburg im Breisgau, recognized the extreme danger the Nazis posed to Husserl's work. In a matter of months he was able to get Husserl's unpublished papers (over 40,000 pages), Husserl's entire library, and Husserl's widow out of Germany to Louvain, where Van Breda and his colleagues hid those works from the Nazis until the end of World War II. They became the Husserl Archives, which have remained the principal center for phenomenological research and publication ever since. One of the first visitors to the Husserl Archives, as early

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LETTERS

as 1938, was Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

A second, but also surprising, omission: Shortall points out that "Before phenomenology came into its own, the closest thing to a continental philosophy at the time was a Catholic one: neo-scholasticism." In his 1879 encyclical *Aeterni patris*, Pope Leo XIII had called for a restoration of Thomistic philosophy in Catholic seminaries and institutions: whence "neo-scholasticism."

Nowhere was this project engaged more fully than at the University of Louvain. Leo XIII himself requested that Louvain institute a program in Thomistic philosophy and in 1882 Désiré-Joseph (later Cardinal) Mercier was named to the first chair of Thomistic philosophy. Several years later Mercier founded the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, which since its founding has been a leading center of Thomistic philosophy in dialogue with contemporary philosophy and with the natural and human sciences. No mention of the University of Louvain in this regard either.

These are two surprising absences in a book of which the reviewer states, ironically, that "The other tremendous benefit of [Baring's] work is to show how and why institutions matter for the history of ideas."

Thomas Ewens
Middletown, R.I.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM?

The religious-liberty issue, as framed by Dolan and DiMarzio in this region of the United States, is confined to issues below the waist ("Rethinking Religious Liberty," John Gehring interviews Melissa Rogers, February). Why can't DiMarzio, Dolan, et al. seek a religious exemption for Catholics who object to paying taxes for U.S. military actions that kill children, immigrant-detention policies that imprison families, or laws that support the death penalty? A fortnight-for-religious-freedom campaign would have more credibility if it included a consistent prolife agenda. Until then, it won't get support from me.

Gene Roman
Bronx, N.Y.

A LARGE GROUP

Tia Noelle Pratt's recent article was very interesting ("Authentically Black, Truly Catholic," April). I'm so glad as a Black Catholic to hear that work is currently being done to highlight our spirituality and faith in the broader sense. I must suggest that while focusing on African Americans, we should not forget the largest group of Black Catholics (Haitians), as well as Nigerians, Catholics from other parts of the Caribbean and Africa, and those who identify as Afro-Latino. There are many parishes within the Diocese of Brooklyn that could be part of your study.

Peter Damour
Queens, N.Y.

LAYWOMEN AS MINISTERS

I am pleased with the insights into how to read this latest document from Francis in Austen Ivereigh's article "New Wine, New Wineskins" (April). Yet there is one point that greatly disappoints me. One of the great failures of the post–Vatican II reforms was how the redoing of the "minor orders" turned out. Though people were no longer to be "ordained" to these orders but rather "installed," the vision was empowering. Readers were also to be catechists of the Word and not just proclaimers. Acolytes were to be more than "altar boys," but entrusted with outreach, especially through a parish-communion ministry. Indeed, it is even suggested that conferences of bishops could propose another ministry for recognition.

The one glitch: Paul VI restricted installation to males. And so decades later the only laypeople with an officially recognized ministry are seminarians—a ludicrous situation given the decades of service to these ministries given by laywomen. Perhaps the idea of women deacons would not seem so scary to many if we had already had women in other official ministries for decades. And perhaps Francis would not be saying that the greatest challenge to the future of the church was clericalism.

Michael H. Marchal
Cincinnati, Ohio

It Didn't Have To Be This Bad

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a cruel reminder that we are far more fragile, individually and collectively, than most of us imagine when times are good. It takes surprisingly little—a sudden shift of tectonic plates, a new submicroscopic particle—to turn a life or a whole society upside down. Modern wealth and technology foster illusions of security and control, but we are still subject to countless life-threatening risks. Some we're aware of, some we aren't. As science conquers one disease, another emerges; and in the time it takes for science to catch up—the time we're all living through now—thousands or millions of lives may be lost. Yes, by all means, trust science (and be grateful to the scientists), but don't imagine it will ever rid the world of mortal harms.

One function of the world's great religious traditions is to remind us of our fragility and to prepare us for death—our own deaths and the deaths of those we love. These traditions may disagree about what, if anything, follows death, but they all agree on its centrality to life. To live in denial of death, they teach us, is no better than to live in constant fear of it.

A few weeks before the full scale of the current crisis became evident, we lined up in churches to be reminded of our mortality: *You are dust, and unto dust you shall return.* Now, in the Easter season, we celebrate Christ's triumph over death, but not his escape from it: he triumphed by "trampling death by death"—that is, by dying. Resurrected, he promises us an eternal life beyond death, but he doesn't promise to spare us the experience of dying or the pain of bereavement. Instead, he shares it with us, thereby investing it with a new meaning. This is why Christians can mourn without despair, and now is a time for mourning.

It is also a time for anger. While all human lives and communities are fragile, some are more fragile than others. People all over the world are now learning the hard way that they were much more vulnerable than they should have been because of bad political decisions, or feckless indecision.

When the new coronavirus was first discovered at the end of last year, Chinese authorities wasted precious weeks trying to hide it, more concerned about its potential political and economic impact than about the health of their people. We now know that by the time China acted to contain the virus, it had already spread far beyond Wuhan, the city where it first emerged. Other nations would repeat this mistake, waiting too long to act because they feared the economic repercussions. Rigorous, well-coordinated travel restrictions might have bought their health-care systems the time they needed to prepare for the worst, but such restrictions seemed unimaginable to politicians for whom it is an article of faith that trade and tourism must never be disrupted. A similar lack of imagination had kept them from stockpiling the medical equipment they would need in case of a pandemic that experts warned was only a matter of time. (These politicians have been less improvident when it comes to stockpiling weapons.)

To his credit, President Donald Trump did restrict travel from China in late January, but in the following month he did little else to stop the virus as it spread largely undetected throughout the country. By the time he cut off travel from Europe, the main source of the outbreak in New York, it was too late to make any difference. And it was already *much* too late to make up for his administration's long record of ignoring and sidelining the people charged with preparing the country for a pandemic. The Trump White House's narrow conception of national security left no room for such people; they were relegated to the neglected ranks of underfunded federal agencies. When Trump could no longer get away with calling the virus a hoax or dismissing it as no worse than the flu, he turned to congratulating himself for recognizing the gravity of the situation before anyone else. He bragged that "he felt it was a pandemic long before it was called a pandemic." He announced that he was now a wartime president, while refusing to make use of his war powers to ensure that the nation's hospitals had enough personal protective equipment and ventilators. Perhaps his greatest dereliction of duty has had to do with testing. First he claimed that every American who wanted a test for the virus could get one; when this still wasn't true weeks later, he suggested that testing was no longer so important; when its importance had become clear to everyone, he claimed it was the governors' responsibility, not his. Even now there is no comprehensive national plan for testing and tracking—the key to controlling the current outbreak and preventing a second one later this year.

Such failures of leadership, here and abroad, have led to the greatest global crisis in living memory. We cannot afford to forget that, now or after the emergency recedes. The public officials whose negligence and shortsighted priorities have left us so vulnerable to a foreseeable danger must be held to account. *April 23, 2020*

COVID-19 and the Food Supply

How will we eat? It's a question all Americans started asking, with varying degrees of urgency, as the pandemic shuttered restaurants and schools, and turned grocery stores into sites of contagion. In mid-March, as shutdowns began, shoppers able to afford bulk purchases (and willing to ignore official guidelines) hoarded not only toilet paper and disinfectant wipes, but also beans, grains, and meats, stripping shelves and straining supply chains to fill their pantries and freezers. "Quarantine baking" made flour and yeast difficult to come by. Egg prices shot up. Hatcheries sold more backyard chickens; vegetable seed sales spiked.

By now, many grocery chains have curtailed panic buying by limiting how much of a product any shopper can purchase at one time. But concerns about food supplies persist. Distributors struggle to reroute food originally intended for restaurants, hotels, universities, cruise lines, and other now-closed industrial kitchens to grocery stores and food banks. The FDA has temporarily loosened nutrition-labeling requirements to try to speed this along. But it's still an expensive process for farmers who've lost big customers. With the agricultural sector unable to adapt quickly enough, perishable surpluses are being destroyed—rotting vegetables plowed into the soil, millions of gallons of milk dumped. It's a terrible waste at a time when so many Americans are struggling to afford food.

Then there's the spike in coronavirus cases among workers in food-processing plants and warehouses. In mid-April, South Dakota's Smithfield pork plant closed after more than 230 of its employees tested positive for the coronavirus. (Smithfield accounts for about 5 percent of the nation's pork production.) Other meat suppliers from Iowa to Pennsylvania are shutting plants amid similar outbreaks.

Next to doctors and nurses, the most essential of essential workers—and the most at risk—are those who maintain our food supply: warehouse workers, grocery-store clerks, food-delivery people, fast-food employees, and Instacart shoppers (the grocery-ordering service's business is up 120 percent). Protective measures have been taken at some companies, including store-capacity limits, reduced hours, plastic partitions, spaced check-out lines, temperature taking, and gloves and masks for employees.

But in too many cases, the corporations that employ these workers have put them in preventable danger, with protective measures enforced inconsistently or too late. Employees complain of shifts without protective equipment, murky or punitive sick-leave policies, no health insurance, limited information about who in their workplace has been sick, and low pay—even as their employers call them "heroes." Workers have resorted to strikes and "sick-outs." At Instacart, workers demanded hazard pay, better sick leave, higher default tips, and disinfectant wipes. The company promised to distribute hygiene kits, but many employees still don't have them.

No surprise, then, that it's increasingly difficult to find people willing to work these dangerous jobs. But the need is greater than ever: as workers call in sick or quit, job postings for grocery clerks have jumped 60 percent. So far, at least forty-one grocery workers have died; thousands have tested positive.

Over five weeks, 26.4 million Americans have filed for unemployment, including many who worked in food service: in restaurants, bars, or corporate cafeterias. Food banks have seen an exponential increase in first-time customers. The banks are stretched to their limits, spending millions more than budgeted as the price of non-perishable staples like peanut butter and rice skyrockets. Public-school cafeterias, kept open to serve meals to low-income students, are now also providing food for adults.

Panic aside, most of us will be fine; suppliers insist that while we may see less variety in the grocery stores, there will still be plenty to eat. If you're going to worry about the food supply, worry about front-line workers, that they'll get the protection and compensation they deserve. Or worry about those who can no longer afford to buy their own groceries. And if you can afford to, maybe do more than worry: consider putting some of that government-stimulus check toward peanut butter and rice for someone else.

—Katherine Lucky

COVID-19 and Education

School's out. Since the beginning of the coronavirus outbreak in the United States, schools ranging from kindergartens to universities have been closing, and learning has gone completely digital. It started on March 10, when Harvard University instructed its undergraduates to pack their bags and leave campus within five days. At the time, it felt striking, sobering—we hoped it was an overreaction. Government officials had not yet sounded the alarm; the Trump administration was still in denial about the severity of the crisis. Looking back, that moment was an inflection point for many Americans, a harbinger of all the other changes that would soon alter our daily lives. The closing of the universities was a sign, not from our public leaders, but from private institutions, whose experts had done the risk analysis and made their decision accordingly. The day after Harvard's announcement, the World Health

Organization declared the novel coronavirus a global pandemic. As "shelter in place" and "stay at home" orders were issued in California and New York, other universities followed suit.

The result has been an unforeseen disruption to American education on all levels. As Zoom meetings became a reality not just for working professionals but also for elementary-school students, a new normal was born. But not everyone has equal access to it. The Pew Research Center reports that 15 percent of U.S. households with school-age children lack high-speed internet at home. The illusion of equality on elite campuses has been shattered, as students from low-income families return to homes where they may be expected to help with childcare or household expenses.

The stay-at-home orders also coincide with a time usually reserved for prospective undergraduates to visit college campuses as they decide where to spend the next four years. Needless to say, those visits are off. With so much uncertainty about nearly everything, few can even be confident that their college of choice will be open in the fall.

Colleges and universities have not escaped controversy in this trying period. Liberty University has come under fire for remaining open, despite the health risks posed to students living in close quarters. Student activists have demanded that schools with particularly large endowments treat their contracted and subcontracted workers fairly. After laying off hundreds of workers, Stanford University faced pressure from Students for Workers Rights (SWR). The provost made concessions, including pay continuance for direct hires until June 15, but so far there has been no follow-up with the contracting company, or the workers themselves. This confusion is strikingly similar to the way the federal government has bungled its response to the pandemic. Millions are struggling to get the unemployment benefits to which they're entitled; loans intended for small businesses get snatched up by big companies like Shake Shack; reliable testing for the virus remains elusive. We find ourselves in a moment of Kafkaesque bureaucracy and disruption. One hopes it will be followed by a moment of reckoning.

—Emily King

COVID-19 and the Church

On April 12, Catholics in the United States observed Easter Sunday mostly alone. With churches closed and Masses canceled in the midst of a global pandemic, community celebration was limited to live-streamed Masses. Most Catholics had already gone without the Eucharist for over a month, and to many the absence of the sacrament on the holiest day of the year felt particularly painful.

The pandemic is "fundamentally changing how we do and be church," as a series at the *National Catholic Reporter* puts it. We have to worship, socialize, and serve differently for the time being, and already individuals and institutions have begun to adapt to this new way of life.

Certainly, we've had to get creative about seeking communion and gathering in prayer. Without the routine of Mass, laypeople have had to be more intentional about their prayer lives in their own homes. This integration of church and home, although temporary, could help us reimagine for the future how faith informs our daily lives and commitments—a counterbalance to the temptation to "keep it in church." One diocesan official in Florida observed, "The coronavirus did in a weekend what it has taken the Second Vatican Council almost sixty years to try to get Catholics to do, which is get out of their church buildings and talk with people about Jesus." Without our usual schedules to fall back on, we can ask ourselves what practices draw us closer to each other and to God, and how to share these with the people closest to us.

Likewise, Catholic institutions have been exemplary in finding new ways to care for people in urgent circumstances. "Parishes, schools, dioceses and social-service agencies are attempting to carry out their missions in a vastly transformed culture in which we cannot wait for men and women of faith to come to us and our churches," Bishop Robert McElroy of San Diego told *NCR*. Health workers and chaplains, putting themselves in harm's way to accompany the sick and their families, have devised new ways to hold prayers for the dying by phone. Groups like the Catholic Health Association and Catholic Charities have adapted to serve the most vulnerable—reorganizing serving kitchens into takeaway-meal stations, for example, or providing extensive ethical guidelines for the treatment of patients with the virus. With creativity and care, these groups have embodied Pope Francis's image of the church as a field hospital, seeking out those in need wherever they are.

Now that our old habits are at least temporarily suspended, it's time to be imaginative and inventive about how we can bring God to others. Many have remarked on the paradox of somehow feeling closer to others now despite the distance. We are quickly discovering that physical separation can present an opportunity to express love in new ways. The challenge is not to miss this opportunity now, but also to remember these new ways once we can gather again for the sacraments. The church should emerge from the pandemic more resourceful and flexible, more alert to new possibilities for ministry, and less dependent on routine.

—Regina Munch

MASSIMO FAGGIOLI

Remaining Unsettled

The acquittal of Cardinal George Pell doesn't bring an end to the 'Pell matter.'

In setting aside the guilty verdict against Cardinal George Pell on sexual-assault charges, Australia's High Court effectively concluded the criminal-justice aspect of a case that has consumed the nation and the Catholic Church for years. But the April 7 ruling doesn't really settle anything in the relationship between the church and the Australian state, nor is it likely to resolve the clash between the different "kinds" of Catholicism in Australia and elsewhere. In fact, the decision will probably keep the contentious debates alive, perhaps for a long time to come.

Pell had been charged with assaulting two thirteen-year-old boys in the sacristy of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne in 1996. From the beginning, there was nothing normal about the way the proceedings against him unfolded. The first trial ended in a hung jury. In a second trial, he was found guilty by unanimous ruling. Then, in an appeal heard by three judges, two found him guilty while the third, Justice Mark Weinberg, dissented in a lengthy 204-page opinion. Meanwhile, a "suppression order" applying to cases involving sexual abuse resulted in what amounted to secret trials that in countries like the United States would be considered unconstitutional. The proceedings were kept under wraps from the public as they happened, and only a handful of people were permitted to hear testimony. The media was not allowed to report on the details of the trials until the verdicts were publicly announced.

Now Pell has been acquitted. In their unanimous ruling, the seven High Court judges pointed to egregious mistakes in the police investigation, and legal errors in the decisions of previous courts. But that does not mean the cardinal has been found innocent. Australia's High Court can't declare guilt or innocence; it issues decisions based only on the rules of evidence, and in the case of Pell, it found insufficient evidence to support the guilty verdict. As Jeremy Gans, a professor at Melbourne Law School, noted: "The High Court's key ruling—that there is a 'significant possibility' that Pell is innocent of the charges against him—isn't a conclusion that he is innocent; it is a conclusion that the prosecution failed to prove that he isn't."

While Pell may yet face further criminal charges and civil lawsuits, the likelihood of this happening is uncertain, given the now diminished standing of those who handled the initial allegations. In fact, the handling of the Pell case has prompted a wider discussion on the criminal-justice system in the state of Victoria. The role of the media in all of this—particularly, reporting and coverage by the publicly funded Australian Broadcasting Corporation—is also under scrutiny. Pell and his supporters are not alone in the opinion that the ABC actively cooperated with the police in attempting to convict Pell in the court of public opinion and thus secure a conviction in the courtroom. Further, an investigative reporter for the ABC attacked Pell in a 2017 book published by the publicly funded Melbourne University Press. Yet at the same time, commentators in some prominent newspapers and hosts on Sky News television were just as vocal in their efforts to see Pell found innocent.

So the Pell case in many ways remains Australia's biggest story, dividing the media, the nation, and

Cardinal George Pell in a car after being released from Barwon Prison in Geelong, Australia, April 7, 2020

CNS PHOTO / JAMES ROSS, AAP IMAGE VIA REUTERS

the church. (When former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott—Catholic and Jesuit-educated—visited Pell in jail, Victoria Premier Daniel Andrews publicly slammed him.) The cardinal and his supporters view the allegations, the investigations, and the trials as an integral part of Australia's culture wars. In his post-acquittal interview, Pell said that his trial was part of an attempt "to remove the Judeo-Christian legal foundations" and that "culture wars are real." Indeed, they are. Any discussion of the Pell case seems to devolve quickly into heated emotional argument: he is either a monster or a martyr. Interesting, however, is how measured the Holy See's press office and the Australian bishops' conference have been in their statements on the acquittal. "Today's outcome will be welcomed by many, including those who have believed in the Cardinal's innocence throughout this lengthy process," said ACBC President Mark Coleridge. "We also recognize that the High Court's decision will be devastating for others. Many have suffered greatly through the process, which has now reached its conclusion. The result today does not change the church's unwavering commitment to child safety and to a just and compassionate response to survivors and victims of child sexual abuse." Neither the Vatican nor the Australian bishops' conference seems eager to publicly cast Pell as a martyr, no matter how he was treated by the police and justice system. Their reasoning probably hinges on the fact that there is still a lot that remains unknown, and it's not clear what may ever become known, or when. In the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (December 2017), the information about Cardinal Pell remains redacted.

And at any rate, since the culture wars in some countries reflect intra-Catholic conflict, it's not likely there will be any settled "conclusion" to the Pell matter in any public forum—whether a courtroom or the media. Those who support Pell (including some of his fellow cardinals) may loudly condemn Australian law enforcement and the justice system, and they might have a reason to do so. But they would also be wise to consider the controversial matter of George Pell in a larger context, as something to be discussed more deeply than as a pitting of personal theologies against each other. The fact is that there has to be a historical and moral reckoning for the Australian Church as a system, and for the most powerful Catholic Australian cleric, in terms of how both have handled the sexual-abuse crisis.

However the Pell matter continues to unfold, it will likely have wide-scale effects. It's a critical moment for the Catholic Church in Australia, which is preparing for its 2020–2021 Plenary Council (the first since 1937, though scheduling is uncertain because of the pandemic). In his post-acquittal interview, Cardinal Pell said that he does not want to have a voice in the Catholic debate in Australia; he also mentioned that the archbishops of Melbourne and Sydney, with whom he is close, need not be overshadowed by him. But Pell's influence remains strong in the part of the Australian episcopate that does not want to see any profound changes in the church, and his acquittal could very well reshape the politics of the Plenary Council.

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In Rome, it remains to be seen whether there will be a canonical investigation and trial of Cardinal Pell, a decision that was being held up until after the criminal proceedings in Australia. One of the most provocative things Pell said in the post-acquittal interview pertained to his belief that the case against him in Australia may have been connected to Vatican financial corruption. (In April 2013, Francis appointed him a member of the "council of cardinals"; in February 2014, Francis named him as the first prefect of the newly created Secretariat for the Economy. In July 2017, Pell left the Vatican to face the charges in Australia.) Pell said that his accuser could have been in some ways "used" by someone: "Most of the senior people in Rome who are in any way sympathetic to financial reform believe that they [the two events] are [connected]." Pell also suggested that corruption in the Vatican goes nearly to the top. "Just how high is an interesting hypothesis," he said, though he made it clear that it doesn't extend to Pope Francis or to Secretary of State Cardinal Parolin. Pell also released a post-acquittal video message in Italian, clearly not aimed at Italian Catholics in the pews but at prelates in the Vatican, which suggests that he still hopes to recover his standing in Rome or have some sway in shaping the political alignment in the college of cardinals.

Cardinal Pell remains a significant figure in global Catholicism, and different people will have different responses to his acquittal. There are the victims and survivors of sexual abuse who might view it as a traumatic setback. And there are Catholics who, feeling or experiencing persecution in their own countries, might have identified with Pell in being targeted, and now feel rightly vindicated. There is little doubt that the legal case of George Pell was mishandled. But at the same time this should not be used as a reason for taking the focus off what remains the primary challenge for the church: the global dimension of the sexual-abuse crisis.

VIVA HAMMER

Alone, Together

Letter from Australia

Forewarning of the coronavirus pandemic came to my family with a package dropped at our door by a neighbor. Such packages are common on Purim, when we remember the undoing of a genocidal decree against the Jews of Persia. But in Sydney, where we live, common courtesy is rare, and common kindness is—let us say—even rarer. "Please let us know if you need anything," said the note with the package. "Anything that is understocked at the shops—soap, toilet paper, medicines." We had never seen this neighbor before or even spoken to her. We were mystified; something was awry.

We are a family of three generations living in my parents' home in Sydney. I moved back here just before the virus struck, after thirty years in the United States. "What are you *waiting* for?" my daughter asked and asked, until I capitulated. I left behind a son at Johns Hopkins University, and he began a barrage of exhortations that ended in our three generations isolating together a few days after Purim. That was three weeks ago from the time I'm writing this. It is hard now to believe we once lived another way. And it is even harder to resist thinking that we may never get out of this way of living. My parents are healthy but old, and the time between now and a cure or vaccine is indefinite.

We are isolated, my parents, my daughter, and I. No one comes in, and we don't go where other people are. If we choose to live with one another, we can *only* be with one another. If my daughter or I want to see anyone else, we cannot come back home until this virus ends. That is the choice: either the family or everyone else, not both. The price we pay for being together is being separated from the rest of the world.

My father, who always prayed twice daily with his community at synagogue, came home to pray alone. Prayer alone is blessed, but wherever ten are assembled in a minyan, the Divine Presence dwells among them (Avot 3:6), in the miniature sanctuary in the places where Jews have been exiled (Ezekiel 11:16). My father is nearly ninety. The very place where religious Jews like my father find solace became a prime source of transmission of the virus. My father's father put on prayer garments in the Nazi camps. "But this is different," my father said. "Here we have a *choice* to live, and life comes first."

It dwells among us in secret, this virus, like a ghost. Many with the disease have no symptoms and can pass it to others unknowing, so that one moment we are dancing, the next we cough, the next we choke and fall. Life has slid along a predictable course this century. The century before saw the reduction of death in childbirth and childhood diseases, the taming of heart disease, cures for cancer, even a decline in car fatalities. The blessing of old age is widely shared; since 1900, human life expectancy on Earth has more than doubled. Doctors and clean water keep us alive an ever longer time. And into a world built on the certainty of a limitlessly increasing lifespan the new coronavirus imposes uncertainty. It whips through us and we are astonished: the moment before, we believed we were masters over nature. And now, doctors who have fought successfully to keep us alive are impotent; we are left to fight the disease alone, to prescribe our own medicine, that is, to keep away from one another. Who knows who hides the disease and breathes it to us?

Four winters ago, when I was still in Washington D.C., my son, my daughter, and my sister all left within weeks of one another, for other cities, other continents. I was going nowhere, but I was moving from a state of perpetual accompaniment to aloneness. When I protested to my loved ones about this prospect, they dismissed my fears. "Viva, you will *never* be alone!" they said. Yet at night I put my head down alone and when morning came, aloneness was still there with me.

Aloneness was like a migraine, a sickness that never left in the years I stayed behind after my loved ones left. No matter how hard I worked, how much I prayed, or how many deeds of kindness I did, the ache never lessened. Aloneness happened to me and I endured

A nearly empty Opera Quays in Sydney's Central Business District, March 17, 2020

PAUL LOVELACE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

it, but my daughter called repeatedly to teach me that it was a condition I could cure, if I chose to. And so I moved 10,000 miles to my parents' house. With three generations under one roof, the sickness of aloneness has vanished; I have not once wished for a night by myself.

Recently, on a plateau in Tanzania, paleontologists found the hardened footsteps of ancient humans walking across the plain together. These footsteps have become symbols of our human attachment, a confirmation that even in our early years, we traveled with one another. The strongest human need is the need for each other. We wish for connection, we ache when we cannot find it, and we are punished most intolerably when we are cut away from one another.

So when my son at Johns Hopkins told us we must cut ourselves from the rest of humanity for a time indefinite, in order to save our lives, my mother's first deed was to reach out to those who did not have the comfort we have in each other. She called them to say, "You are not alone." Our synagogue, which was notorious for its quarrels and lawsuits, has sprung such a large cadre of volunteers that there are more offering to help than there are those who know they can get help. My mother is ringing through her address book to create demand for the volunteers. Young people are flooding social media with offers, and we bridge those offers to the

What is the *plan*? we ask. Who is in *charge*? we wonder. Then we call friends, make face masks, and hang out the washing to dry.

So much of what we hold onto the virus has made worthless. Business suits. A handbag. A metro card. Frequent-flyer miles. And other things that were trivial are now more precious than everything else combined. Toilet paper. Rice. Wi-Fi.

older ones, who don't know how to ask. One woman burst out into tears when my mother matched her with a buddy. All her food was gone and she had no way to replenish it.

In the company of this virus, I find myself exhausted. Our ecosystem evolves so fast that how we live one day is obsolete and forgotten the next. The uncertainty, the ever-changing laws, the amount of information to consume and discard, and the yearning for an end date, all leave me spent at day's end, and sleepless at night. What is the *plan*? we ask. Who is in *charge*? we wonder. Then we call friends, make face masks, and hang out the washing to dry.

Three weeks have passed since we isolated; the past week was compressed into an hour, whereas the week before was at least a year. These strange derangements of time come with the disorder of circumstance. This week we try living without news, because the week before we were addicted to news. My mind is too empty or too full. Disconnection from the world distorts time, as does excessive immersion in it. The empty mind compresses time and the full one stretches it out. And through these weeks that are years, nothing whatever is going on in Sydney, the weather is beautiful, the air is cleared of bushfires, hardly anyone has died of the virus. The disease lives among us, silent and invisible.

"Do we have enough to do for a year and a half like this?" I ask my mother.

I am waiting; I clear out a closet. So much of what we hold onto the virus has made worthless. Business suits. A handbag. A metro card. Frequent-flyer miles. And other things that were trivial are now more precious than everything else combined. Toilet paper. Rice. Wi-Fi. Neighbor on this side, neighbor on that side, neighbor opposite, whose names and faces I never knew.

The neighbor who left us a food package for Purim left another package this week. It is matzah, the unleavened bread we eat on Passover, to remind us how once we were slaves in Egypt and with signs and wonders, God let us free. We eat the unleavened bread and remember that on the night of Exodus, we did not have time to let the dough rise. Redemption might come before the bread rises, or the washing dries, if we are willing to get up and leave when we hear the call.

We are taught that the first Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed because of idol worship. The rabbis prayed for that desire to be eradicated from the human vices, and God answered their prayers. The second Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed because of baseless hatred, but this time we can be redeemed only by our own deeds of baseless love. Coronavirus love. Each of us alone, together.

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B. D. MCCLAY

Distance, Not Desertion

Letter from New York City

St. Roch

WELLCOME IMAGES

According to New York by the Numbers, as of March 16, there were almost 5,500 people in Rikers. Of these, about three-quarters are pretrial detainees. "As a former correction officer at Rikers Island," writes Ralph Ortiz for the *Independent*, "I can tell you that the island is one of the filthiest places you will ever see." Like other reporting on Rikers, including from *Mother Jones*, Ortiz concurs that there is not enough soap, that inmates are crowded. He draws from this a dispiriting conclusion: those people need to be kept in. They are too dangerous, disease-wise, to be let out.

Whatever prisons are meant to be, they largely function for this purpose: to keep people free from a sense of contamination. They claim to shield society from conditions that are then generated within the prisons themselves on a massive scale—violence, rape, and, in this case, disease. The hellishness of prisons becomes proof that the people they hold belong there. But unlike hell, prisons are not places governed by a just and all-knowing God. Inmates are placed there for arbitrary reasons for arbitrary lengths of time and suffering that bear no real relation to their crime.

Social distancing asks a lot of us, but perhaps what it asks that is hardest is that we try, as best we can, to distinguish distance from desertion. Public health currently demands that many people will, quite literally, die alone. Against the backdrop of this deprivation, it might seem like keeping people in prisons is just asking them to do their part, too. But the imprisoned people across the country are not being asked to sacrifice on behalf of others. Instead, the conditions in which they live are held against them, as if they created them. But they didn't; we did.

We need to let the prisoners out. It is the right thing to do. The alternative is thousands of people dying totally and intentionally abandoned. We need to let them out, get them treatment if they are sick, provide them with a clean and safe place to shelter. This is a moral duty. It is very simple, like most moral duties are, and like most things that have to do with this disease are, but that does not mean that anyone is going to do it. "I had to lie on the floor in intake with about seven other people, not within six feet of each

other, but six inches," one inmate told ABC News. Nobody could deserve this. On April 5, the first inmate at Rikers died. He was there on a parole violation.

When I first started going to Mass, I would walk to the old Italian church nearest my home and sit in the back. The church is extravagantly beautiful, but sparsely attended. I would sometimes spend my time looking up at the Station of the Cross nearest to me (Christ falls the second time). I was unsure if I wanted to be there. Behind me were two saints surrounded by flickering electric candles. One was St. Anthony, easy enough for me to identify. The other was a man with a little dog, pointing at his wounded leg. He was St. Roch; I'd never heard of him.

When it comes to plagues, saints are often the ones we see rising to the occasion. It's saints who are unafraid to embrace lepers; who drink the water in which they wash pus from the wounds of the sick. It is also saints who comfort the prisoners. Roch, a fourteenth-century son of a wealthy family, ministered to victims of the plague until he contracted it himself. He retreated to the wilderness, where a dog brought him bread until Gotard, the dog's wealthy owner, followed the dog and found him. Roch eventually recovered and traveled to Lombardy, where, taken for a spy, he was thrown into (as *The Golden Legend* puts it) "a hard and strait prison," where he died five years later.

Why preserve Roch from plague but not from prison? This question is one Roch presumably never asked, but it's hard not to, as it is with many stories in which God intervenes dramatically to save a person from one fate but not another. (Why spare Catherine of Alexandria from the wheel only to allow her to be immediately beheaded?) Perhaps to be imprisoned was, like exposing oneself to disease, a form of unitive suffering. Maybe the point of the story is that other people can be crueler than disease. Or maybe there simply isn't a way to answer or even truly ask the *why*; what happened happened and is left to us to understand or take comfort from. Saints do not mean just one thing.

Roch's near contemporary was Catherine of Siena, who never much wanted to be around her neighbors. God deprived her of her solitude. It was God who had her step out into the world; God who tells her that "love of me and love of others are inseparable," that "every virtue of yours and every vice is put into action by means of your neighbors." God tells Catherine that "those who are willing to lose their own consolation for their neighbors' welfare receive and gain me and their neighbors." So Catherine went out.

Maybe Catherine would have had her own seesawing relationship with action and solitude even without God's directions. It is hard to imagine a version of her life where she does not inject herself into disputes. Still, if she were shut in her room during a plague she'd certainly be making the most of it, chewing her handful of leaves a day and beating herself, sleeping on the floor and praying ceaselessly. There's always something to do. The saints are the people with the love that puts them on the line. But there have also been plenty of saints who did not leave their rooms.

When God talks to Catherine about people who prioritize their own consolation over their neighbors, he means people who prioritize routine prayer over helping people who they see are in need. But maybe this counsel can be inverted for our time: one cannot seek the consolation of bold action if it's simply not what's required of you. Many people will not emerge from this time as heroes. They are not doctors, delivery workers, grocery-store cashiers. What they're being asked to do is small and humiliating: Stay inside. Give money where you can. Figure out a safe way to be there for your neighbors. Wear a mask. Try not to put strain on supply lines. Tip heavily on delivered food. Pray. There is no heroism in this, but it is what you can do.

Tactility has always been one of Catholicism's selling points, but now I cannot even receive Christ in the Eucharist, much less dip my fingers in holy water or click a little button to "light a candle." Watching a streamed liturgy is unbearably painful, like looking through the wedding photos of someone who didn't love you back. You can pray to Roch anywhere, but it is only in the church next to his statue that I can see him and his funny little dog, that we can share the same space.

I thought I had already made my peace when it came to the microbial world that lives on, inside and around me, with the knowledge that every surface I touched was a rich landscape I would never see or understand, that the slightest human contact involved a kind of breach of defenses. There was a lot of beauty to this. I do not believe in fearing other people, even dangerous people, or diseases, even dangerous diseases. But now it is no longer my own vulnerability I'm supposed to accept, but my danger to others.

Still, here is what I ask myself, as I sit in relative comfort: How does one recover, in this time, this kind of ecstatic, welcoming faith of the body, the love of God and neighbor that understands that the sick must be visited, the dead buried, hands held, brows mopped, that to be alone is not just a condition of life but an active hardship, that no one should die alone?

How does one recover, in this time, this kind of ecstatic, welcoming faith of the body, the love of God and neighbor that understands that the sick must be visited, the dead buried, hands held, brows mopped, that to be alone is not just a condition of life but an active hardship, that no one should die alone?

to be alone is not just a condition of life but an active hardship, that no one should die alone? If you cannot visit the prisoner or the sick—cannot even visit the dying—where is the space for these acts of love? Why is it that the best thing I, personally, can do feels synonymous with indifference?

Contagion exists, potentially, in every handshake, every present, every train ride; contagion exists in picking up something you saw someone else drop, in stopping to check in on an elderly friend, in lending a book, in hugging someone whose heart is breaking. I find myself haunted by onions I have picked up and then put down in the grocery store. *Where did they go?* (Then, regarding the onions I did bring home: *Where have you been*?) Watching people touch in movies and television is agonizing. Don't they know what they're risking? They do and they don't.

All the same, when I walk around my neighborhood, I do not think I live in a fearful city. The streets are empty and the people out walking are mindful of each other. In the grocery store people coordinate entering aisles. At 7 p.m. we clap for hospital workers. Most of the people I see are wearing masks. We may not be heroes, but we can take care of each other. In the carefully maintained gaps between one person and the next what stretches across is not just a virus; it's love. It is not the same thing as holding somebody's hand. But it's love.

And we can continue with this love, a perfect love that casts out fear, with a distance that embraces rather than refuses responsibility. We can be not afraid; we can release the prisoners. Let them out. Risk this, because it's the just thing to do. Risk this, because we can be close to each other, we do not have to desert each other, we can stand by each other. Do not be afraid. We are not alone. The angel of the Lord is always at hand.

B. D. MCCLAY *is senior editor of the* Hedgehog Review, *and a contributing writer to* Commonweal. *She lives in New York.*

NICOLE-ANN LOBO

Precarity Made Plain

Letter from the United Kingdom

In mid-March, before the University of Cambridge shut its doors, I stockpiled four boxes of library books in preparation for indefinite confinement. I have since spent my time in quarantine like many, though not all, people can: reading, writing, watching movies. I leave my house once a day—with the government's permission—for exercise. There are weekly trips to the local Sainsbury's grocery store: hundred-meter queues outside, people masked and separated six feet from one another. The pubs are boarded up, and the town square is silent. Cambridge is a tranquil town, so watching it come to a standstill hasn't produced the shock of seeing, say, New York closed down tight.

I've been paying more attention to the spring blossoms, now coming up in patches. Everything seems to beg for its beauty to be recognized. I've witnessed humanity at its best, in the form of small acts of kindness. Notes slipped under my door from faceless neighbors, offering groceries and help, no questions asked. Brownies and banana bread exchanged by friends bonding in isolation. Before leaving Cambridge, another friend gave me a plant, *hypoestes phyllostachya*, green leaves with light pink spots, to keep me company when the lockdown began.

Of course, living in quarantine in a different country has its challenges. I weighed the decision of whether to return to the United States. If I flew back, I could enjoy the comfort of my family in sunny California, instead of being alone in an attic room looking out on gloomy British skies. But if I stayed, I wouldn't risk picking up the virus on the fifteen-hour journey and potentially transmitting it to others. And if I stayed and got sick, I'd still have free health care.

Governments and health systems around the world have been overwhelmed by coronavirus, but at least the United Kingdom's National Health Service (NHS) offers equal access to testing and treatment for all, free of charge. In the early days of the pandemic, friends in the United States had told me about the astronomical costs of testing; it was something that factored into my decision to stay here. Now, though tests in the United States have been made free, they're exceedingly difficult to come by, a critical shortage that, thanks to the Trump administration's ineptitude, is likely to persist. And though some U.S. insurers have pledged to cover the costs of treatment, others are only waiving deductibles or paying a portion of out-of-pocket expenses. In other words, the usual patchwork of care and costs that characterizes the dysfunctional American system, whether or not there's a pandemic.

If there is something the United Kingdom shares with the United States, it's the initial and reckless reluctance to implement nationwide restrictions on travel and gathering. Prime Minister Boris Johnson's first response to the pandemic was plainly misguided. "Many more families are going to lose loved ones before their time," Johnson said in a March 12 address before refusing to close schools or ban large gatherings. This laissez-faire approach was intended to allow many people to contract the virus in order to build "herd immunity," which would ultimately protect the economy from widespread business shutdown. But when figures showed it could result in hundreds of thousands of deaths, Johnson changed his tune. Within a week, people were urged to stay home. All pubs were ordered to close. On March 23, as footage spread of Britons flouting social-distance measures, Johnson ordered a police-enforced nationwide lockdown. It was too little, too late: as of this writing, more than 138,000 infections have been reported, and more than 18,000 deaths. Johnson himself ultimately tested positive for the virus after bragging that it wouldn't stop him from shaking hands with coronavirus patients in the hospital; still suffering symptoms after two weeks, he was hospitalized on April 5 and placed in intensive care. He is now recovering at home.

To mitigate the economic impact on its citizens, the government plans to pay 80 percent of salaries for workers kept on by their employers, up to a maximum of £2,500 (about $3,100) per month, somewhat more generous than the one-time payout of $1,200 many Americans are set to receive. Measures have also been introduced to strengthen benefits for those who are unemployed, like increased tax credits and universal credit value, which is essentially a monthly allowance for people who are low-income or out of work. But many self-employed workers are likely to slip through the cracks, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, which estimates that around 2 million would not be covered because they don't earn enough or had only become self-employed within the past year, missing

ROBERT CONVERY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

a critical period to prove their past income. The Uber driver who brought me (and my books) from the library to my home, and had only recently begun working full-time, told me I was his first customer in his seven-hour shift. ("The government keeps telling me to work from home," he said, "but what am I bloody supposed to do? Drive in circles around my living room?") Another 2 million people who run their own companies and pay most of their income in dividends instead of salaries will not be covered either.

Since getting serious about the coronavirus, the government has dramatically ramped up its testing initiatives, which the prime minister touted as "the way through" the pandemic. The United Kingdom announced that it plans to test one hundred thousand people per day by the end of April. Hundreds of thousands of tests have been deployed, with the focus on testing thousands of frontline NHS workers because of their increased risk. There has been a sudden show of support for the NHS from those who've long sought to dismantle the U.K's government-funded social-service programs. This has been interesting to observe. A decade of Tory austerity policies have resulted in reduced NHS spending, and just a few short months ago voters overwhelmingly reelected a party intent on further cutting public health care. Since 2015, the Tory government has awarded £15 billion in contracts to private companies, outsourcing the health service's functions while reducing service quality and raising costs. Further, cuts in funding to nurse-training programs have resulted in the highest-ever vacancy rate for nursing posts, with 43,000 positions unfilled. Nearly half of NHS trusts face

The Uber driver told me: "The government keeps telling me to work from home, but what am I bloody supposed to do? Drive in circles around my living room?"

Coronavirus-assessment pod at a U.K. hospital, February 25, 2020

a 10 percent shortage in nurse staffing, which is over three times more than five years ago. Even before the coronavirus crisis began, nurses were being replaced with untrained assistants.

Since March 26, every Thursday evening, British residents are encouraged to clap from their doorsteps and balconies in recognition of the work done by NHS employees. But while the "Clap for Carers" campaign celebrates the doctors and nurses working twenty-four-hour shifts and those providing home care, it seems not to take into account the other people keeping the hospitals open—like cleaning staff, who in the United Kingdom are largely the same immigrant laborers the Tory government has tended to denigrate. It's not so long, after all, since the end of the Brexit campaign, whose chords of racism, xenophobia, and imperialist nostalgia still echo. Yet a third of all doctors in the NHS are immigrants—as were the first eight U.K. doctors to die from the disease. In early April, Home Secretary Priti Patel announced that work visas for all foreign-born NHS doctors, nurses, and paramedics would be extended for another year, "free of charge." No such concession has been granted to the hospitals' cleaning staff.

Populism and nationalism, climate change and the migrant and refugee tragedy, the election and presidency of Donald Trump: for years now it feels we've been living in one ongoing, all-encompassing crisis. So what makes the pandemic different? My initial reaction is that it's the number of people who have died, and are still likely to. Yet how much of this is my own personal anxiety, the fear that I and people I know could fall victim? After all, millions of people already die completely preventable deaths every year. It's estimated that as many as 25,000 people around the world perish each day from hunger-related diseases. Approximately 9.1 million people die of starvation annually. Yet one-third of all the food produced goes to waste. This is a problem, and it's hard not to see how policies that prioritize capital over human life play a role. Fealty to neoliberal economic policies is also behind the cuts in health-care spending in countries like the United Kingdom and denial of universal health care to Americans. It's on display in the rush to reopen businesses before the pandemic has receded, a move justified as needed to "save the economy" but one that would likely jeopardize tens of thousands more lives. Scientists had been warning of a pandemic for years, but in prioritizing short-term economic strength many countries (including the United Kingdom) paid no heed to calls to strengthen health care and other social and economic infrastructure.

While I read and write in the comfort of my room, workers at grocery stores and pharmacies, delivery drivers, and maintenance workers risk their health to provide the goods and services we need. The restaurants and pubs will reopen, people will go back to work, large gatherings will again convene. But snapshots of the levels of inequality during this "universal crisis" remind me of the state of precarity so many millions already live in, and will likely remain living in, after the pandemic ends.

I join my neighbors on our doorsteps to clap for NHS workers, while also gratefully remembering the many laborers now deemed "essential" who are contributing to my safety. And as the death toll rises in the United States, and I hear stories of my friends' parents dying, I fear for the safety of my loved ones far away. I hope that the lessons we take from the pandemic won't be lost when life returns to "normal." I know how lucky I am at this moment. I pray that the crisis might result in better, more compassionate government policies. And on a very human level, I pray we remember that all are deserving of our empathy. *April 23, 2020*

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ROBERT P. IMBELLI

Privileged & Vulnerable

Letter from a priests' retirement home

Drawing by Ivan Lapper of a lay brother bringing food to a monk's cell at Mount Grace Priory, a medieval charterhouse in North Yorkshire, England

Our experience here reinforces the general impression that the number of deaths attributable to the virus far surpasses the officially announced total.

The first sign appeared on the door of the priests' retirement residence where I live. It was March 10 and the sign read: "No Visitors Until Further Notice." Of the approximately thirty residents, perhaps only six or seven get out with any frequency, helping in parishes and attending an occasional concert. But all follow the news closely and were aware of the increasing threat from the insidious virus that had made its way from China to Europe and was now reaching New York. So the posted sign, though unwelcome, did not come as a complete surprise.

A second sign was the decision to reduce the "density" at the evening meal. We changed from one sitting to two so that, instead of four men at a table, there would be only two—one across from the other. Though this meant extra work for the staff, they accommodated themselves to the new arrangement with generosity and kindness.

A third sign appeared on March 21, and this more foreboding. Our usual custom is to celebrate Mass together in the late morning, with those attending seated along the chapel's walls, some in wheelchairs, others with walkers. Only the main celebrant would stand at the altar. It became apparent that we were physically much too close and that, even without an actual exchange of peace, our proximity could be a risk. And so the sign posted on the chapel door declared: "Mass Suspended." Of course, some continue to celebrate Mass in their rooms, but others have joined the dolorous Eucharistic fast suffered by the immense majority of God's people.

I have lived here since the residence opened about three and a half years ago. In that time close to twenty men have died of causes ranging from Alzheimer's to cancer. Most have been older than myself, but a few younger. As I would sit in the chapel, the words of the "Benedictus" about those "who dwell in the shadow of death" took on new significance. They seemed not morbid but actual and pertinent. In a culture in which death denial is so prevalent, any reminder of death's inevitability can be salutary. It can help one appreciate the present moment, its grace and possibilities. It can focus attention on what is truly important.

Then on Saturday, March 28, a yet more ominous sign appeared. An ambulance drove up to the entrance of our residence and two EMS workers in protective gear emerged and wheeled a gurney into the building. After a brief time they came out, bearing one of our retired priests. The following day a sad notice on the bulletin board reported his death. It was only the following Tuesday that the news came that he had tested positive for the virus.

Four men, who by then showed symptoms that caused concern, were taken either to the hospital or to a nursing facility. A new protocol was instituted for the remaining residents. All meals would be delivered to the rooms and left on a chair outside the door. Masks were to be worn during any necessary interaction. We were in effect quarantined within our rooms.

Since then two men who had been transferred from the residence have died. To my knowledge neither was tested, though one surmises that the virus was a contributing factor. Our experience here only reinforces the general impression that the number of deaths attributable to the virus far surpasses the officially announced total.

I am acutely aware that here in the residence we are both privileged and vulnerable. Privileged because of so many committed workers who provide for our needs—health-care providers, kitchen staff, maintenance people, food-delivery people, postal workers. Yet I am also aware of the vulnerability of elderly men, who often have other health problems. And though those who come to work here are checked for symptoms and take ordinary precautions, like simple masks, there is the real possibility that some of them are asymptomatic bearers of the invisible enemy.

I am also aware of the many in New York and elsewhere whose challenges far surpass our own. Those on the frontlines whose dedicated exploits we see morning and evening on the news. Families confined in homes both small and large, with restless children and teenagers. The homeless…one can barely imagine the plight of the homeless.

And so a new realization impresses itself: our unity in the Body of Christ. Not as some stirring theological notion, but as an ever-present reality. Never has prayer been more somatic, more alert to our oneness in the Body of Christ. Strange to say: in a time of diminished sacramentality, an enhanced corporeality may be growing. We may be beginning to fathom the mysterious truth of Paul's words: "I am completing in my own flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of his Body, the Church" (Colossians 1:24).

A good part of this enhanced corporeality is a closer attunement to the rhythms of bodily existence. I have always appreciated the Divine Office and its relation to the rhythms of nature. Lauds at sunrise, Vespers at sunset. But when I'm awake in the middle of the night, the Office of Readings joins me to relatives and friends in different time zones: Australia, Italy, the United States from east to west. Whatever time of day or night it is where they are, all pulse to the rhythms of divine grace and praise. "From the rising of the sun to its setting a sacrifice of praise is offered to the Lord."

Although I'm a diocesan priest, both my temperament and daily routine have always been somewhat monastic. Regular patterns of prayer (the Benedictine *Opus Dei*), study, teaching, writing. These continue but with an even more deliberate pattern. Rhythm again. Prayer has pride of place, but reading (the monastic *lectio*) takes up a good part of the morning. When inspiration strikes, I may undertake a short article. Since I'm an early riser (and an Italian) I usually take an afternoon nap, which sets the stage for further study in the afternoon.

I've also picked up a new habit: before bed I watch a musical performance on DVD. I have always loved to listen to classical music and have a wide selection of CDs. But lately I have found that *watching* musicians play the music concentrates my attention. It allows me to experience the music more deeply, to resonate with the gestures and expressions of the musicians. Their joy communicates itself to the viewer. We are not alone. A friend recently alerted me to the fact that on Amazon Prime TV, if one searches "Abbado," one has access to all the Beethoven symphonies conducted by the great maestro with the Berlin Philharmonic. One can follow the arc of Beethoven's genius, culminating in his Ninth Symphony. And then begin again, discovering new riches with each listening.

I have spoken of "privilege." One of the surpassing privileges of our residence is the land that surrounds it, crowned by an overview of the Hudson River and the Palisades. Just to be able to walk outdoors safely in this time of quarantine is a privilege. To be able to do so amid such beauty is sheer grace. Spontaneously, St. Francis's *Laudato si'* wells up.

Images assume ever greater importance in this time of confinement. Imageless prayer may be fine for disembodied angels, but for us mortals images are life-giving and sustaining. Atop the dome of the chapel that my window faces is a bronze statue of Christ, beckoning with outstretched arms. Every time I glance up from my desk I see Jesus inviting: "Come to me all who are burdened." Wondrously, the statue is illuminated at night. So day and night Jesus stirs and soothes my heart.

But it need not be an imposing statue. A simple crucifix, a favorite icon of Our Lady, a small print of a patron saint can equally well remind and impress upon each of us: "None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living" (Romans 14:7–9). Easy enough to quote. Our challenge, more than ever, is to make these words our own.

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RAÚL RODRÍGUEZ RODRÍGUEZ

Sanctioned Cruelty

Trump-administration policies are meant to punish the people of Cuba.

U.S. tourists from a cruise ship walk through Havana, June 5, 2019.

CNS PHOTO / ALEXANDRE MENEGHINI, REUTERS

For six decades, American foreign policy toward Cuba has consisted largely (though not solely) of unilateral coercive economic measures. Sanctions, in other words, beginning with the Eisenhower administration's cut on sugar imports to the United States in July 1960 and proceeding on up through the Trump administration, which has taken economic sanctions to unprecedented levels. Although the rationales have varied somewhat over time, the consistent objective has been to deploy U.S. economic power to undermine Cuba's socioeconomic and political systems and bring about regime change. The State Department's notorious Mallory Memorandum of April 1960 made it explicit: "The only foreseeable means of alienating internal support is through disenchantment and disaffection based on economic dissatisfaction and hardship.... If the above are accepted or cannot be successfully countered, it follows that every possible means should be undertaken promptly to weaken the economic life of Cuba."

What is commonly known as the U.S. embargo against Cuba subsequently commenced, in October 1960, when the Eisenhower administration invoked the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 to ban all exports to Cuba except medical supplies and food. In 1962, President Kennedy further tightened the screws by prohibiting the import "of all goods of Cuban origin and goods imported from or through Cuba." In the decades that followed, the United States expanded and reinforced the regime of sanctions against Cuba, by 2007 transforming it into the most comprehensive embargo on any state, according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office. Today, every major method available to a sanctioning state is currently employed: trade control, suspension of aid and technical assistance, the freezing of financial assets, and the blacklisting of foreign companies involved in trade with Cuba. (Then there are the suggested covert actions; as early as 1963, U.S. officials sought to sabotage key sectors of the Cuban economy.)

What has been the impact of this decades-long approach? Back in 2000, a report commissioned by the UN Human Rights Commission noted that "health and nutrition have been two of the primary victims of the sanctions." It quoted the highly critical report from the American Association for World Health confirming that the embargo led to "malnutrition, poor water quality, and the denial of access to medical equipment and drugs" and amounted to "the deliberate blockading of the Cuban population's access to food and medicine." Amnesty International has also documented the effects of the sanctions on economic and social rights, and has repeatedly called for the lifting of the embargo. And though the Obama administration eased certain restrictions following the accords of December 2014, those measures were limited, primarily relating to travel and cultural exchanges. None of the regulatory changes made through executive action affected the core provisions of the embargo established by federal legislation.

Enter Donald Trump, who has not only reversed the modest changes made by the Obama administration, but has also taken the sanctions program to new extremes. The measures imposed by the Trump administration are plainly geared toward bankrupting the Cuban state. They target the country's areas of economic strength, such as tourism and the export of professional services, and exploit its vulnerabilities, such as its energy dependence and its reliance on direct foreign investment. By undermining Cuba's economic performance, U.S. sanctions have further degraded the living standards of the Cuban people, who rely on the state for access to health care and education, along with subsidized housing, food, transportation, and utilities. Their plight is worsened by a new cap on family remittances, which limits the amount of money Cubans can receive from family in the United States.

We could have seen it coming. On November 29, 2016, President-elect Trump took to Twitter to threaten a rollback of the normalization efforts made by the Obama administration. Then, in June 2017, he appeared at the Manuel Artime Theatre in Miami, where, surrounded by the most conservative elements of the Cuban-American community in South Florida, he signed the National Security Presidential Memorandum on Strengthening the Policy of the United States toward Cuba. This was the first formal executive action aimed at reversing Obama-era measures. The core of the memorandum identifies sanctions as the tool of choice for dealing with Cuba, by limiting economic interaction with the country, enforcing the travel ban, and formally affirming opposition to calls from international forums to lift the embargo.

Five months later, in November 2017, the U.S. State Department published a list of 180 entities and establishments that U.S. persons could no longer frequent on the contention that they help finance the Cuban military and its intelligence and security services. These included hotels, stores, rum-manufacturing facilities, marinas, and an economic-development zone at the Port of Mariel. That list has since been updated several times and currently numbers 223 entities, including ministries and holding companies. The Treasury Department issued its own set of restrictions on travel to Cuba for educational or cultural exchange groups of U.S. citizens. The latest change related to travel was the elimination of "people-to-people" educational trips altogether, so that outreach and educational visits that don't lead to an academic degree are no longer permitted, unless with groups organized under the auspices of a licensed travel provider based in the United States. There *are* still legal ways for U.S. citizens to go to Cuba, but travel is far more severely restricted than it was before Trump came to office.

There was more to come. On March 4, 2019, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that twenty-three years after the passage of the 1996 Helms–Burton Act—which had codified mechanisms for enforcing sanctions and the embargo—the U.S. would activate a clause in the act known as Title III. This allows plaintiffs—both U.S. persons and Cuban-born U.S. citizens—to sue foreign companies that do business on properties nationalized following the 1959 revolution. That April, in Miami, then–National Security Advisor John Bolton announced two more restrictions, each of which targets a critical sector of the economy: visits by U.S. cruise ships and remittances.

Then, in June 2019, the Trump administration further clamped down on travel to Cuba by banning group trips via cruise ships, yachts, and corporate planes. More than 638,000 non-Cuban U.S. persons had visited Cuba in 2018, but that number has since dropped significantly. Analysts agree that Cuban small-business owners, who were enjoying an increase in commerce from U.S. visitors, have been especially hurt. A huge impact will fall on the Cuban private sector, because U.S. travelers, as per U.S. Treasury Department regulations, were more likely to stay at privately owned bed-and-breakfasts and hire private drivers and tour guides. At the end of 2019, it also became far more difficult for Cubans living in the United States to travel home for family visits: the State Department directed the Transportation Department to suspend all commercial flights to Cuban cities other than Havana, effective December 10. This suspension was extended to charter flights effective January 10, 2020.

Travel restrictions have also exerted a humanitarian toll. After a January 2019 tornado in Cuba that killed six people, injured many others, and damaged or destroyed dwellings, Cubans living in Japan mounted a relief effort, raising money and collecting clothing and shoes for donation. The Japanese NGO Peace Boat loaded those items onto the vessel *Ocean Dream*, which is owned by the Miami-based maritime company Seahawk Corp. But under the new travel restrictions, the aid could not be delivered, and the *Ocean Dream*, loaded with donations, was forced to return to Japan.

Coercive economic measures imposed in September 2019 are perhaps the most crippling—and cruel—to date. Under the Obama administration, people living in the United States could send unlimited remittances to family members in Cuba. Now that amount has been reduced to a maximum of $1,000 per quarter. Under the Obama administration, Cubans in the United States could also send money to Cubans who weren't family members, and to charitable organizations; now, neither of these is permissible. This will have an enormous human cost. Approximately 1 million of the more than 2 million Cubans who live abroad, most of them in the United States, send remittances to their families.

Also under Trump, the Treasury Department has further limited Cuba's access to the U.S. financial system by eliminating authorization for what are commonly known as "U-turn" transactions. These are fund transfers that originate and terminate outside the United States, where neither the originator nor beneficiary is a person subject to U.S. jurisdiction. This will have considerable

impact on how Cuban entities, whether private individuals or state owned, conduct their business with trading partners in Canada, Europe, Asia, and Latin America.

It was during 2019 as well that the Trump administration moved to disrupt oil shipments to and from Cuba, while imposing penalties on companies in third-party countries that have commercial relations with it. Such was the case of Italy-based PB Tankers SPA. The Treasury Department specifically cited six of the company's tankers as having transported oil from Venezuela, including one tanker that delivered oil products from Venezuela to Cuba. (A particular aspect of this action stands out: the attempt to disrupt Cuba's oil supply coupled with the interest in damaging Cuba's main ally in the region, Venezuela.) Subsequently, PB Tankers discontinued shipments to Cuba. Soon after that, the Treasury Department lifted sanctions on the company's fleet, "praising the Italian firm for halting deliveries of Venezuelan oil to the island nation," in the words of an AP news report.

The action taken against PB Tankers goes well beyond the restriction of trade by U.S. persons; it also goes beyond punishing Cuba's military and intelligence services, the declared targets of sanctions. Pressuring foreign shipping companies to restrict the import of oil significantly reduces the fuel available for transportation, electricity, and other vital services. But there's an even more telling example of how the extraterritorial scope of U.S. sanctions is in fact meant to impose hardship on the people of Cuba, a goal first articulated in the State Department's 1960 Mallory Memorandum. Today, in the midst of a pandemic, as companies and organizations outside the U.S. seek to deliver coronavirus-aid shipments to the island—including ventilators, masks, and testing kits—the U.S. embargo prevents them from doing so.

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POETRY

[YOU — FERNS]

John Martone

You—ferns under the window
ferns under the pine,

I planted the pines, then you,
and put in a window,

my great work of silence and shade.
And now you don't need me to sit here,

need no one to keep your secret
under a blazing sky.

How you unfold your hands
as after prayer

more and more hands
opening, perfect
unreadable scrolls.

JOHN MARTONE *is the author of several books of poetry, including* so long *and* Storage Case *and the editor of* Spiritual Necessity: Selected Poems of Frank Samperi. *His new volume of translations,* Giovanni Pascoli: O Little One and Selected Poems *will appear in December from Laertes Books.*

An interview with Pope Francis

‘A Time of Great Uncertainty’

Austen Ivereigh

Toward the end of March I suggested to Pope Francis that this might be a good moment to address the English-speaking world: the pandemic that had so affected Italy and Spain was now reaching the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia. Without promising anything, he asked me to send some questions. I picked six themes, each one with a series of questions he could answer or not as he saw fit. A week later, I received a communication that he had recorded some reflections in response to the questions. The interview was conducted in Spanish; the translation is my own.

Pope Francis leaves the library of the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican, March 18, 2020, after a livestream of his weekly general audience.

The first question was about how Pope Francis was experiencing the pandemic and lockdown, both in the Santa Marta residence and the Vatican administration (“the Curia”) more widely, both practically and spiritually.

POPE FRANCIS: The Curia is trying to carry on its work, and to live normally, organizing in shifts so that not everyone is present at the same time. It’s been well thought out. We are sticking to the measures ordered by the health authorities. Here in the Santa Marta residence we now have two shifts for meals, which helps a lot to alleviate the impact. Everyone works in his office or from his room, using technology. Everyone is working; there are no idlers here.

How am I living this spiritually? I’m praying more, because I feel I should. And I think of people. That’s what concerns me: people. Thinking of people anoints me, it does me good, it takes me out of my self-preoccupation. Of course I have my areas of selfishness. On Tuesdays, my confessor comes, and I take care of things there.

I’m thinking of my responsibilities now, and what will come afterwards. What will be my service as Bishop of Rome, as head of the church, in the aftermath? That aftermath has already begun to be revealed as tragic and painful, which is why we must be thinking about it now. The Vatican’s Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development has been working on this, and meeting with me.

My major concern—at least what comes through my prayer—is how to accompany and be closer to the people of God. Hence the livestreaming of the 7 a.m. Mass [I celebrate each morning] which many people follow and appreciate, as well as the addresses I’ve given, and the March 27 event in St. Peter’s Square. Hence, too, the step-up in activities of the office of papal charities, attending to the sick and hungry.

I’m living this as a time of great uncertainty. It’s a time for inventing, for creativity.

CNS PHOTO / VATICAN MEDIA

In my second question, I referred to a nineteenth-century novel very dear to Pope Francis which he has mentioned recently: Alessandro Manzoni's I promessi sposi (The Betrothed). *The novel's drama centers on the Milan plague of 1630. There are various priestly characters: the cowardly curé Don Abbondio, the holy cardinal archbishop Borromeo, and the Capuchin friars who serve the* lazzaretto, *a kind of field hospital where the infected are rigorously separated from the healthy. In the light of the novel, how did Pope Francis see the mission of the church in the context of COVID-19?*

POPE FRANCIS: Cardinal Federigo [Borromeo] really is a hero of the Milan plague. Yet in one of the chapters he goes to greet a village but with the window of his carriage closed to protect himself. This did not go down well with the people. The people of God need their pastor to be close to them, not to overprotect himself. The people of God need their pastors to be self-sacrificing, like the Capuchins, who stayed close.

The creativity of the Christian needs to show forth in opening up new horizons, opening windows, opening transcendence toward God and toward people, and in creating new ways of being at home. It's not easy to be confined to your house. What comes to my mind is a verse from the *Aeneid* in the midst of defeat: the counsel is not to give up, but save yourself for better times, for in those times remembering what has happened will help us. Take care of yourselves for a future that will come. And remembering in that future what has happened will do you good.

Take care of the *now*, for the sake of tomorrow. Always creatively, with a simple creativity, capable of inventing something new each day. Inside the home that's not hard to discover, but don't run away, don't take refuge in escapism, which in this time is of no use to you.

My third question was about government policies in response to the crisis. While the quarantining of the population is a sign that some governments are willing to sacrifice economic well-being for the sake of vulnerable people, I suggested it was also exposing levels of exclusion that have been considered normal and acceptable before now.

POPE FRANCIS: It's true, a number of governments have taken exemplary measures to defend the population on the basis of clear priorities. But we're realizing that all our thinking, like it or not, has been shaped around the economy. In the world of finance it has seemed normal to sacrifice [people], to practice a politics of the throwaway culture, from the beginning to the end of life. I'm thinking, for example, of prenatal selection. It's very unusual these days to meet Down's Syndrome people on the street; when the tomograph [scan] detects them, they are binned. It's a culture of euthanasia, either legal or covert, in which the elderly are given medication but only up to a point.

What comes to mind is Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae vitae*. The great controversy at the time was over the [contraceptive] pill, but what people didn't realize was the prophetic force of the encyclical, which foresaw the neo-Malthusianism that was then just getting underway across the world. Paul VI sounded the alarm over that wave of neo-Malthusianism. We see it in the way people are selected according to their utility or productivity: the throwaway culture.

Right now, the homeless continue to be homeless. A photo appeared the other day of a parking lot in Las Vegas where they had been put in quarantine. And the hotels were empty. But the homeless cannot go to a hotel. That is the throwaway culture in practice.

I was curious to know if the pope saw the crisis and the economic devastation it is wreaking as a chance for an ecological conversion, for reassessing priorities and lifestyles. I asked him concretely whether it was possible that we might see in the future an economy that—to use his words—was more "human" and less "liquid."

POPE FRANCIS: There is an expression in Spanish: "God always forgives, we forgive sometimes, but nature never forgives." We did not respond to the partial catastrophes. Who now speaks of the fires in Australia, or remembers that eighteen months ago a boat could cross the North Pole because the glaciers had all melted? Who speaks now of the floods? I don't know if these are the revenge of nature, but they are certainly nature's responses.

We have a selective memory. I want to dwell on this point. I was amazed at the seventieth-anniversary commemoration of the Normandy landings, which was attended by people at the highest levels of culture and politics. It was one big celebration. It's true that it marked the beginning of the end of dictatorship, but no one seemed to recall the 10,000 boys who remained on that beach.

When I went to Redipuglia for the centenary of the First World War, I saw a lovely monument and names on a stone, but that was it. I cried, thinking of Benedict XV's phrase *inutile strage* ("senseless massacre"), and the same happened to me at Anzio on All Souls' Day, thinking of all the North American soldiers buried there, each of whom had a family, and how any of them might have been me.

At this time in Europe when we are beginning to hear populist speeches and witness political decisions of this selective kind it's all too easy to remember Hitler's speeches in 1933, which were not so different from some of the speeches of a few European politicians now.

What comes to mind is another verse of Virgil's: [*forsan et haec olim*] *meminisse iuvabit* ["Perhaps one day it will be good to remember even these things."] We need to recover our memory because memory will come to our aid. This is not humanity's first plague; the others have become mere anecdotes. We need to remember our roots, our tradition which is packed full of memories. In the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius, the First Week, as well as the "Contemplation to Attain Love" in the Fourth Week, are completely taken up with remembering. It's a conversion through remembrance.

This crisis is affecting us all, rich and poor alike, and putting a spotlight on hypocrisy. I am worried by the hypocrisy

Go down into the underground, and pass from the hyper-virtual, fleshless world to the suffering flesh of the poor.

Pope Francis carries a candle as he celebrates the Easter vigil in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, April 11, 2020. The Mass was celebrated without the presence of the public.

of certain political personalities who speak of facing up to the crisis, of the problem of hunger in the world, but who in the meantime manufacture weapons. This is a time to be converted from this kind of functional hypocrisy. It's a time for integrity. Either we are coherent with our beliefs or we lose everything.

You ask me about conversion. Every crisis contains both danger and opportunity: the opportunity to move out from the danger. Today I believe we have to slow down our rate of production and consumption (*Laudato si'*, 191) and learn to understand and contemplate the natural world. We need to reconnect with our real surroundings. This is the opportunity for conversion.

Yes, I see early signs of an economy that is less liquid, more human. But let us not lose our memory once all this is past, let us not file it away and go back to where we were. This is the time to take the decisive step, to move from using and misusing nature to contemplating it. We have lost the contemplative dimension; we have to get it back at this time.

And speaking of contemplation, I'd like to dwell on one point. This is the moment to see the poor. Jesus says we will have the poor with us always, and it's true. They are a reality we cannot deny. But the poor are hidden, because poverty is bashful. In Rome recently, in the midst of the quarantine, a policeman said to a man: "You can't be on the street, go home." The response was: "I have no home. I live in the street." To discover such a large number of people who are on the margins.... And we don't see them, because poverty is bashful. They are there but we don't see them: they have become part of the landscape; they are things.

St. Teresa of Calcutta saw them, and had the courage to embark on a journey of conversion. To "see" the poor means to restore their humanity. They are not things, not garbage; they are people. We can't settle for a welfare policy such as we have for rescued animals. We often treat the poor like rescued animals. We can't settle for a partial welfare policy.

I'm going to dare to offer some advice. This is the time to go to the underground. I'm thinking of Dostoyevsky's short novel, *Notes from the Underground*. In another short work, *The House of the Dead*, the employees of a prison hospital had become so inured they treated their poor prisoners like things. And seeing the way they treated one who had just died, the one on the bed alongside tells them: "Enough! He too had a mother!" We need to tell ourselves this often: that poor person had a mother who raised him lovingly. Later in life we don't know what happened. But it helps to think of that love he once received through his mother's hope.

We disempower the poor. We don't give them the right to dream of their mothers. They don't know what affection is; many live on drugs. And to see them can help us discover the piety, the *pietas*, which points toward God and toward our neighbor.

Go down into the underground, and pass from the hyper-virtual, fleshless world to the suffering flesh of the poor. This is the conversion we have to undergo. And if we don't start there, there will be no conversion.

I'm thinking at this time of the saints who live next door. They are heroes: doctors, volunteers, religious sisters, priests, shop workers—all performing their duty so that society can continue functioning. How many doctors and nurses have

CNS PHOTO / STEFANO DAL POZZOLO, POOL

died! How many religious sisters have died! All serving.... What comes to my mind is something said by the tailor, in my view one of the characters with greatest integrity in *The Betrothed*. He says: "The Lord does not leave his miracles half-finished." If we become aware of this miracle of the next-door saints, if we can follow their tracks, the miracle will end well, for the good of all. God doesn't leave things halfway. We are the ones who do that.

What we are living now is a place of *metanoia* (conversion), and we have the chance to begin. So let's not let it slip from us, and let's move ahead.

My fifth question centered on the effects on the church of the crisis, and the need to rethink our ways of operating. Does he see emerging from this a church that is more missionary, more creative, less attached to institutions? Are we seeing a new kind of "home church"?

POPE FRANCIS: Less attached to institutions? I'd say less attached to certain ways of thinking. Because the church *is* institution. The temptation is to dream of a deinstitutionalized church, a gnostic church without institutions, or one that is subject to fixed institutions, which would be a Pelagian church. The one who makes the church is the Holy Spirit, who is neither gnostic nor Pelagian. It is the Holy Spirit who institutionalizes the church, in an alternative, complementary way, because the Holy Spirit provokes disorder through the charisms, but then out of that disorder creates harmony.

A church that is free is not an anarchic church, because freedom is God's gift. An institutional church means a church institutionalized by the Holy Spirit.

A tension between disorder and harmony: this is the church that must come out of the crisis. We have to learn to live in a church that exists in the tension between harmony and disorder provoked by the Holy Spirit. If you ask me which book of theology can best help you understand this, it would be the Acts of the Apostles. There you will see how the Holy Spirit deinstitutionalizes what is no longer of use, and institutionalizes the future of the church. That is the church that needs to come out of the crisis.

About a week ago an Italian bishop, somewhat flustered, called me. He had been going round the hospitals wanting to give absolution to those inside the wards from the hallway of the hospital. But he had spoken to canon lawyers who had told him he couldn't, that absolution could only be given in direct contact. "What do you think, Father?" he had asked me. I told him: "Bishop, fulfill your priestly duty." And the bishop said, "*Grazie, ho capito*" ("Thank you, I understand"). I found out later that he was giving absolution all around the place.

This is the freedom of the Spirit in the midst of a crisis, not a church closed off in institutions. That doesn't mean that canon law is not important: it is, it helps, and please let's make good use of it, it is for our good. But the final canon says that the whole of canon law is for the salvation of souls, and that's what opens the door for us to go out in times of difficulty to bring the consolation of God.

You ask me about a "home church." We have to respond to our confinement with all our creativity. We can either get depressed and alienated—through media that can take us out of our reality—or we can get creative. At home we need an apostolic creativity, a creativity shorn of so many useless things, but with a yearning to express our faith in community, as the people of God. So: to be in lockdown, but yearning, with that memory that yearns and begets hope—this is what will help us escape our confinement.

Finally, I asked Pope Francis how we are being called to live this extraordinary Lent and Eastertide. I asked him if he had a particular message for the elderly who were self-isolating, for confined young people, and for those facing poverty as result of the crisis.

POPE FRANCIS: You speak of the isolated elderly: solitude and distance. How many elderly there are whose children do not go and visit them in normal times! I remember in Buenos Aires when I visited old people's homes, I would ask them: And how's your family? *Fine, fine!* Do they come? *Yes, always!* Then the nurse would take me aside and say the children hadn't been to see them in six months. Solitude and abandonment...distance.

Yet the elderly continue to be our roots. And they must speak to the young. This tension between young and old must always be resolved in the encounter with each other. Because the young person is bud and foliage, but without roots they cannot bear fruit. The elderly are the roots. I would say to them, today: I know you feel death is close, and you are afraid, but look elsewhere, remember your children, and do not stop dreaming. This is what God asks of you: to dream (Joel 3:1).

What would I say to the young people? Have the courage to look ahead, and to be prophetic. May the dreams of the old correspond to your prophecies—also Joel 3:1.

Those who have been impoverished by the crisis are today's deprived, who are added to the numbers of deprived of all times, men and women whose status is "deprived." They have lost everything, or they are going to lose everything. What meaning does deprivation have for me, in the light of the Gospel? It means to enter into the world of the deprived, to understand that he who had, no longer has. What I ask of people is that they take the elderly and the young under their wing, that they take history under their wing, take the deprived under their wing.

What comes now to mind is another verse of Virgil's, at the end of Book 2 of the *Aeneid*, when Aeneas, following defeat in Troy, has lost everything. Two paths lie before him: to remain there to weep and end his life, or to follow what was in his heart, to go up to the mountain and leave the war behind. It's a beautiful verse. *Cessi, et sublato montem genitore petivi (*"I gave way to fate and, bearing my father on my shoulders, made for the mountain").

This is what we all have to do now, today: to take with us the roots of our traditions, and make for the mountain.

Commonweal CONVERSATIONS

Monday, October 19, 2020

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6:30pm | Reception with Featured Guests
7:30pm | Dinner & Award Presentation

Our Featured Guests:

Plus more to be announced soon!

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Matthew Boudway
Rand Richards Cooper
Dylan Corbett
Anthony Domestico
Paul Elie
Massimo Faggioli
Rita Ferrone
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Cathleen Kaveny
Paul Lakeland
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Alice McDermott
Paul Moses
Regina Munch
Mollie Wilson O'Reilly
Griffin Oleynick
Hosffman Ospino
Dominic Preziosi
Kirstin Valdez Quade
Peter Quinn
Matthew Sitman
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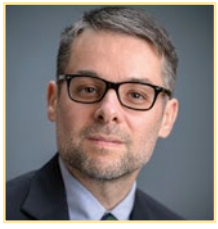
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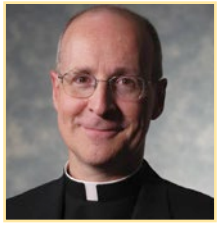
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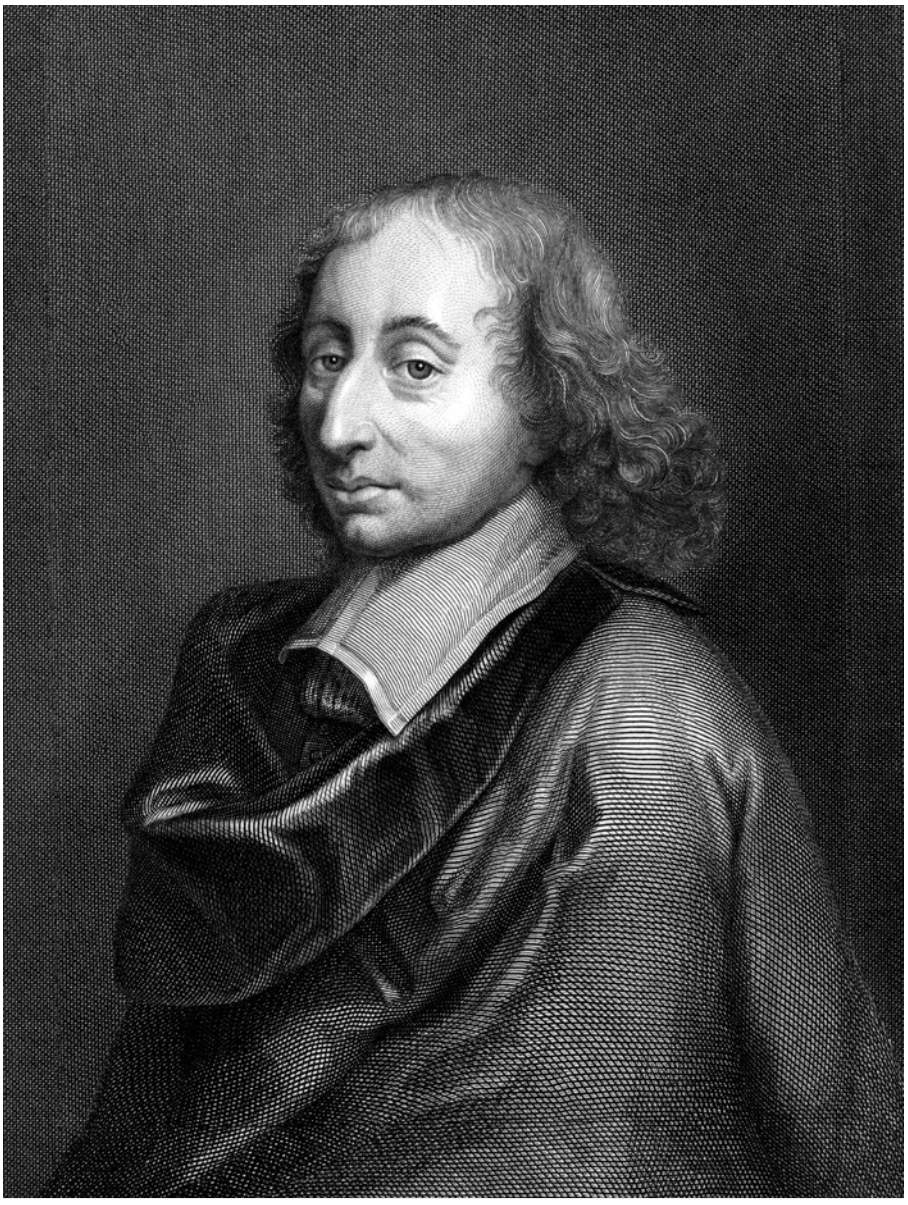
Under Pressure

Paul J. Griffiths

The weight of the magisterium lay heavy on Blaise Pascal. Instead of crushing him, it clarified his thinking—and ours.

"Magisterium" is a Latin word that designates, for Catholics, the church's teaching authority, vested principally in its bishops. Grammatically, the word is a noun in the genitive plural and means, literally, "what belongs to teachers"—teacherly things, that is. In theological usage, the teacherly thing indicated most directly by "magisterium" is authority. Jesus had this, Scripture tells us: it was strikingly and surprisingly evident in his teaching, and he is referred to as "teacher" (*magister*) in Latin versions of Scripture. The church's bishops, as Jesus' inheritors in this respect, have it too.

Authority asks for submission, and when it's recognized, submission ordinarily follows. When the state trooper's blue lights flash in my rearview mirror, I pull over. That's because she has authority and I recognize it. If I didn't, I might ignore the flashing lights. That she does in fact have authority explains why, if I ignore those lights, things won't go well for me in the short-term future. Authority is real: it belongs to those who have it whether it's acknowledged or not. But for it to become active, it must be acknowledged, whether willingly (I pull over) or not (I'm forced off the road).



Blaise Pascal

It's a commonplace that teachers have authority. If you want to learn something from someone and you don't recognize their authority to teach it to you, you won't be able to learn it from them. This is most obvious when what you want to learn is technique: ordinarily, the teacher demonstrates the technique (the fingering that makes it possible to play the *Goldberg Variations*, or the best way to make a villanelle), and then you try it for yourself. If you don't recognize the teacher's authority by observing and imitating her demonstration of whatever it is you're trying to learn, then she won't be able to teach you. The authority of a teacher is ordinarily limited to its proper sphere. It's not reasonable to expect your piano teacher to also instruct you in the proper use of a chainsaw, in rather the same way that it's not reasonable to take the state trooper's authority to extend to the establishment of foreign policy.

All human life is lived, more or less, under authority, and it's among the privileges of Catholic life for that condition to be explicit and theorized.

All this applies to the magisterium. It has its proper sphere, which is, roughly speaking, what belongs to Catholic faith and morals, with extensions into the governance of Catholic life by law. Its authority does not extend to instruction in the arts, or to empirically observable fact, or to mathematical truths. Generally, it also does not extend to questions of historical fact, or to politics, or to literature. If it *does* have anything to say about such questions, it's because answers to them are understood to have an effect upon Catholic faith and morals. And mostly they don't.

As with other kinds of authority, magisterial authority is effective only when it's freely recognized, or when teachers can force recognition on those who'd rather not give it. Since most non-Catholics don't recognize magisterial authority at all, and since the church's teachers, unlike state troopers, have few means at their disposal to make them do so, magisterial authority is, by and large, effective only for Catholics. And it's not always effective even for them, because sometimes they refuse to recognize it, and the bishops either can't or don't do what would be necessary to make them.

So here's the picture, drastically simplified but accurate as far as it goes: the church's bishops have authority to teach Catholics about what we Catholics should believe and how we should act. And that authority binds: we are to assent to, and act upon, these teachings. Because of the magisterium we can say, as the centurion said to Jesus, that we know what authority is and that we live our lives responsively to it. That is good knowledge to have, for all human life is lived, more or less, under authority, and it's among the privileges of Catholic life for that condition to be explicit and theorized.

But living a life under authority in this way comes with interesting difficulties, and with the help of Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), a peculiarly sharp thinker on this as on most other

topics, I want to consider one of them. Suppose you're a Catholic and that you take yourself to be bound by magisterial teaching: you're aware of it and you take it seriously; you don't shrug off difficulties in this sphere by replacing what the bishops teach with what seems good to you. Suppose, next, that a magisterial teaching is promulgated on a sharply delineated topic about which you take yourself to know a good deal. Suppose, further, that what the magisterium has to say about this topic is, so far as you can see, simply wrong. And suppose, lastly, that the situation of the church in your time and place makes silence on the matter seem to you either imprudent or improper. What do you do? Pascal was faced with just such a situation.

Today Pascal is mostly known for the *Pensées*, the title given in 1670 to the first publication of a collection of literary fragments left in disarray at his early death. These contain the outlines of an apologetic in favor of Catholic Christianity, a subtle and interesting understanding of the human condition with observations on death, boredom, amusement, the meaning of social and political life, and much more. The *Pensées* were widely read in the seventeenth century, as they have been ever since. Pascal also wrote a considerable quantity of polemical theology, mostly against the Jesuits, some of it published under a pseudonym during his lifetime. But during his life

Cornelius Jansen

he was mostly known as a mathematician and scientist. He made contributions to the development of calculus, designed and built the first working calculating machine, planned the first mass-transit system in Paris, performed experiments that showed the possibility that a vacuum can exist—and much more. And since he died at thirty-nine, he managed to fit all this into a short career.

Pascal lived at perhaps the last moment in European history when it was halfway reasonable to think yourself capable of having significant expertise in every department of human knowledge. He doesn't rival his younger contemporary Leibniz (1646–1716) in the range of his knowledge—who could?—but he makes Descartes (1596–1650), whom he met, and Spinoza (1632–1677) look positively provincial in their interests. But many people have great intellectual capacities. That alone wouldn't make him memorable. Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (1627–1704) was more of a polymath than Pascal, and vastly more learned. But Pascal could write with lucidity and force, and Bossuet, like most intellectuals, could not. Pascal, therefore, was read much more widely during his life, and has been ever since. The ability to write well, with lucidity, concision, wit, and force, is at least as important in intellectual life as the capacity to think, and since there is no profundity of thought that requires obscurity in writing, it's surprising how many thinkers with important things to say haven't been able to find clear language with which to say them. Pascal isn't among them: his writings were and still are a stimulating pleasure to read.

Pascal considered himself a faithful Catholic, and this was central to his self-conception. Were he to have lost or abandoned his faith, he would have lost something as close to himself as his ability to write French or think mathematically. And so, when he found himself at odds with the magisterium, he took it seriously; and because he was the kind of man who wrote about whatever he took to be important, he wrote about this situation. In fact, he wrote a lot about it, over a period of more than ten years, which means that we have a good deal of material from his hand on which to draw.

Pascal's understanding of theological topics such as God, grace, church, and the nature of the Christian life were deeply influenced by the published work of Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638), a Dutch theologian and bishop. Jansenism, named for Jansen, was a Catholic reform movement of Augustinian inspiration. It was eventually judged heretical in significant part, and it disturbed French Catholicism, and eventually European Catholicism, for a century and a half after Jansen's death. During Pascal's life, the movement was institutionally centered on the convents of Port-Royal in Paris, and Pascal was among its principal apologists. Jansenism survives now largely as a label for a set of heresies about grace and predestination, and for a harshly rigorist understanding of the disciplines of the Christian life. That is regrettable, for some of the most knowledgeable and

skilled theologians of the seventeenth century were, or later came to be called, Jansenists, and there's more to be said in favor of their work, and of the tendency within Christianity that it represents, than such a dismissive summary permits.

Augustinus (1640), Jansen's principal work, is a large study of Augustine, with a particular focus on Augustine's understanding of grace as set out in his late anti-Pelagian works. The *Augustinus* was a foundational text for Pascal and the Port-Royalists. They took Jansen's work to be correct as a reading of Augustine, and orthodox with respect to the doctrines of grace and human agency. They also took it to be an essential corrective to other, largely Jesuit tendencies within Catholicism that, as they believed, over-accommodated Christianity to the pagan mores of seventeenth-century France, and gave too much independence to human agency. In May 1653, Pope Innocent X issued a bull condemning five propositions on grace and attributing them to Jansen's *Augustinus*. Innocent described these propositions as rash, false, impious, blasphemous, scandalous, and concluded that they were, collectively, heretical. The Port-Royalists, including Pascal, responded with a flood of polemical writing.

Innocent's bull, *Cum occasione*, makes two claims. First, that a certain understanding of the workings of grace is heretical; and second, that precisely such an understanding is endorsed by a particular book—namely, the *Augustinus*. Pascal acknowledged at once the right of the magisterium to rule on questions about grace, and accepted that the five condemned propositions do enshrine an unorthodox and unacceptable understanding of grace. But he also insisted he had never held such an understanding of grace, and neither, so far as he could tell, had any of the so-called Jansenists, particularly not Cornelius Jansen, whether in the *Augustinus* or anywhere else.

Pascal's response calls into question the right—and perhaps also the capacity—of the bishops to rule on matters of fact that can be settled by ordinary empirical investigation. Matters of that sort, Pascal argued, should be investigated by those best equipped to do so, and with the methods best adapted to the task. And the question of whether the *Augustinus* really did endorse, defend, or explicitly mention any or all of the condemned propositions is exactly a matter of that sort. It's a question of fact. If you want to know what's in the *Augustinus*, there's just one appropriate method: it's to study the book. If it includes the five propositions in question, then the references can be given, the quotations supplied, and anyone who wishes can confirm for themselves the facts of the matter. Pascal notes that no one—not Innocent, not the consultors in Rome who advised him, not those among the French theologians and bishops who had it in for Pascal and his friends—had been able to show where the condemned propositions are to be found in the *Augustinus*. And that, Pascal writes, is because they aren't there. No matter what *Cum occasione* says, the *Augustinus* does not endorse or even contain *any* of the condemned propositions, much less all of them.

And Pascal tightened the screw. Matters of fact such as the one at issue don't and can't require the assent of faith.

Pascal's response calls into question the right—and perhaps also the capacity—of the bishops to rule on matters of fact that can be settled by ordinary empirical investigation.

He writes, in the *Provincial Letters*, that "when the church condemns texts, she supposes them to contain an error that she condemns; and then it's a matter of faith that the error has been condemned; but it isn't a matter of faith that the texts in fact contain the error that the church supposes to be there." In other words, whatever the pope or the bishops might say about matters of fact, positions on such matters cannot require the assent of faith. They're simply not that kind of thing. No one's orthodoxy or salvation depends on whether so-and-so wrote such-and-such in a particular book. People can disagree about what Jansen wrote, or about the best way to interpret it; but the magisterium has no special expertise in such matters.

In pursuing this argument, Pascal applied tools he'd developed in earlier controversies. (He was, from beginning to end, a controversialist: a man for whom the intellectual life was essentially an agonistic matter.) One such controversy had been about whether nature abhors a vacuum. Most of Pascal's contemporaries thought that it did, and that therefore a vacuum could never be established or observed. Pascal devised experiments that showed, decisively, that a vacuum can indeed be established and observed; and he was scathing about those (again, mostly Jesuits) who thought the question about vacuums could be resolved by appealing to what Aristotle and his interpreters had written. Pascal considered that method inappropriate to the question, which was one of physics, not Aristotelian exegesis. Those who thought that the results of Pascal's experiments must be wrong because of what the Aristotelian tradition said were ridiculous fools, and Pascal did not hesitate to ridicule them. So also here: the question about what's in the *Augustinus* is one that can be investigated by ordinary means (read the book, provide the references), and those who think it can be answered by appeal to what the bishops say misunderstand both the nature of the question and the scope of magisterial authority.

In 1656, after complicated backroom maneuverings in France and at Rome, Alexander VII promulgated the bull *Ad sanctam*, which responded directly to Pascal's argument. Pope Alexander wrote that the five propositions of *Cum occasione* were drawn from the *Augustinus*, and are condemned "*in sensu ab eodem Cornelio Iansenio intento*": in just the same sense as that intended by Jansen. This raised the temperature. Alexander didn't back off from what Innocent had written, but rather intensified it in two ways. Now the five propositions were not merely said to have been taught or endorsed by Jansen in the *Augustinus*, but to have been *excerpted* from that book; and the sense in which they were condemned was said to be exactly the sense intended by Jansen. That second claim introduced a new problem: it was no longer just a question of what was written in the book, which is a matter of public record, but also of what the person who wrote it meant by it, which isn't.

Pascal did not retreat. In 1657, partly in response to *Ad sanctam*, he restated a clear distinction between two ways of coming to assent to some claim. One is by reason, which means deploying for oneself whatever means of investigation are best suited to the claim in question. The other is by relying on authority, which means faith or trust in those best equipped to rule on the topic. Pascal subdivided this second way, faith, into two kinds. First, there's divine faith, which means faith in what God has entrusted to the church, available to Catholics in Scripture and tradition. Here tradition means "what's proposed to us by the church, with the assistance of the Spirit." The church, Pascal writes, is infallible on those matters. And then there's human faith, which means faith in authoritative people, those best equipped to teach us truths about particular matters (historical, empirical, and so on). And then Pascal writes this:

> Everything that has to do with a particular point of fact can only be assented to by human faith. That's because it's quite clear that such matters can't be founded upon Scripture or tradition, which are the two channels through which God's revelation, on which divine faith is founded, comes to us. And that's why the church can be in error on questions of fact, as all Catholics recognize.

And this:

> To command those who are entirely persuaded of the truth of some point of fact to change their opinion in deference to papal authority would be to require that they abuse their reason against the order of God himself, who has given us reason to discriminate true from false so that we can prefer what we take to be true to what we take to be false.

This makes the tension very clear. In spite of what Alexander's bull says, Pascal continued to deny that particular matters of fact can be resolved by magisterial authority, and he did that because of an epistemology—an understanding of what knowledge is and how it's arrived at—that places conclusions about such matters beyond the scope of magisterial teaching. So if you should find yourself in the position, as Pascal did, of having what you take to be clear, even decisive evidence in favor of some conclusion about a question of fact, you shouldn't abandon that conclusion because a pope or some bishops say the opposite.

It's worth pausing here to note that Pascal is correct about the question of fact at issue. None of the five propositions condemned by Innocent and Alexander is to be found verbatim in the *Augustinus*, and if Alexander said otherwise, then he was wrong. Thanks to Google Books, you can test this at home. The 1640 Louvain edition of the *Augustinus*—1,463 pages of turgidly serious Latin on double-columned badly-photographed pages—can be downloaded gratis. You can read it all with the text of the condemned propositions at hand, and if you do, you'll find that none of them has been excerpted from the book—not, at least, if "excerpted" means "taken verbatim." And if you consult the latest edition of Denzinger's *Compendium* (2012), you'll find that its notes to the relevant sections of Innocent's *Cum occasione* claim that the first of the condemned propositions is found "literally" in the *Augustinus*, at 3.III.13. But it isn't—or not if "literally" means "verbatim."

Of course, to say that the condemned propositions aren't found *verbatim* in the *Augustinus* is perfectly compatible with saying that the condemned propositions are an adequate summary of the positions defended in that text. I'll make no claim about that one way or the other. Here I focus on the matter only to provide a clear instance of Pascal's strong claim, quoted above: that it's possible for the magisterium to err on matters of fact, and that if we think we have decisive evidence that this has happened, we'd be abusing our faculties—and, I'd add, our consciences—were we to pretend otherwise.

But that isn't the end of the story. Following Alexander's bull—and after much back-and-forth among the French bishops, the Roman consultors, and various political factions, to which Pascal contributed with the vigor you might expect—the French vicars general demanded that priests, religious, and teachers of theology sign a formulary of submission to the bulls of 1653 and 1656, in wording designed to make it impossible to maintain a distinction between the condemned propositions and Jansen's teaching of them. This was in October 1661, just nine months before Pascal's death. Pascal's last surviving written contribution to the debate, composed during the last months of 1661, speaks to a situation in which, as he sees it, the Port-Royalists have only three choices: sign the formulary without reservation, which would mean agreeing that the propositions are heretical and that Jansen taught them; refuse to sign; or sign with the reservation that the signature has to do only with matters that concern the faith—i.e., *not* with the question of what Jansen did or didn't write or intend or teach, but only with questions of substance about the workings of grace.

Pascal explicitly rejects the third option. By now, he writes, "it's a point of doctrine and of faith to say that the five propositions are heretical in the sense given them by Jansen." To sign the formulary, then, is to submit to the denial of *the-five-prop-*

ositions-in-the-sense-given-them-by-Jansen. That complex object can no longer be disaggregated into its components (the five propositions on the one hand; Jansen's teaching on the other). Attempts to do so have been ruled out by *Ad sanctam* and the formulary. If one signed the formulary, one's signature meant submission to all of it; anything else would be bad faith. It would be "abominable before God and despicable before men." But it's not clear from this last surviving writing on the matter which of the other two possibilities—signing without reservation or not signing—Pascal endorsed. He died the following August.

At first blush it might seem clear which option Pascal must have favored. If, as he'd been consistent in arguing for the preceding six years, the magisterium's authority doesn't extend to matters of fact, and yet explicit submission to a teaching on just such a matter was now being required of French Catholics, shouldn't he have refused to sign? Wouldn't signing have been acknowledgement of a kind of authority the bishops don't in fact have? Perhaps. But it seems to me that there's something else Pascal might have done—and some evidence to suggest that it's what he did.

The evidence: First, it's clear that by late 1661 Pascal was at odds with other Port-Royalists on the question of the signature. The disagreements circled around whether the fact/doctrine distinction could be maintained, whether it was proper to sign with reservations, and whether it was proper to sign at all. That there were such disagreements shows at least that Pascal's final position wasn't identical with any of those held by other prominent Jansenists in 1661 and 1662, and since those positions were, essentially, sign with reservation or don't sign, it's at least possible that Pascal advocated signing without reservation. Second, there's some (disputed) evidence in support of the view that Pascal died in full communion with the church, having confessed, received the last rites, and, during the last few days of his life, fully acknowledged to his confessor the right of the church to require his assent to the claims of the formulary. That's the sworn testimony given after Pascal's death by the priest who attended him in his last days. This testimony was accepted by the bishop of Paris, who'd commissioned an investigation into Pascal's death in response to a request that his remains be disinterred from their burial place because he was a heretic who'd died separated from the Church. And third, there's evidence (again, not probative) that close to the time of his death Pascal asked Jean Domat, to whom his papers were consigned, to destroy his writings on the signature if the religious of Port-Royal found themselves under persecution, but to preserve and publish them if they'd submitted. That report makes more sense if Pascal finally advocated signing without reservation.

Pascal's case shows with unusual clarity what it is to hold together two judgments that might at first seem incompatible, and what it's like to act consistently with such a balancing act. The first judgment is: I'm convinced that *p* is the case. The second is:

Pascal's case shows what it is to hold together two judgments that might at first seem incompatible, and what it's like to act consistently with such a balancing act.

I see that the magisterium teaches *not-p*, and I acknowledge its authority to do so. Acknowledging that an authority teaches *not-p* doesn't require you to abandon your assent to *p* (Pascal never abandons his view that none of the five propositions is found in the *Augustinus*). What it does require is submission (the signature) to the authority of the teacher who teaches *not-p*. Not to acknowledge that authority would be, in the Catholic case, to separate yourself from the form of life in part constituted by such an acknowledgment; it would be to look the state trooper in the eye as she asks you to roll down your window and say, "I don't recognize your authority to direct my action; I've nothing to say to you." You may do that. But doing it comes with a price: it's the price of removing yourself from the form of life in which state troopers have authority to enforce local laws. That, *mutatis mutandis*, wasn't a price Pascal was prepared to pay in the Jansen case, and I'm with him on that. Within the Catholic form of life, the magisterium does in fact have authority to do what it did in that case.

But acknowledgment and submission don't require pretense. If it seems to you that such-and-such is the case (that the five propositions aren't in the *Augustinus*), then clarity of thought and strength of conscience not only don't require you to pretend otherwise, but require the opposite: when occasion demands, you must say that what seems to you to be the case does in fact so seem, and when relevant you must give your reasons for this judgment. Theologians call this expressing a doubt: I see that the magisterium teaches *p*, but, so far as I can tell, *not-p* is the case, and here's why. We've seen Pascal doing this, *con brio*. The modifier "so far as I can tell" is important. You might be wrong (that's always true), and seeing that the magisterium seems to be teaching that you are should place your sense of your own rightness under pressure. Pressure of that kind is usually a good thing for the intellectual life: it clarifies conviction by accentuating difference.

The pressure of authority had at least one very clear effect on Pascal's

If you never find yourself in a situation like Pascal's—seeing that the magisterium teaches one thing while, as far as you can tell, the opposite is true—that is likely an indication that you're not thinking hard enough.

thought: it led him to suggest that when the magisterium says that so-and-so's teaching of such-and-such is heretical, the right response is not to try to disaggregate the teaching (separating the so-and-so from the such-and-such), but rather to treat it as a complex whole. That's what Pascal did in his last surviving letter about the formulary. The nature of that complex whole then requires further clarification. Maybe the best way to describe it is *heresies-about-grace-insofar-as-they-are-endorsed-by-Jansen*; or maybe it's *whatever-Jansen-wrote-that-supports-this-heresy*, or *grace-heresies-best-labeled-"Jansen's"*—and there are more possibilities. Once disaggregation is rejected new possibilities for thought open up, both for the speculative theologian (Pascal) and for the teaching church. One such new possibility appeared, as we've seen, in Alexander's *Ad sanctam*: he develops what Innocent had written in *Cum occasione* by mentioning the sense in which Jansen intended the five propositions. This, as I've noted, postulates an extra-textual something, and moves everyone's thought away from the textual particulars of the *Augustinus* and toward something else—a trajectory of thought, an implied grammar, or some such. This magisterial move wouldn't have occurred without Pascal's polemics; and those, in turn, wouldn't have occurred without magisterial pressure. The benefit is mutual, and is the result of the magisterium doing what it should and of a theologian doing what he should.

The other question that Pascal's case raises and illuminates for us is about the place matters of fact have in magisterial teaching. Suppose we understand a matter of fact to be one capable, in principle, of exhaustive investigation by observation. One example: the presence of a sequence of words in a particular book—affirmed, as we've seen, variously, by Innocent X and Alexander VII in the case of Jansen's *Augustinus*. Another example: the involvement of a Roman official named Pontius Pilate in the trial, condemnation, and execution of Jesus of Nazareth—affirmed scripturally and credally ("suffered under Pontius Pilate").

Pascal came to see that his attempt to maintain an impermeable distinction between matters of this sort and matters of faith and morals couldn't be sustained. But the attempt is helpful to us in two ways. First, it shows that when the magisterium instructs about matters of fact, as it often does, it doesn't do so with any concern for those matters considered in themselves. Pontius Pilate is interesting to the church only because he was involved with Jesus; had he not been, the church would have had nothing to say about him. It follows from this that it's a misconstrual of the church's teaching about Pilate to treat it like an encyclopedia entry, from which data about Pilate can be extracted and considered independently from the story about Jesus. This is compatible with the thought that some things said about Pilate are incompatible with the church's teaching. That would be true, for example, of the statement "Pontius Pilate was actually in Rome when Jesus was tried." If you're a faithful Catholic and you find yourself believing that statement (perhaps you're a historian and you've come to think that this is what the evidence shows), then you'll find yourself in a position similar to the one just discussed: believing something incompatible with what the church teaches, while also affirming the church's authority to teach what it teaches.

But there is an interesting, if subtle, difference. Pascal's insistence on an impermeable distinction between matters of fact and matters of doctrine, and what I take to be his later abandonment of that hard distinction, shows that the tension between the church's teaching about Pilate and the historian's findings isn't best understood as a direct contradiction.

Alexander VII

It's not as it would be if you find the church teaching *it's not possible for women to be ordained to the priesthood* while you find yourself believing that it *is* possible. That's a direct contradiction. But in the Pilate case, the church teaches about Pilate only in his relation to the figure of Jesus: Pilate has no significance for the church outside that relation. His name serves as synecdoche for something like "empire-as-related-to-Jesus." The point of the church's teaching about him isn't to make an entry into a chronicle of events, but to locate Jesus in time and place, and to show something about the significance of his trial and death. Those purposes can be served in other ways, and, so far as I can see, nothing much hinges upon whether the name of the Roman official who condemned Jesus was Pontius Pilate. That much remains of Pascal's insistence that no one's salvation rests upon a matter of fact.

And that is the final gift that the Pascal case gives. It provides Catholics who want to think about matters of fact spoken to in one way or another by the magisterium with a fundamental guiding question: What is the significance for the life of the church of the magisterium's teaching about this matter of fact? There will always be some such significance if, as I've suggested, the church never teaches about matters of fact simply as such. Whenever we find ourselves in disagreement with the magisterium about a matter of fact, we should begin by trying to understand what that significance is.

If you want to think as a Catholic about the Lord God, about the human person, or about the good society, you'll find the magisterium there as a companion and a blessing, albeit one that sometimes comes with painful difficulties. Pascal's case, on my reading of it, shows how that blessing may be welcomed and the difficulties embraced, to the benefit of all concerned. If you never find yourself in a situation like that of Pascal—seeing that the magisterium teaches one thing while, as far as you can tell, the opposite is true—that is likely an indication that you're not thinking hard enough, and therefore not doing the job the church needs you to do as a thinker. If, when you do find yourself in Pascal's situation, you pretend to yourself and the world that you don't take to be true what you do take to be true, you're also failing, this time by treating the magisterium as if it were Big Brother and concealing the truth out of fear. Your task as a Catholic thinker is always to do the best you can at what you're thinking about; to be as clear as you can about the conclusions to which your thinking leads you; to delineate, as clearly as possible, what differences you have with the magisterium's teaching; and, at the same time, to acknowledge the magisterium's authority, recognizing that you are more likely to be wrong than the church is. All that together makes a delightfully difficult task. Neither the delight nor the difficulty should be forgotten or covered over. Together, they're the Catholic thing.

PAUL J. GRIFFITHS, *a longtime contributor to* Commonweal, *is the author of several books, including* Intellectual Appetite: A Theological Grammar, *and, most recently,* Christian Flesh *(Stanford University Press).*

POETRY

EACH WEEK

Michael Miller

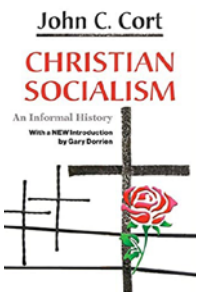
Bedridden at ninety-five,
Her long white hair
Always combed,
She drifts in, she drifts out
Of that place
No one can reach.
She recognizes the flowers
He brings. "Daffodils," she says
At the beginning of spring,
"And who are you?"

MICHAEL MILLER'*s new book is* Waking In The Dark *(Pinyon Publishing). His poems have appeared in the* Sewanee Review, *the* Yale Review, *and* Raritan.

From Catholic Worker to DSA

Gary Dorrien

John Cort's long road to socialism



CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM
An Informal History

JOHN C. CORT
Orbis Books
440 pp. | $45

John C. Cort was a retired labor journalist, Peace Corps regional director, Massachusetts service-corps director, and Model Cities program director when he became a socialist in 1975 and two years later began to write *Christian Socialism*. The writing went on for ten years, contributing mightily to some of the happiest years of his life. He had spent his entire forty-year career of labor journalism and social activism in the outer orbit of his subject, doubting all along that democratic Christian socialism was genuinely democratic or Christian. But he changed his mind. *Christian Socialism* was the product of a recent conversion and a commitment to evangelize.

John Cort at his home in Nahant, Massachusetts, during the summer of 1979. This photograph was likely taken by his son, Paul.

Cort wished it had not taken him so long to learn that there was a long and rich tradition of Christian socialism. The book he wrote was the one he wished he could have read as a much younger man. He kept finding as he wrote that there was more to cover than his framework allowed, and he was keenly aware that his theologically conservative Catholicism filtered everything he wrote about socialism and Christian socialism. But he acknowledged this standpoint with characteristic honesty, and the things he got wrong did not come from trying to make his favorite Christian socialists come out best. Cort did not have a mind for theory; a great deal of socialist theory and Christian-socialist theology seemed pointlessly abstract to him. His subject was the real-world career of Christian socialism in France, England, German-speaking Europe, the United States, the Roman Catholic Church, and liberal Protestant ecumenism—a story he told winsomely.

Cort was born in 1913 in Woodmere, Long Island, the youngest of five boys. His father, Ambrose Cort, was a quintessential liberal and deist who believed in cultural progress, education, the League of Nations, and later, Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. He taught in a Brooklyn junior-high school by day, taught Latin and English in a night school to keep his family solidly middle class, and willingly attended the Episcopal Church with his wife, Lydia Cort, a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music. John Cort grew up comfortably enough that he was blissfully unaware of the Depression until 1936. The poor sections of New York City that he glimpsed from a train window looked no worse to him in 1933 than in 1923. The poor were always there, remote and unknown. I heard Cort tell his story several times

What good was Catholic social teaching if Catholics didn't know what it was? That question drove Cort to teach Catholic unionists the social doctrines and history he had to teach himself.

over the years; he knew it was unusual and interesting, plus the key to how he ended up. Eventually he wrote it up in his book *Dreadful Conversions: The Making of a Catholic Socialist* (Fordham, 2003), on which I draw.

Cort heard a great deal in his youth about being a responsible person and doing well in school. The Episcopal Church made very little impression on him, despite three years of schooling at the Choir School of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in Manhattan. Church was simply boring and nothing else. He won a scholarship to Taft, a prep school for rich kids in Watertown, Connecticut, which put him on track to get into Harvard, where he enrolled in 1933. At Harvard he studied the classical humanism of Irving Babbitt and tried to adopt it, but stewed over the question of whether humanism provides enough meaning to live by. Two things drew him into the Catholic Church. The first was an experience of romantic heartbreak that compelled him to realize he was not as rational as he'd thought. Then he read the four gospels straight through and was caught by the Gospel itself.

The picture of Jesus that the gospels convey broke through to Cort—a convicting impression that stuck with him for the rest of his life. This picture trumped whatever it was that biblical scholars rattled on about. Jesus made an impression of divinity through his powerful words and deeds, the poor flocked to him, he claimed a unique relationship to God, he denounced sin and oppression, he was crucified for it, and God raised him from the dead. Cort said the gospels felt like good reporting to him. They tell a story crammed with realistic details, conveying a ring of truth. It amazed him that scholars thought they were grasping a deeper truth when they deconstructed the biblical text. On several occasions Cort asked me to explain the different kinds of biblical criticism to him and why he should care about them. It was always the same conversation because most biblical scholars did not describe what changed his life. The few that he trusted, notably Raymond Brown and Alan Richardson, seemed to get it.

In his college years Cort sang in the choir for pay at an Episcopal Church in Cambridge. These were the same kind of decorous middle-class and upper-middle-class churchgoers among whom he had been raised, but now he paid attention to the sermons and asked various clerical sermonizers what they believed. Most of them didn't believe very much, telling Cort the Nicene Creed was symbolic and historically relative. Cort vowed not to stay in a church that undermined its own authority and the authority of the Gospel. He read two articles by Jesuit theologian J. Pohle on grace and predestination, seated in Harvard's Widener Library. Pohle said the Catholic Church teaches that all are given sufficient grace to be saved and grace is thwarted only by the free resistance of the human will. Cort left Widener flush with gratitude that Catholicism believed in his freedom and God's goodness. He walked two blocks to St. Paul's Church to join the Catholic Church, but his father exploded at the news, threatening to terminate Cort's studies at Harvard. He wouldn't become a Catholic until he graduated in June 1935, still walled off from the catastrophe ravaging the poor, the entire working class, and much of the former middle class.

Cort hooked a job writing for a Boston weekly in Brookline. In December 1935 Cort encountered a man selling the *Catholic Worker* newspaper outside a French Catholic church in Boston. He had never heard of the Catholic Worker (CW), which Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin had founded on the Lower East Side of Manhattan in 1933. The inaugural issue of the paper had declared that its purpose was to expound the ideas about social justice contained in the papal encyclicals. Cort read one of Maurin's front-page free-verse poetic jingles. It was strange and a bit cheesy, but also intriguing. The last page contained a fundraising appeal from Day begging for donations to be shared with the homeless and hungry of New York City. By 1936 the *Catholic Worker* had a circulation of 150,000. It espoused a pacifist, communal, anarchist-leaning Catholicism devoted to feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, providing a home for the homeless, and seeing Christ in the poor and vulnerable. It asserted defiantly that Communists were not the only ones who cared about the poor and oppressed. Cort joined the Boston affiliate of the CW, heard Day speak in Boston in April 1936, and quit his job, moving into the new CW house in New York, House of Hospitality on Mott Street in Little Italy.

Cort was drawn to Day's saintly intensity and her familiar Episcopal-to-agnostic-to-Catholic conversion story. He liked that she wrote for socialist papers before she converted to Catholicism, and that her writing style closely resembled his—low key, filled with anecdotes about people and events, and sprinkled with biblical sayings. Before Cort arrived at House of Hospitality he wrote a characteristically opinionated letter to Day and Maurin declaring that they were wrong about pacifism; moreover, Maurin erred in saying there was nothing wrong with communism. That pegged Cort as

a Harvard know-it-all before he arrived. Maurin loathed all institutions except the Catholic Church. He was a deeper-down anarchist than Day; unlike her, he did not care about American leftist movements. Maurin wrote in 1936 that strikes didn't strike him. That was unbearably flippant to Day, who replied that strikers fight for the right to be treated as human beings instead of slaves.

John L. Lewis founded the Committee for Industrial Organization in 1935, which became the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1938 after it broke away from the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Lewis fulfilled a longtime socialist and industrial-unionist dream by organizing millions of workers in the mass-production auto, steel, electrical, and rubber industries. The United States had never had a real labor movement in the European sense; it had a bunch of business unions that fended off its socialists seeking to build a labor party. For a while, in the 1930s, it seemed that the Depression might rewrite the script on what kind of labor movement was possible in the United States. Cort found his first calling in this situation.

Day said Cort came to the Catholic Worker to join the labor movement and found himself in a flophouse. Cort said that was not quite right; he became a labor journalist because Day pushed him into it. He wrote about union organizing, strikes, and strikebreaking for the *Catholic Worker,* entering a world unknown by his teachers at Taft and Harvard. He taught a course at the CW on the 1931 papal encyclical of Pius XI, *Quadragesimo anno,* which updated the 1891 encyclical of Leo XIII, *Rerum novarum*. Both encyclicals were harshly critical of capitalism and socialism, calling for a reconstructed social order based on the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, the right to private property, and the right to collective bargaining. Cort taught himself the encyclical tradition as he taught the course, barely keeping ahead of the class. He caught some flack from CW pacifists for siding too clearly with the CIO, but not from Day. Cort crafted a speech that he gave at Catholic parishes and CW events. He quoted select passages from *Quadragesimo anno* about the concentration of economic power under capitalism, asked the crowd to identify the source, and corrected them when they guessed it must be Karl Marx or the Communist *Daily Worker.*

He commended the balanced wisdom of the papal tradition. On one hand, it condemned the fundamental principle of capitalism that production is primarily for profit and not for the satisfaction of human needs; on the other, it did not claim that the wage system is essentially unjust or inevitably exploitative. But what good was Catholic social teaching if Catholics didn't know what it was? That question drove him to teach Catholic unionists the social doctrines and history that he had to teach himself, and he gathered a CW group in 1937 to launch the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU), an educational association for Catholic members of unions. That mission to educate was the foundation of his entire career in labor journalism and activism, which Cort repeated in the 1970s after he became a socialist.

He gave five years of full-time service to ACTU and wrote for its national weekly newspaper, the *Labor Leader,* for twenty years. Cort expressed the teaching of *Quadragesimo anno* that workers have a right to share in the control and decision-making of plants and industries through worker groups variously called industry councils, vocational groups, or guilds. He denied the accusation of liberals and Communists that this idea was best described as corporatism or fascism. Cort defended the CIO sit-down strikes of the late 1930s, denying that sit-downs violated the property rights of owners, though the Supreme Court ruled otherwise in 1939. He steered ACTU and the paper entirely toward the nexus of labor news and Catholic social teaching, which gradually took him outside the orbit of the CW. The *Labor Leader* did not expound in CW fashion on agrarianism, pacifism, anarchism, liturgy, and spirituality. Cort became wholly absorbed in Catholic union activism while Day drifted from it except for Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW).

ACTU supported a dozen different strikes, mostly by the new CIO unions. Cort supported the efforts of United Auto Workers leader Walter Reuther and CIO leader Philip Murray to drive Communists out of the CIO unions. He took pride in belonging to the Catholic wing of the anti-Stalinist Left. Cort did not apologize for opposing Communist influence in the CIO and he was averse to later scholarship that romanticized the Popular Fronts of 1935–1939 and 1941–1945. What really cut him, however, was the failure of the merged AFL-CIO in the late 1950s to root out corruption. It distressed him so much that he bailed out of labor activism; industrial democracy had failed. He joined the flagship of liberal Democratic Party anti-communism, Americans for Democratic Action, wagering that perhaps political democracy might be more effective.

Cort struggled for a dozen years with tuberculosis, believing his meager diet at the Catholic Worker was the cause of his illness. In 1943 he met

His daughters persuaded him that their family had a division-of-labor problem caused by patriarchy, Christianity, American society, and him.

a recent graduate of the College of New Rochelle, Helen Haye, at the New York ACTU headquarters. He courted her for three years in and out of various hospitals, married her in 1946, and their first child was born in 1947, followed by nine more. Cort said he was "totally Catholic" when it came to marriage and family, believing in "seek ye first the kingdom of God and all shall be added to you." In 1973, however, he bowed to the insistence of his large family that he had to accept household chores like everyone else and stop citing the apostle Paul on his God-given paternal authority. His daughters persuaded him that their family had a division-of-labor problem caused by patriarchy, Christianity, American society, and him.

The expulsion of the Stalinist unions from the AFL-CIO ironically devitalized ACTU, depriving it of a galvanizing opponent. The *Labor Leader* ran its last issue in November 1959, though New York ACTU kept going into the 1970s. Cort served on the editorial staff of *Commonweal* from 1943 to 1959, forging friendships across its liberal Catholic readership. He worked successively as a business agent of the Boston Newspaper Guild, regional director of the Peace Corps in the Philippines, director of the Massachusetts Commonwealth Service Corps, and director of the Model Cities Program in Lynn, Massachusetts. In 1965 he moved his family to Roxbury, a predominantly African-American section of Boston, believing that white liberals like him needed to prove their commitment to racial integration, especially if they ran an anti-poverty agency as he did. In his last paycheck job he funded sixteen projects, including a Meals on Wheels program, a senior citizens' center, a housing-rehab program, and three child-daycare centers. It was good work tied to political vicissitudes, and an unfriendly mayor pushed him out in 1973.

Cort was sixty years old when he stopped earning paychecks and vowed to figure out the meaning of his life. In January 1974 he attended a conference at Massachusetts Institute of Technology sponsored by a new organization called People for Self-Management (PSM). There he met one of the leading theorists of worker ownership, Cornell political economist Jaroslav Vaněk, and was deeply impressed by keynote speaker Irving Bluestone, a UAW economist and vice president. Bluestone said workplaces needed to become more interesting, complex, democratic, and humane. Cort joined PSM and attended a meeting of another new organization, the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC).

The founder and leader of DSOC, Michael Harrington, was an old acquaintance of Cort's from their *Commonweal* days. Harrington had grown up very Midwestern, middle class, and Catholic in St. Louis, Missouri. He moved to New York after graduating from Holy Cross College and the University of Chicago, joining the CW in 1952, where he ran the *Catholic Worker* for a while and became Day's favorite Worker. It took Harrington two years to decide in succession that he did not believe in anarchism, pacifism, or God. He morphed into the sectarian world of New York Marxism, joining a group led by former Trotskyite Max Shachtman. He kept writing for *Commonweal* and in 1958 he followed the Shachtmanites into the Socialist Party, led by Norman Thomas. In the 1960s Harrington was the youthful star of the Socialist Party. He was deeply involved in the Civil Rights movement and wrote a famous book in 1962 titled *The Other America,* contending that 50 million Americans were poor in their supposedly affluent society. In 1973 he led a progressive faction of the Socialist Party into DSOC, breaking with rightwing Socialists who loathed the anti-war movement, the feminist movement, and the liberal turn in the Democratic Party. DSOC was founded as an inclusive, open-ended, multi-tendency organization that united the Old Left with the 1960s New Left. It was more Old Left than New Left, but trying, and its Boston chapter was emphatically religion friendly. Cort attended a DSOC gathering at the Paulist Center, hearing speeches from *Commonweal* editor Peter Steinfels and Holy Cross College historian David O'Brien.

Very characteristically, Cort arose to ask the speakers the same question he had asked Norman Thomas at a Harvard venue forty years previously. If they believed in freedom as much as they claimed, how could they believe in state ownership of the means of production? Steinfels and O'Brien were no more persuasive than Thomas had been, but Cort had a worker-ownership answer in his head, and he immersed himself in DSOC literature and Harrington's books. Two Harrington factors won him over: Harrington was unquestionably devoted to freedom and democracy, and he denied that socialism should be equated with nationalizing the economy. Harrington's socialism was pragmatic, pluralistic, and more decentralized than not, committed to mixed forms of worker ownership and public ownership, mostly at the local level. These positions were much less exceptional than they seemed at the time to Cort. State

socialism was a latecomer in the history of socialism everywhere except Germany. The earliest traditions of socialism were cooperative, communal, and decentralized.

Cort began to think that perhaps he had been a socialist ever since he joined the ACTU. He greatly admired Julius Bernstein, a revered veteran of the Old Left and director of the Jewish Labor Committee who was the ringleader of Boston DSOC. In September 1975 Cort told Bernstein he was ready to join. He wrote an article announcing his decision ("Why I Became a Socialist," *Commonweal,* March 26, 1976), leading with a typically puckish Cort anecdote plucked from Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov.* A French police official professed that he didn't fear the socialists, anarchists, infidels, and revolutionaries. He understood them and kept watch over them. The people he feared were the Christian socialists: "They are dreadful people! The socialist who is a Christian is more to be dreaded than the socialist who is an atheist." Cort enjoyed the suggestion that he became dangerous after many years of respectable work as a professional service director. One paragraph later, however, he played up that DSOC operated in the left wing of the Democratic Party, and that its roster of distinguished members included economist John Kenneth Galbraith, literary critic Irving Howe, and UAW icon Walter Reuther.

Cort observed that DSOC proposed to nationalize part of the defense industry and some of the big banks. It also proposed that employee and public representatives should be placed on the boards of directors of all major industrial and financial corporations. If that was democratic socialism, he had been one for a long time: "Since conversion to Catholicism in 1933 I have always been rather conservative in theology and inclined to take seriously the opinions of the Popes as expressed in their encyclicals." From the popes he absorbed that socialism is about nationalizing the economy and abolishing private property. But what if socialism is more complex and various than that—and always has been? Cort noted that even in select industries where nationalization is the socialist solution, it could mean different things. In 1894 French Socialist leader Jean Jaurès proposed that France's mines should be nationalized and managed one-third by worker representatives, one-third by worker and peasant unions from other areas of the economy, and one-third by the standing government. That sounded to Cort like a good solution to the terrible problem of the coal industry. He stressed that producer and consumer cooperatives are forms of social ownership, and that West Germany had co-determined enterprises. He noted that John XXIII, in *Mater et magistra* (1961), improved on Pius XI in *Quadragesimo anno.* It was not merely a good idea to grant workers some share in their enterprises; Pope John said it was a "demand of justice." Cort reveled in the inside story that German Jesuit Oswald von Nell-Breuning wrote the first drafts of both encyclicals.

In 1977 a group of religious socialists gathered at the DSOC convention in Chicago to organize a Religion and Socialism group and its publication, *Religious Socialism.* Cort ran the magazine for eleven years, handed it over to Jack Spooner and Curt Sanders for ten years, picked it up again in 1998, and in 2000 passed it to Andrew Hammer, Norm Faramelli, and Maxine Phillips. To read the magazine in its early years was to get very familiar with the Frankfurt Declaration, the 1951 platform statement of the Socialist International, since Cort quoted it constantly. The Frankfurt Declaration was social democratic and revisionist, equating democratic socialism with believing in universal rights of freedom and economic well-being, not a particular ownership scheme. He treated it with a decided reverence, prizing one Frankfurt statement above all others: "While the guiding principle of capitalism is private profit, the guiding principle of Socialism is the satisfaction of human needs." That was an echo of *Quadragesimo anno*, to his delight. Cort could not have become a democratic socialist if its official international organization had retained Marxian language condemning private profit, even if, like the Catholic Church, the Socialist International also claimed that the satisfaction of essential human needs must be lifted above it.

It puzzled him that very few of his religious socialist comrades held a similarly reverent feeling about the Frankfurt Declaration. Cort treasured the revisionist outcome in social democracy before he studied the history behind it. *Christian Socialism* barely mentioned the blowout between Eduard Bernstein and Karl Kautsky within German Social Democracy that produced a revisionist tradition, but Cort realized he had to learn about it to understand some of his theologian subjects and himself. Much of the relevant history was highly theoretical and tangled. Harrington detailed a fair amount of it in his books, but he insisted that Marx was a radical democrat remarkably like Harrington, and he obscured how much he owed to British revisionist socialist Anthony Crosland. Harrington's leadership responsibilities in DSOC and Democratic

Socialists of America (DSA) sometimes compelled him to fudge his position. He gave the appearance of claiming that capitalist markets should operate within socialist plans, but in fact his planning proposals were Social Democratic strategies operating within capitalist markets: solidarity-wage policies, co-determination, and worker investment funds.

In 1989 the International replaced Frankfurt with the Stockholm Declaration. It carried on for fifty-five paragraphs about economic rights and democratic-socialist values before it said anything about models of ownership. Then it advocated worker and public ownership "within the framework of a mixed economy." Harrington was one of its coauthors, just before he died of cancer. Cort jubilantly embraced the Stockholm Declaration, exulting that it *didn't even mention* Marxism. It featured trademark Harrington arguments—state ownership by itself does not guarantee economic efficiency or social justice, equality is the condition of the development of individual personality, and equality and personal freedom are indivisible.

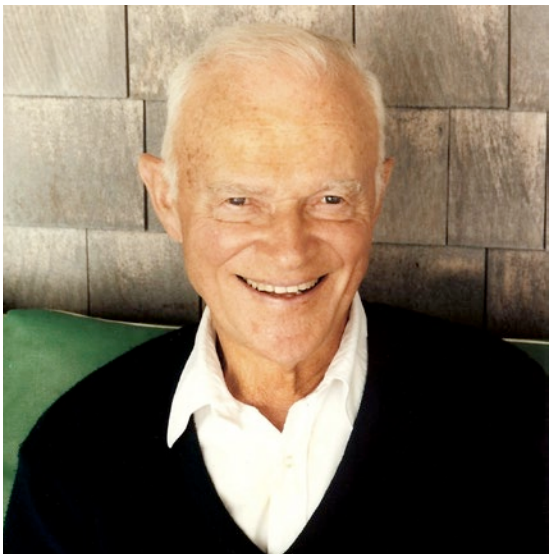
In Cort's last issue of *Religious Socialism* (Summer 2000), he bowed out with what he called "a public service," reprinting the entire text of the Stockholm Declaration under the banner title "This Is Socialism," which he juxtaposed to a passage from *The Communist Manifesto* under the title, "This Is Not Socialism—This Is Communism." The latter passage was the Marx-Engels exhortation about overthrowing the capitalist class, centralizing all instruments of production in the hands of the state, and abolishing private property. Cort said he grieved that the latter type of thought continued to infiltrate DSA, perhaps "by a kind of secret seduction." Elsewhere he celebrated that the Stockholm Declaration said nothing about abortion. Cort had a history of halting DSOC and DSA conventions on this subject, demanding to know on what basis they claimed expertise in moral theology. He knew he would lose the vote overwhelmingly, which didn't stop him from making a ruckus.

Sister Mary Emil Penet, IHM, a social-ethics professor at Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, told Cort after reading his article on "Why I Became a Socialist" that he should write a book on the history of Christian socialism. She jump-started the project by securing a position and library privileges for him at Weston. Cort dove into the work in 1977 and it became a wonderful obsession. He had written a lot but had never been a scholar. His book would not be as theoretically oriented as the works of major figures he wrote about. He was a journalist, he said, who wrote journalese. Yet Cort was deeply offended when Orbis Books hung a truth-in-advertising subtitle on his book, "An Informal History." He smoldered for years at the subtitle, feeling slighted by it. Writing journalese, he would say, was no reason to insult him. Cort believed his biggest error in the book was his statement that Christian Social Democrats of Sweden had one thousand members, when in fact it had ten thousand members.

Actually, there were larger problems. A big one came on the first page, where Cort framed and defined socialism. Rightly he said that socialism and Marxism are widely various. Cort explained that the Marxist spectrum ranged from Lenin at the dictatorial end to Harrington and Rosa Luxemburg at the democratic end. Nearly everything about this frame was wrong. It erased the enormously significant phenomenon of ultra-left Marxism, erased the equally weighty tradition of right-wing Marxism, and misrepresented Luxemburg.

Cort got Luxemburg wrong because he fixed too simply on democracy, and her warm words about it confused him. He graded varieties of Marxism entirely by the democracy factor. There were two main reasons for this fixation: people lumped democratic socialists with Communists, and Latin American liberation theologians recycled Marxian slogans about the sham of liberal democracy. Both things galled and motivated Cort. Luxemburg's glowing commendation of something called democracy sounded like Harrington to Cort. She was a true believer in the full-bore utopian version of the Marxian dictatorship of the proletariat. But Marxian dictatorship, she said, had to be the work of the entire proletarian class. It was not something owned by a revolutionary elite. It had to flow out of the active participation and direct influence of the masses; otherwise it was another form of tyranny. Cort caught the utopian idealism in Luxemburg, but wrongly thought it made her an anti-Leninist.

Problems of this sort recur in Cort's rendering of socialist theologians, registering what he knew, what he favored, and what he half understood. For example, his entire discussion of Karl Barth's performance at the Tambach Conference of 1919 conflated the first and second editions of Barth's *Epistle to the Romans,* misunderstanding that these were two very different books and the one that caused a sensation was the second one of 1921. Moreover, Barth had serious dialectical-theological reasons for distinguishing between Christian socialism and religious socialism, emphatically rejecting religious socialism, and saying he was a Christian and a socialist but not a Christian socialist. Cort didn't even try to tease out the argument.



John Cort in 1996

He tagged Barth as a victim of Godwin's disease, "destitute of common sense," who was somehow a great theologian. Cort was too quick to brand as confused any theologian who confused him.

But I have passed many copies of *Christian Socialism* on to students for thirty years because it took a magnificent swipe at a sprawling story that no one else even tried to cover. Cort delivered the goods about how Christian socialism developed in England, Germany, and the United States. The book was crammed with the learning of his later life, radiating his deep moral integrity. It offered memorable, succinct, often funny, always perceptive characterizations of the major players from Moses to Gustavo Gutiérrez. It worked because Cort never strayed from writing the book he wanted to read. He was far more interested in people and anecdotes than in theories, and he wrote about socialist theologians and Christian socialist activists with a keen interest in how they heard the Gospel, what drove them, why they remained Christian, how much orthodoxy they retained, and how they related their faith to socialist politics.

Cort prized common sense. His favorite Christian socialists were long on common sense as he construed it. The figures who disappointed him usually took flight from it, whether out of excessive idealism, a utopian impulse, an annoying woolly-mindedness, a tendency to over-intellectualize, or an alienated numbness. Others disappointed him by interpreting Christian doctrines too loosely; it puzzled him that they had to contrive some new meaning out of the creeds. Cort was always lucid, cogent, reasoned, and opinionated. Everything he wrote had to pass the newspaper test of clarity and transparency. He told readers straight-out what he got from reading theologians, and his best sections vividly conveyed real-world contexts resembling struggles he had lived through.

Christian Socialism, long in coming, came out just before the Berlin Wall came down and the Soviet Union imploded. I asked Cort if he anticipated a second edition that registered how the Soviet Communist episode turned out. Perhaps the death of Soviet Communism would occasion a second chance for democratic socialism? Cort said he would welcome the opportunity to add a chapter if asked, but would not press for it, since the book stood well enough on its own. His feelings about the Communist disaster were sprinkled through the book; it was obvious what he would say if he added a chapter. Today there is a great global revulsion against forty years of letting the big banks and corporations do whatever they want. The second chance that we hoped for in 1990 has come. The slogan that defined two generations of neoliberal capitalism—"There Is No Alternative"—no longer works to intimidate young people. There had damned well better be an alternative to severe inequality and the destruction of the planet.

Democratic socialism has made a comeback as a name for the belief in economic rights and the desire for an alternative to neoliberalism and eco-catastrophe. Some of this rebellion is occurring within the Democratic Party and much of it is operating outside the Democratic Party. Cort would be unsettled by the fact that a resurgent DSA has vowed to break free of the Democratic Party. On both sides of this argument, however, there is a case to be made for the enduring relevance of religious socialism. Throughout the history of democratic socialism, Christian socialists have refused to say that capitalism is the cause of all social harm, and they have refused to subordinate their ethical convictions to an ideology. Christian socialists have Christian reasons to be socialist. *Christian Socialism* tells this story with genial grace, making a persuasive case for why it mattered then and now.

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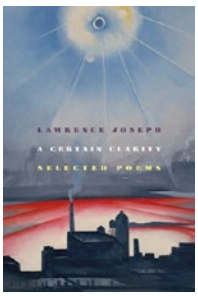
‘So Many Selves’

Anthony Domestico

A poet of unlikely combinations



A CERTAIN CLARITY
Selected Poems

LAWRENCE JOSEPH
Farrar, Straus and Giroux
$28 | 208 pp.

> …So many selves—
> the one who detects the sound of a voice,
> that voice—the voice that compounds
> his voice—that self obedient to that fate,
> increased, enlarged, transparent, changing.
> —from “Woodward Avenue”

All poets have many selves; all non-poets do, too. But the selves that constitute the poet Lawrence Joseph are particularly numerous and peculiarly unlikely in their combinations.

Lawrence Joseph is a Detroit poet. (For decades, his father and uncle owned and ran a grocery store, which they inherited from their father, on the corner of John R. and Hendrie.) He’s a New York City poet. (He has lived in Battery Park, a block from Ground Zero, for twenty-six years. After the September 11 attacks, he couldn’t locate his wife, the painter Nancy Van Goethem, for more than twenty-four hours.) He’s an Arab-American poet. (His grandparents were among the first wave of immigrants from Lebanon and Syria to Detroit in the 1910s.) He’s a leftist poet. (“Eyes fixed on mediated screens,” he writes in “Visions of Labor,” “in semiotic / labor flow: how many generations between / the age of slavery of these States and ours?”) He’s a Catholic poet. (Or, as he prefers, a poet who is Catholic—one who has been, as he announces in the very first poem in his very first book, “appointed the poet of heaven.”) Perhaps most interestingly, he’s a lawyer-poet.

This last compound identity distinguishes Joseph from almost every other great American poet (*almost*: there is also Wallace Stevens). For nearly fifty years, Joseph has led two distinct professional lives—one legal, one poetic. Since 1987, he has been on the faculty at St. John’s University School of Law in Queens, where he serves as Tinnelly Professor of Law and teaches courses on torts and compensation, labor and employment law, and law and interpretation, among other subjects. Before coming to St. John’s, he taught at the University of Detroit and clerked for Justice G. Mennen Williams of the Michigan Supreme Court. He has given papers at (and been the subject of) legal conferences, and he has

published essays with decidedly unpoetic titles: "The Causation Issue in Workers' Compensation Mental Disability Cases: An Analysis, Solutions, and a Perspective" in the *Vanderbilt Law Review*, for example. David Skeel, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, writes that "Joseph has explored the increasing, though awkward and at times unreflective, recognition of subjectivity in Supreme Court opinions." As Skeel told me on the phone, "Larry's perspectival opinion has won the day." He's an important figure in the growing field of law and literature.

Yet since 1983, Joseph has also been publishing books of poetry that, in their formal control and moral witness, match anything published in the past half century. In March, Farrar, Straus and Giroux published *A Certain Clarity: Selected Poems*, which gathers together poems from five previous collections. The range of Joseph's writing, in this book and throughout his career, is awesome. His language is streetwise and philosophical; his forms are by turn intensely compressed and exhilaratingly expansive.

The poet is concerned above all else with language. So is the lawyer.

Lawrence Joseph

COURTESY OF MACMILLAN

Joseph's 1983 debut, *Shouting at No One*, included Detroit geographies (Van Dyke Avenue, "UAW Local 89," "the Church of I AM") rarely encountered in American poetry. These early poems have short lines and long stanzas. They're concrete, imagistic, and condensed, displaying, as the poet Toi Derricotte told me, a real "knowledge of the complexities of Detroit." (Derricotte is herself a Detroit native who went to school near the Joseph family store.) Though *Shouting at No One* is primarily a Detroit book, it was published two years after Joseph had moved to New York City. With each subsequent collection, Joseph has expanded and continued to intensify his vision. The first poem in *Curriculum Vitae* (1988) takes place "in New York City, / during the nineteen eighties," and the collection, though it often returns to Detroit, looks increasingly to Manhattan's flow of capital—and to those left outside the flow, abandoned by the economy and the city: "I watch // a workman standing on the pier, looking / across at the coast turning toward // the Narrows, his hands bandaged, / victim of a work accident // who doesn't know what to think / or what to do and hasn't enough // to buy himself something to settle his mind."

In his next book, *Before Our Eyes* (1993), Joseph includes both his first poems about America's wars with Iraq, and an increased sensuousness. Here are that book's first, painterly lines: "The sky almost transparent, saturated // manganese blue. Windy and cold. / A yellow line beside a black line, / the chimney on the roof a yellow line / behind the mountain ash on Horatio." In 2005's *Into It*, the language opens up even more, accommodating terms from the realms of law and political economy, especially in poems dealing with the September 11 attacks and the second Iraq War. Some of the poems get prosier; almost all find beauty "in the midst of delirium." 2017's *So Where Are We?* takes on America's endless wars, both foreign (Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria) and domestic (the financial crisis, both its cause and effects).

Joseph's poems map American violence in its diverse forms. They examine the physical violence of American empire: "Behind / the global imperia is the interrogation cell." They chart the moral violence of the American economy: "Capital capitalizes, / assimilates, makes / its own substance."

And they note the connections between the two: "the blood money in the dummy account / in an offshore bank, washed clean, free to be / transferred into a hedge fund or foreign / brokerage account, at least half a trillion / ending up in the United States, with more to come." *A Certain Clarity* measures and pushes back against the pressures of our time. Joseph has lived in New York City since 1981, for years by the Brooklyn Bridge and now for years by Wall Street. He has lived, in other words, at the center of American culture and capital, and his poems, as they stroll from Fulton Street to Pearl Street to Peck Slip, register the workings of American power in all its forms.

Yet Joseph is also an aesthete—"I'm not a pseudo-aesthete," he told me, laughing: "I'm a full-blown aesthete"—as the righteous anger of his prophetic vision is matched by the sumptuousness of his language. Each of his poems finds its meaning in and through form: the various shapes his stanzas and sentences take, their shifts in cadence, tense, and register. "I believe that poets have to—perhaps above all have to—love sound," Joseph has said, and his love of sound and color comes across in every poem. He has spent most of his life living alongside water—the Detroit River, the East River, and the Hudson—and *A Certain Clarity* contains one riverine observation after another. His poems often describe the changing light over water: "Pink above the Hudson / against the shadows lingering still, / the sky above an even blue and changing / to a pale gray and rose"; "This light is famous, / its sad, secret violet, and, this evening, / West and East rivers turned into one."

When I asked Joseph about how his two lives—the life of the lawyer and the life of the poet—fit together, he quoted Wallace Stevens. "One is not a lawyer one minute and a poet the next," Joseph said, quoting a 1942 letter Stevens wrote to Harvey Breit. "I don't have a separate mind for legal work and another for writing poetry. I do each with my whole mind, just as everything that each of us does we do with our whole minds."

The poet is concerned with many things: perception and meditation, the social and the soul. But the poet is concerned above all else with language: pressurizing language, perfecting and condensing and enlarging it. The poet is, to quote Marianne Moore on Stevens, "a linguist creating several languages within a single language." So is the lawyer. James Boyd White, a legal scholar often cited as the founder of the law and literature movement of which Joseph is such an important part, has argued that judicial language should strive for "many-voicedness." That's a good description of the polyvocality of Joseph's verse, which channels Gramsci and Melville, the union hall and the lecture hall, lyrical rhapsodizing and rage-filled cursing, often in the space of a single stanza.

"Reading, teaching, tens of thousands of cases, writing and teaching sets of facts, which are stories, narratives, rooted in every dimension of social reality has greatly expanded my range of language," Joseph told me. It's also attuned him to power and its perversions: "Being a lawyer has intensified my moral awareness of evil." What better training for the kind of poet Joseph has always been: looking outward to the world and inward to the soul, finding a language for both.

° ° °

… Baptized
in the one true church, I too
was weaned on Saint Augustine.
—from "Curriculum Vitae"

"All poems," Joseph told me, "come out of experience," and his poems often point back to his own biography in refracted, transfigured form. "The 'I' in a poem can never be identified with the poet's empirical self," Joseph said, quoting the critic Michael Hamburger. "The 'I' in a poem conveys a great many different gestures, of a great many different orders." This is true for all poets, and it's certainly true for Joseph. But it's also true that a great many of Joseph's poetic gestures have arisen from his interesting and complicated life.

Joseph was born on March 10, 1948 in Providence Hospital, a Catholic hospital located on West Grand Boulevard in Detroit. His parents were also born in Detroit; so were his many aunts and uncles (he counts twenty-six first cousins); and so was his wife, Nancy. Both his parents attended Catholic schools—his father on Detroit's West Side, his mother on the city's East Side. So did Nancy. "I've lived in the language and theology of Catholicism since I was a child," he told me.

Detroit's history in the twentieth century is the history of many things: of big industry and mass production; of labor and capital; of Motown and modern jazz; of professional sports (it's one of the few cities that has had franchises in all four major sports) and political upheaval (the 1967 riots; the city's recent bankruptcy). All of these have touched upon Joseph's life in one way or another. He's worked summer jobs in factories. He's listened to, and written on, Aretha Franklin and Smokey Robinson. Knowing I'm a Red Sox fan, he told me that he will never forget the heartbreak of the Tigers losing the pennant to Boston on the final day of the 1967 season.

Detroit's twentieth-century history is also the history of Arab Americans. Immigrants from Lebanon and Syria started settling in the Detroit area in small numbers in the 1870s. By 1951, three years after Joseph's birth, about 50,000 people of Lebanese and Syrian descent lived in the city. Joseph's maternal grandfather was born in Damascus and baptized in the Melkite rite. His paternal grandparents were born in Lebanon, as was his maternal grandmother, all baptized in the Maronite rite.

In a poem from *Curriculum Vitae* (1988), Joseph metaphorically crystallizes his Arab-American Detroit: "Lebanon is everywhere / in the house: in the kitchen / of steaming pots, legs of lamb / in the oven, plates of kousa, / hushwee rolled in cabbage, / dishes of olives, tomatoes, onions, / roasted chicken, and sweets." Inside the house, there's warmth and love. Outside the house, the speaker witnesses the effects of industrial capitalism and racialized violence: "'Sand nigger,' I'm called,

/ and the name fits: I am / the light-skinned nigger / with black eyes and the look / difficult to figure—a look / of indifference, a look to kill."

Joseph was baptized at St. Maron's, a Maronite church in Detroit, as were his two brothers and one sister. "I've never not believed in God," he told me. He remembers attending daily Mass from the first through eighth grades, "following along, from fourth grade on, with the *St. Joseph Daily Missal*, which included the Ordinary of the Mass in both Latin and English, and also hundreds of pages of the Liturgical Calendar and a 'Treasury of Litanies and Prayers.'" He was confirmed at the age of ten and began serving Mass in the sixth grade. "I memorized the *Baltimore Catechism*," he writes in "Curriculum Vitae," "I collected holy cards, prayed / to a litany of saints to intercede / on behalf of my father who slept / through the sermon at seven o'clock Mass." (From 1960 on, Joseph's father worked as a meat cutter at A&P, in addition to helping his brother man the store, often working twelve hours a day.)

When he was almost four, Joseph's family moved to Royal Oak, near Woodward Avenue and Twelve Mile Road, four miles north of Detroit's 8 Mile Road boundary. They were parishioners at the Shrine of the Little Flower, located a few blocks from where they lived. Built in the 1930s, the Shrine is known in part for its Art Deco style but mainly for its patriarch, Father Charles Coughlin—the Jew-baiting talk-radio priest who is the forerunner of much that is most toxic in our own political moment. Coughlin started off as a New Deal populist, preaching Leo XIII and Pius XI's social encyclicals, before turning to anti-Semitism and flirting with outright fascism in the late 1930s and early '40s. Joseph described Coughlin to me as "a progenitor of right-wing Catholicism that espoused a fascistic Catholic Corporate State." Joseph has been describing and denouncing this strand of God-talk for years: "Thugs, / thugs are what they are, false-voiced God-talkers and power freaks / who think not at all about what they bring down." Joseph's family were Democrats. He delivered Detroit's morning paper, the liberal *Detroit Free Press*, from the age of eleven to eighteen. (When Joseph met Nancy, she was working as an artist at the *Free Press*.)

His father's grocery store, called Joseph's Market, was in a rough neighborhood. Joseph's uncle had his throat slashed at the store in the 1960s. When Joseph was twelve, his father, Joseph Joseph, taught him how to recognize the signs of heroin addiction. In "By the Way," the poet remembers his father, shot by a heroin addict in 1970: "The bullet missed / the heart and the spinal cord, / miraculously, the doctor said. / Everything eventually would be all right. / The event went uncelebrated among hundreds / of felonies in that city that day." From an early age, Joseph walked and drove the streets of Detroit, looking and listening and jotting down notes. In high school he caddied, and in college he washed dishes and delivered pizzas and, during summers, worked in factories. Every Detroit street, he told me, contains some sensuous memory. The city is for him a metaphor and a body—a geography that is physical, spiritual, imaginative, and economic. "In Joseph's Market on the corner of John R and Hendrie," he writes in an early poem, "there I am again: always, everywhere, // apron on, alone behind the cash register, the grocer's son / angry, ashamed, and proud as the poor with whom he deals."

° ° °

Two things, the two things that are interesting
are history and grammar.
In among the foundations of the intelligence
the chemistries of words.
—from "When One Is Feeling One's Way"

After attending the Jesuit University of Detroit High School, where he studied Latin and Greek, Joseph enrolled at the University of Michigan in 1966, where he took part in the antiwar movement and, in the winter of 1967, wrote his first poems. That July, while he was working at General Motors Truck & Coach in Pontiac as a dry sander, the Detroit riots occurred. Looters hit Joseph's Market: "Take the canned peaches," Joseph imagines his father saying as he drives away from the store. "Take the greens, the turnips, / drink the damn whiskey / spilled on the floor."

At Michigan, Joseph studied with the poet Donald Hall, writing a paper on Vorticism (there's the modernist influence) and an honor's thesis on "Swinburne's Poetic Technique" (there's the interest in aestheticism). He won a fellowship and studied English at Cambridge University in England from 1970 to 1972, obsessively reading Albert Camus, Simone Weil, Eugenio Montale, John Berryman, and many others, translating St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*, and writing poetry all the time.

Joseph told me that he realized in 1966, while an undergraduate, that he would write poetry for the rest of his life. He realized in 1972, while at Cambridge, that he would "have a professional life as a lawyer, and not as a professor of literature or creative writing." This decision was no doubt informed

Anyone who has read Joseph will know how often his poems shift: cutting between temporalities and locations; juxtaposing different languages that come from different social spaces.

by his background. He was "raised to be a lawyer," he says: his uncle John founded the first Arab-American law partnership in Detroit, and Joseph was a skilled debater for all four years of high school. "I wanted the freedom to write what I wanted," he told me. "I didn't want what I wrote, and the pace that I needed to write it, economically dependent upon my profession." So he enrolled at the University of Michigan Law School in 1973 and began a successful legal career. In that same year, he met Nancy. In 1975, Joseph moved to Detroit to live with her at the Alden Park—a Tudor apartment complex on Detroit's East Side, on the Detroit River, next to the United Auto Workers' Solidarity House, four or five miles from downtown and near where his maternal grandparents lived.

As one who has never received an MFA or taught in an MFA program, Joseph is a relative rarity in the poetry world. "I was always attracted to the margins," he told me. He counts many poets as friends, but poetry isn't his only interest. Sometimes, Joseph's life outside of poetry can be felt in his command and poetic repurposing of legal language: "After I applied Substance and Procedure / and Statements of Facts," he writes in "Curriculum Vitae," "my head was heavy, was earth." Here is a sestet from "On Peripheries of the Imperium":

> Conflated, the financial vectors, opaque
> cyber-surveillance, supranational cartels,
> in the corporate state's political-economic singularity
> the greatest number of children
> in United States history are, now, incarcerated,
> having been sentenced by law.

Due to his legal training, Joseph knows the language of power. He sees its victims and its victimizers; he sees its intended and unintended effects. As the legal scholar Frank Pasquale writes in a recent essay, Joseph's poems "reveal patterns of power and meaning in the world by exploring the ramifications of critical terms."

The law has influenced the diction of Joseph's poems. It has also influenced his formal decisions. "Law's aesthetic-formal-rhetorical dimensions," he wrote to me, "asking questions, cross examination, argument, have greatly broadened the transitional rhetoric in my poetry." Anyone who has read Joseph will know how often his poems shift: cutting between temporalities and locations; juxtaposing different languages that come from different social spaces. He's also an interrogative poet. One recent poem memorably, horribly begins, "Technically speaking, / is a head blown to pieces by a smart bomb a beheading?"

Reading *A Certain Clarity* in its entirety, an argument about American political economy emerges. We have moved from "mass assembly based on systems of specialized / machines operating within organizational domains" to the flim-flam of leveraged buy-outs and "techno-capital." Joseph isn't sentimental about our long-since-departed manufacturing economy. He knows that capital has always thrived by exploiting labor, polluting workers' bodies and poisoning our environment. (For decades he's been writing about what economists call "negative externalities" and what Pope Francis describes as the plundering of creation for profit.) But he's horrified by the speed and unreality of our current finance economy—unreal except in its devastating effects upon those not in power: "Narco-capital techno-compressed, / gone viral, spread into a state of tectonic tension and freaky / abstractions—it'll scare the fuck out of you, is what it'll do, / anthropomorphically scaled down by the ferocity of its own / obsolescence."

° ° °

> Who talks like that? I talk like that.
> —from "Who Talks Like That?"

Anyone who has met Joseph will tell you he's a conversationalist, his talk intelligent and intense, kind and brash. He confides, cajoles, improvises. A normal conversation with him moves rapidly between politics and poetry, history and aesthetics. He quotes Gertrude Stein and Walter Benjamin from memory. He seems to know the news before you know it. Conversation about poetry isn't chit-chat for him; it's a game with high stakes. "Some sort of chronicler I am," he has written, "mixing / emotional perceptions and digressions, // choler, melancholy, a sanguine view."

As I've discovered, you can't budget half an hour for a phone call with Joseph. You can't even confidently budget an hour. Recently, my wife walked into the kitchen and started talking to me while I was on the phone with Joseph. She thought I'd been off the phone for fifteen minutes; I'd just been listening in awe to a peroration on William Barr, Steven Bannon, and other Catholic Trumpists.

A conversation with Joseph keeps going as long as it needs to keep going, driven by an intellectual and linguistic energy that seems inexhaustible. "There's a headiness to talking with Larry," says the law professor David Skeel, who has written on Joseph's work and maintained a friendship with him for years. "It's intellectual, it's head-spinning, it's exhilarating. It's like you're entering into another dimension, with an entirely different intensity." Skeel first reached out to Joseph when he was clerking for a federal judge and happened upon a poem referring to the "Uniform Commercial Code." They would often meet in the West Village at the recently closed Cornelia Street Café, where their conversations would swing from poetry to the law and back again.

Joseph has distinctive conversational patterns. "But that's the game," he often says, whether he's talking about electoral or literary politics. He doesn't pull punches when discussing politicians or writers he sees as serving and lusting after power—for him, one of the cardinal sins. He doesn't have false humility, either. As the writer and former Farrar, Straus and Giroux editor Paul Elie put it, "He's modest and open. He also knows he's a first-rate poet."

To talk with Joseph is to be shown a complex but precisely mapped social network. He knows a lot of people—in the legal world, in the literary world (Joyce Carol Oates is a good friend), in the Catholic world, in the Detroit world, in the New York City world—and he knows who those people know, and where they went to school, and when they became who they are. He pays close attention to the literary landscape. He described himself as often working as a kind of middleman—putting one person in touch with another, helping his students or fellow writers. "I suppose that's the Levantine in me," he joked.

Everyone I spoke with stressed Joseph's intellectual and personal generosity. When Elie was working on his book *Reinventing Bach*, Joseph read the manuscript in its entirety and offered a single sentence insight—"What is music and how are you making it in this book?"—that helped shape the revising process. He has offered Skeel advice for years—taking him out for coffee when Skeel was a junior law professor, reading and commenting on Skeel's writings on law and literature. There are countless young writers, myself among them, who have been helped in ways big and small, public and more often private, by Joseph's attention and care.

° ° °

… Peck Slip

to Water Street to Front Street
to Pine, to Coenties Slip to Pearl

to Stone Street to Exchange Place,
the light in majestic degrees.
—from "A Fable"

Joseph moved to New York City in 1981 and has lived there ever since. For years, he lived steps away from the Brooklyn Bridge in a co-op he rented. In 1994, he and Nancy moved to Battery Park City, where they still live on the thirty-third floor of a rent-stabilized apartment building. From Joseph's study, he can see the Hudson, Ellis Island, and the ever-expanding skyline of Jersey City. He's a few blocks away from Zuccotti Park, the site of the Occupy Wall Street movement; he's even closer to the World Trade Center.

On a blustery February afternoon, Joseph and I walked around his neighborhood together. Joseph loves to walk—Elie said that they'll often meet for coffee only to stroll around Manhattan together for hours—and his poems offer readers an imaginative introduction to his various neighborhoods: "Water Street, // South Street Seaport, seated outdoors, late June, / early evening, strips of bright silver-pink clouds, // trio of bass, keys, drums; or, let's say, / Water Street, Bridge Café, that February // gray winter day, table in the back, near / the window, up along Dover the Bridge." In real life, I had barely set foot in the area. As a reader of Joseph's work, I'd spent ages there.

We walked and talked for several hours, frequently stopping on benches to look at the water—first the Hudson, then the East River. Several of the locations, restaurants and landmarks mainly, were familiar to me from *Lawyerland*, Joseph's formally *sui generis* nonfiction novel that captures how lawyers talk (boisterously and endlessly) and what they talk about (power). Joseph is an inveterate note-taker. Most lawyers are, he told me. No matter where he goes, he has Post-its with him so that he can jot down an image or scrap of overheard conversation. When the weather is nice, he frequently reads and writes in the many parks surrounding his apartment, with the skyline behind him and the water before him.

Lower Manhattan is haunted by many ghosts, some literary (it's the place of Melville's birth—Joseph brought me to the spot), some political (Alexander Hamilton is buried at Trinity Church), and Joseph's recent work grows out of this place where, as Elie put it to me, "literature and the hurly-burly of politics meet." Of course, the area around Joseph's apartment is most haunted by September 11, 2001—a national trauma that was also a personal one for Joseph. That morning, he took the subway to St. John's and learned about the first plane hitting the tower when he got to work. He tried to get in touch with Nancy. The phones didn't work. No one could tell him anything, and the area around their building was cordoned off. It was more than a day before he was able to find her. She had been in the apartment the whole time.

It took two years before Joseph could write about the event. In a way, his entire legal and poetic careers had been preparing him to respond imaginatively to the attacks. For years, he'd been writing about downtown Manhattan. For years, he'd been writing about American empire, the "millions, millions / plunged and numbed by dreams of blood." For years, he'd been writing about terror and violence and power. "And then you add the Arab thing," as he puts it in an essay.

In *Into It* and *So Where Are We?*, Joseph speaks of war with ferocity and precision. The title poem of *So Where Are We?*, made up of twenty-two unrhymed couplets, begins by bearing witness to the forms of violence that constitute our national

Justice and love arise from an encounter with the individual, a refusal to fall into reification.

landscape: America's foreign wars that are so frequent and widespread that it is often difficult to keep them straight ("What year? Which Southwest Asian war?"); the financial speculation that harms the economy and the lives of those who participate in it; the scope and velocity of destruction that dwarf the human scale: "The point at which // a hundred thousand massacred / is just a detail."

How should we meet such injustices—the specific acts of violence that can so easily be ignored or elided? Joseph suggests an answer in the final movement of his poem, where he shifts from the Federal Reserve, a space sacred to capital, to the Church of the Transfiguration:

> Ten blocks away the Church of the Transfiguration,
> in the back a Byzantine Madonna—
>
> there is a God, a God who fits the drama
> in a very particular sense. What you said—
>
> the memory of a memory of a remembered
> memory, the color of a memory, violet and black.
>
> The lunar eclipse on the winter solstice,
> the moon a red and black and copper hue.
>
> The streets, the harbor, the light, the sky.
> The blue and cloudless intense and blue morning sky.

By the end of the poem, we are in a different realm—not just in spatial terms but in formal terms as well. When describing the violence against which this poem sets itself, Joseph writes predominantly enjambed lines, running the second line of a couplet into the next stanza: "a tangle of tenses // and parallel thoughts." In doing so, he finds a formal analogue for the kind of blurring and bleeding, the erasure of difference, that his poem represents.

By the poem's end, though, this muddle of tenses and stanzas gives way to something cleaner, clearer, more precise. We move from enjambments to end-stops; from abstractions to particulars; from an inability to locate ourselves in time and space to concrete images of the natural and the human-made that are located precisely. Color and detail enter into the poem. Distanced analytical vision gives way to sensuous vision—those blues and reds and coppers. We end not with our thoughts about the things of the world but with the things themselves. This formal shift marks a kind of moral shift in the poem, too: justice and love arise from an encounter with the individual, with a refusal to fall into reification. As William Carlos Williams, one of Joseph's poetic lodestars, put it, "No ideas / but in things."

To greet violence with justice and love, Joseph suggests, is to display this kind of vision: exact, precise, and particular. And it is no accident that this shift toward the exact, precise, and particular comes about after the poem encounters the Church of the Transfiguration. We might say that the poem is itself transfigured after this encounter: it shines forth with the repeated Marian blues of the last line, with the hues of city and sky. Joseph writes that the God of the Transfiguration, Christ, is "a God who fits the drama / in a very particular sense." By this he seems to mean that Christ fits our human drama because of how he suffered, because he too was attuned to injustice and suffering. But Christ also fits our drama in a very particular sense because of his incarnation into the world of the senses. The Transfiguration shows the human and fleshly made radiant with divinity, just as Christ's life tells the story of the transcendent made concrete.

As we walked around lower Manhattan, we talked about many things: the future of the church and the past of the city (many of Joseph's sentences began, "That building used to be…") and the manic, improbable American present. Joseph is often righteously angry at where we are as a country and as a species. As he said to me, "The planet is being pillaged, and, with impunity, laid to waste by capital, by an unfettered greed for money that rules our entire socio-economic system." But in the time we spent together, our eyes and conversation kept coming back to the water and the winter light reflecting off its surface.

Joseph thinks of himself as writing one long poem across many books. It's a book on war, certainly. But it's also, to quote his poem "On Nature," a "book on love." *A Certain Clarity* registers, without flinching, America's current hellscape: "violence from the terror felt, // violence in the suffering, violence / in the mind, collectively modified." We need poets to confront such violence, and Joseph has been doing that for years. But *A Certain Clarity* doesn't end with war. It ends, as so many of his poems do, by looking toward the water and the sky that he loves:

> So what more is there to say? Many times
>
> the mass of the sun, solar masses
> spiraling into spacetime, radiating
>
> energy in gravitational waves, the edges
> of the islands soft in the black-gray sky,
>
> on this side of the Battery, near the ferry,
> a small bird's footprints, here, in the snow.
>
> New moon, mauve cloud, sea level
> higher than normal, the harbor again,
>
> green and gray, punctuated by waves
> lashing about. Thickening, the mists,
>
> this early morning; repeated, sounds
> of foghorns we hear from afar.

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ONCE AGAIN

Lawrence Joseph

The esplanade. High summer.
The sea is beyond

the sunset's light—
the shapes amassed, the sky

a current carrying us along,
heavy with that green and that black.

Fate's precisive wheel revolving,
force's writhing wheel—

the stealing, the killing, accomplished
by new types of half-monsters—

it's what I said—
the poem is the dream, a dream technique;

the primary soul-substance
on which our attention is fixed—

supernal, metaphysical—in other words,
a representation,

as we have seen,
of mythical origins.

Something felt, something needed—
as much as we needed;

a woman, a man,
love's characters, the myth

their own. We are agreed.
The moon is low, its silent flame

across the garden of roses, almost level
with the harbor. We place our hands

on the silence
and, once again, repeat the vow.

From A Certain Clarity: Selected Poems *(2020, Farrar, Straus and Giroux). Used with permission.*

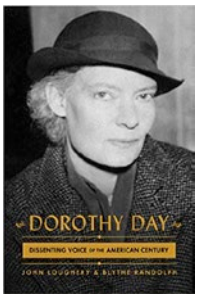
Still a Sign of Contradiction

MICHAEL J. BAXTER

For the first two decades after her death in 1980, Dorothy Day was revered as a life guide mainly by devoted followers and fellow travelers. In their pastoral letter on nuclear weapons, *The Challenge of Peace* (1983), the U.S. Catholic bishops praised her pacifism but only as an individual witness; they did not recommend it for society at large. Catholic scholars commended her heroic service to the poor but criticized her theology as utopian and sectarian. After the end of the Cold War, when the "end of history" seemed to vindicate free-market economies and liberal democracy, her critique of capitalism and the state was deemed irrelevant. But a gradual shift has occurred in reckoning with her legacy, prodded by the most unlikely of authorities.

In 2000, Cardinal John J. O'Connor, Archbishop of New York and head of the U.S. Military Vicariate, initiated the cause for Day's canonization. Friends and coworkers who knew her were consulted. A Dorothy Day guild was established. She was named "Servant of God." Then in 2012, the U.S. Catholic bishops gave their unanimous approbation of Day's cause and forwarded it to Rome. In 2015, Pope Francis stood before a joint session of Congress and extolled Day's example of faith, devotion to the saints, and social activism rooted in the Gospel. More recently, her life and work have gained increased attention beyond Catholic circles. In 2016, the conservative *New York Times* columnist David Brooks included a chapter on Day in his bestselling book *The Road to Character*, extolling her persistent struggle for justice. This past January, the DVD version of the film by Martin Doblmeier, *Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story*, hit the top spot for documentaries on the Amazon sales chart. In March, it was aired by PBS. And now we have a new full-length biography published by a major trade publishing house and intended for a general readership. There has never been so much attention focused on the matriarch of Catholic radicalism in the United States.

Dorothy Day would have been wary of all this adulation. We should be a little wary too. Whenever a radical, personalist, anarchist pacifist who is also a deeply traditional Catholic receives kudos from almost every quarter, then it is likely that some crucial element in the story, some key aspect of the person, is being neglected or suppressed. How many Catholic bishops who approved Day's cause really understand her Trotskyist views on state politics or her unswerving condemnation of usury? If David Brooks really grasped her pacifism, would he follow his chapter on Day with a chapter extolling the virtues of General George C. Marshall? Does Jim Wallis, who in the Doblmeier film talks about her as a religious progressive, truly appreciate her piety, which shaped every aspect of her being, as Michael Garvey once put it, "from her mantilla down to her rosary beads"?



DOROTHY DAY
Dissenting Voice of the American Century

JOHN LOUGHERY & BLYTHE RANDOLPH
Simon and Schuster
$30 | 448 pp.

To their credit, John Loughery and Blythe Randolph appreciate the quite complicated, seemingly conflicted life of Dorothy Day. At the outset, they state that compared to other women of the Left who have been the subjects of recent biographies—Jane Addams, Margaret Sanger, Rosa Parks, Rachel Carson, and Jane Jacobs, among others—Day is "a more difficult figure to encompass." For almost fifty years, she was "a great anomaly in American life: an orthodox Catholic and a political radical." Her sharp criticisms of capitalism, U.S. foreign policy, the arms race, and war after war, combined with a deep skepticism toward modern liberalism, "put her profoundly at odds with much of both secular and religious thought in the United States." It is difficult, they acknowledge, "to sort out the paradoxes of a woman as many-sided as Dorothy Day."

Loughery and Randolph address Day's "paradoxes" and "many sides" through what has become a familiar story. What is striking is how they place her life in fuller context, filling in some gaps in that story and adding many vivid details.

In the early chapters, they provide background on the *Call*, the socialist daily paper that gave Dorothy her first job, and the *Masses,* where, working with Leftist luminaries Floyd Dell and Max Eastman, "she was happily in the eye of the storm" before the feds shut the paper down in August 1917. Here we learn that her comrade Mike Gold's name was actually a pseudonym he adopted in the 1920s to replace the original (Romanian) Itzok or Irwin Granich, that he and Dorothy shared political and literary interests, and that perhaps they were lovers, although this is not certain. We do know that Mike Gold's mother did not approve of the relationship. After hosting Dorothy for

a tense family dinner, she smashed the plates used by their gentile guest.

We also learn about Lionel Moise, the hard-boiled newspaperman who awed a "cub reporter" at the *Kansas City Star* by the name of Ernest Hemingway, and who was an unapologetic womanizer. Dorothy fell for him, hard. Their tortuous relationship is presented in disconcerting detail: Dorothy's self-subordination to him, her following him to Chicago, her pregnancy and abortion, her suicide attempt(s) back in New York, and her marriage on the rebound to Berkeley Tobey, which took her to London, Paris, Rome, Capri, then back to Manhattan where "the Tobeys" lived in the New Yorker Hotel. Dorothy walked out on him shortly thereafter and headed back to Chicago—back, she hoped, to Lionel, but to no avail. After almost two years there, plus five months in New Orleans, she returned to Manhattan just as her novel, *The Eleventh Virgin*, was published. Loughery and Randolph describe the reviews as "soul flattening." Nevertheless, the book was purchased for movie rights, allowing Dorothy to buy a bungalow on Staten Island.

Readers of Day's autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, might expect a dramatic shift in the plotline at this point, but Loughery and Randolph accentuate the continuity between Day's life with Forster Batterham, the birth of her daughter Tamar, and her conversion, with her earlier period of "searching" (Part One of *The Long Loneliness*). They offer an informative background on the Batterham family of Asheville, North Carolina, and explain how Forster's sister, Lily, whom Dorothy had befriended years before, introduced the two. As part of the Greenwich Village crowd, Forster acted in a Eugene O'Neill play at the Provincetown Playhouse. Dorothy loved his easygoing manner, his freedom from material attachments, his "unbribed soul," as William James puts it in *Varieties of Religious Experience*, which Dorothy was reading at the time. The two were companionable, at ease with each other. For Dorothy, the relationship was a source of healing. It was strained by money trouble: Dorothy was a spender, Forster was exceedingly frugal. But it was the pregnancy that caused the breakup. Kids were not what Forster had bargained for. He did not even go to the hospital after Tamar's birth. Dorothy's decision the next year to have Tamar baptized made things worse. Her growing religiosity deepened the rift. After "a final, fierce argument" at Christmas 1927, Dorothy herself got baptized. But it was not a final parting, strictly speaking. Letters that were published in 2010 indicate that the relationship continued on and off for another five years—another period of searching, one could say, as Day tried to win Forster back. The authors depict these years too in rich detail: Day's time in Culver City editing for a film studio, in Mexico City as a freelance writer, in Florida visiting her mother, all with Tamar in tow. Then she went back to New York where, for almost two years, she continued writing, now for Catholic publications, including *Commonweal* and *America*. Both assigned her to cover the National Hunger March in Washington D.C. in December 1932.

"Purpose" is the title of the chapter about Day's prayer at the National Shrine for a way to serve the poor as a Catholic and her encounter soon thereafter with Peter Maurin. From here on out, the storyline follows standard accounts of Day and the Catholic Worker. Loughery and Randolph write as outsiders to the movement. (This became clear to me when I noticed Rosalie Riegle's name in the acknowledgments, preceded by the words "the late." I emailed Rosalie to ask if she had died and she quickly emailed back assuring me that she is still very much alive. This mistake has been corrected in online and future print editions.) The authors cover the Catholic Worker movement from its first site at Charles Street to Day's final community setting on First and Third Streets. They work into the narrative a nearly full cast of Catholic Worker characters: Ade Bethune, Stanley Vishnewski, John Cort, Arthur Sheehan, Robert Ludlow, Ammon Hennacy, Mary Lathrop, Michael Harrington, Tom Cornell, Jim Forest, Frank Donovan, Jeannette Noel, Jeff Gneuhs, Robert Ellsberg, and Brian Terrel. They include a host of notable friends and fellow travelers: A. J. Muste, Eileen Egan, Thomas Merton, Daniel Berrigan, and Cesar Chavez, to name a few. They touch on a wide range of intellectual sources for the Catholic Worker: Karl Adam's ecclesiology, Emmanuel Mounier's personalism, G. K. Chesterton's distributist economics, Virgil Michel's liturgical theology, Paul Hanly Furfey's "supernatural sociology," and John Hugo's "Ignatian radicalism" (as Ben Peters calls it).

Loughery and Randolph do justice to both small but significant episodes

PHOTO BY JUDD MEHLMAN / NY DAILY NEWS VIA GETTY IMAGES

Dorothy Day inside the Catholic Worker office at 175 Christie St.

and more momentous events: starting the newspaper, the houses of hospitality, and the farms; the crisis caused by the Catholic Worker's pacifism during World War II; the face-off with Cardinal Spellman over the gravediggers' strike in 1949; the string of protests against the Civil Defense drills between 1955 and 1960; getting shot at while visiting the integrated Koinonia Farm in Georgia; the "Big Stomp," when everyone involved with publishing a gag journal with the F-word in the title was expelled from the house; Day's trip to Rome during Vatican II to pray for a stronger witness to peace, and her visit to Marx's grave in England on the way back; the first public protest against the Vietnam War; the tragic suicide of Roger LaPorte in 1965 (a "victim soul," Dorothy called him); Day's speech to the World Congress on the Lay Apostolate in Rome; her receiving communion from Paul VI and visiting Ignazio Silone; her arrest at the U.F.W. strike in California in 1973; her regular visits all these years with her daughter Tamar and her grandchildren; and, finally, her death and funeral, including the story of how some Catholic Worker folks went out drinking after the wake and, when no one was hung over the next day, someone declared, "It's the first miracle!"

This colorful history of Day will give readers a lot to absorb, reflect on, and argue about. It gets a little gossipy at certain points, suggesting, for example, that Dorothy slept with Eugene O'Neill, and that Peter Maurin may have had syphilis. But at least the authors admit when they are speculating on the basis of tenuous evidence. For the most part, they offer substantial endnotes. So while there may be plenty to argue about in this book—"for the clarification of thought" Peter Maurin would say—it should be a standard source for years to come.

Beyond gathering so much material on Day, Loughrey and Randolph show that she truly was, in the words of the subtitle, a "Dissenting Voice of the American Century." The slogan "the American Century" was coined by Henry Luce in 1941 to shake the nation from isolationism and inspire it to take the lead in World War II. After the Axis powers were defeated, it became a central theme in U.S. ideology during the Cold War, proclaiming that the United States must prevail over Soviet Communism and predominate in political, economic, and cultural affairs throughout the world.

Day resisted this Americanist mentality with an unyielding radicalism. Her trenchant denunciations of U.S. capitalism and war-making set her against the American mainstream—and also against the American Catholic mainstream, for Catholics of her era were among the most formidable defenders of the "American Way of Life." The authors note this persistent tension. Cardinal Spellman wanted the word "Catholic" removed from the *Catholic Worker*'s masthead after its editorial opposing the Korean War. William F. Buckley "bristled at the mention of [Day's] name" and described her as "slovenly, reckless, and intellectually chaotic." But she was also at odds with liberal Democrats. She dismissed John F. Kennedy as "a Cold Warrior who had made much in his campaign of an alleged missile gap," whose "Catholicism was of the thinnest kind." And the criticism went both ways. In *America*, John La Farge faulted Day for her radical stance on workers' rights and pacifism, charging that, while the Catholic Worker was exemplary when it came to personal charity, it lacked a well-founded ethic for society at large. She also tangled with the editors of *Commonweal*. After they argued that there are still things worth going to war for, she wrote in to slam the G.I. Bill for seducing young men to enlist, filling them with "a warm glow of self-love" while training them "in how to escape death, how to kill." In response, the editors of this magazine chided her for exhibiting "a determinism unworthy of her thinking and style." True, liberal Catholics often tempered their criticisms of Day, as when a *Commonweal* writer, reviewing *Loaves and Fishes*, described her as "the most admired sign of contradiction in American Catholicism." But still, as this book amply demonstrates, Day did not conform to how most Americans, including most American Catholics, think about politics and culture. Liberal, conservative, traditionalist, progressive: her life defies these conventional, increasingly inadequate categories.

All of this makes Dorothy Day into what Loughery and Randolph call "an American paradox," a many-sided figure whose apparent contradictions appear irresolvable. But it should be added that Dorothy herself simply tried to live in accord with the convictions that drew her to the church. She focused her life, as much as possible, on Christ's teaching and example; on the church because it provided (in spite of its businesslike priests) the sacraments; on the lives of the saints, the social teaching of popes, the spiritual masters, and the works of mercy. Day's focus on God is captured well by the authors' account of her burial, which concludes with the inscription on the headstone: "Dorothy Day, November 8, 1897–November 29, 1980 / Deo Gratias." And then this: "After the funeral, mourners who had not gone to Staten Island went back to Maryhouse, where a ten-gallon kettle of pea soup was simmering, loaves of bread and baskets of oranges filling a table nearby. There were so many to feed that day."

Forty years later, there are still many to feed. St. Joseph House is feeding two hundred folks on the street amid the virus scare. There are also more houses of hospitality than ever. Small farms inspired by the Catholic Worker have sprouted up in unprecedented numbers. And Dorothy's disciples are still witnessing for peace; some of them, including Dorothy's granddaughter Martha, are currently awaiting sentencing in Georgia for protesting against nuclear weapons. The extended Catholic Worker family is still a dissenting voice, a sign of contradiction, *Deo gratias*.

MICHAEL J. BAXTER *teaches Religious Studies and Catholic Studies at Regis University in Denver and is completing a book of essays,* Blowing the Dynamite of the Church: Radicalism Against Americanism in Catholic Social Ethics *(Cascade Press).*

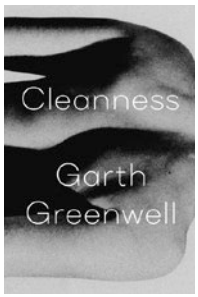
Apollo's Not Enough

FRANK B. FARRELL

Garth Greenwell's second book of fiction consists of nine closely linked stories involving the narrator of his first novel, *What Belongs to You*. That book is about a queer American teaching literature at a prestigious school in Sofia, Bulgaria, still dealing with an upbringing that connected same-sex desire to shame, contamination, disgust, and dirt. In the basement men's room of the Sofia cultural center, he meets a handsome Bulgarian who makes his way in the world by having sex with foreigners in exchange for gifts. In their interactions over many months, we see the Bulgarian man's health and prospects go downhill while the narrator gradually discovers that he can be on the side of health. The novel's title suggests that the narrator is doing the difficult work of shaping his own boundaries and defining his own character, of determining what is properly his own. A key to the transformation is his mature, reciprocal relationship with R., a young Portuguese man who is in Sofia on a student-exchange program.

R. now becomes a central character in *Cleanness* and is explicitly made a marker of the narrator's health. "Sex had never been joyful for me before…it had always been fraught with shame and anxiety and fear, all of which vanished at the sight of his smile, simply vanished, it poured a kind of cleanness over everything we did." Yet he keeps finding a profound aspect of himself that is unmoved by the relationship with R. and that desires to return to scenes of erotic degradation and shame, ritual repetitions of his father's punitive disgust at his sexuality. Two of these scenes are described in such graphic detail that some readers will be put off. What makes them more than pornography is the way they deal with the experience of selfhood as a burden. At these moments the narrator explicitly wants to become *nothing*, to lose all sense of selfhood, will, and agency by becoming a pure object for another. Nietzsche compared the pain of individuation and self-consciousness to that of sea animals first feeling the terrible weight and awkwardness of their bodies as they emerged onto land. Ancient peoples commonly had rites for an ecstatic loss of self. That Greenwell has these in mind is suggested when his narrator goes to a writing conference on the Black Sea, to what was in ancient times a Roman city dedicated to Apollo. He notes how much he likes the sea, how you can lose yourself in it, how it drowns out thinking the way it drowns out noise. We are back with Nietzsche's contrast between Apollo—the god of beauty, form, and individuation—and the oceanic, individuality-swallowing, ecstatic Dionysus. As much as the narrator is made happier and "cleaner" by his relationship with R., he still has feelings that suggest that what really belongs to him, what provides his profoundest sense of self, is an ecstatic losing of himself in cruel, often degrading rituals. He and R. celebrate their devotion to beautiful form through a brief visit to lovely Venice, but at one point in that city he imagines he can see Aschenbach, from *Death in Venice*, emerging from the sea. Thomas Mann's character tried to maintain his rigid sense of identity through exhausting intellectual work, but his attraction to beautiful Apollinian form in the person of Tadzio soon gives way to an attraction to a world of disease and to the suggestion of ecstatic erotic rituals.

In one story, Sofia is beset by fierce winds carrying sand and dirt from Africa and Greece. The narrator and R. find small sheltered spaces for themselves in a café and an apartment, but the winds seem able not only to penetrate everywhere but also to underline the great ephemerality of everything except this pure, impersonal circulation, "picking things up and setting them down again willy-nilly, not just broken things but things that seem whole." When that Dionysian force bursts open their apartment window, the narrator finds himself expressing a touch of cruelty in his sexual treatment of R. and wonders again just how well he understands his



CLEANNESS

GARTH GREENWELL

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

$26 | 240 pp.

Garth Greenwell

own desires, just how much they are on the side of the "cleanness" he has been praising. The powerful winds, he notes, are bearing a world of trash and dirt, yet he seems to identify with their destructive force as much as with the fragile protected spaces he shares with R.

Finding it difficult to maintain their relationship after R. leaves Sofia, the narrator and R. take a trip to a town built around a Bulgarian fortress that fell to the Ottomans in 1393. A Delibes opera that had been a favorite of the narrator when he was an adolescent in Kentucky is being performed, to be followed by a grand light show that depicts the historic battle for the fortress. The narrator has criticized the Bulgarians for articulating their identity so often in terms of such ancient structures rather than finding a contemporary style of political identity. But the overall image system of the story suggests that he is not much different from them. Ancient psychological structures in him have a staying power that his personal relationships do not. The Bulgarians keep returning to memories of a time when their nation covered all of Thrace and reached expansively to three seas. The narrator also keeps finding himself attracted to a sense of self far more expansive than one limited to a particular relationship of everyday intimacy. As he says in another of the stories: "How much smaller I have become, I said to myself, through an erosion necessary to survival perhaps and perhaps still to be regretted, I've worn myself down to a bearable size." The performance of the opera from his adolescence turns out to be mediocre; the light show is evidently superficial, a play of brief, gaudy illuminations over an earlier world that remains unaffected by it. The title of this story is "Valediction" and the narrator is realizing that the trip is a ritual of finally letting go of R. after two years, though it seems clear that R. would like the narrator to try harder to continue the relationship. In a story called "The Frog King," a visit to Bologna at New Year's finds a great sculpture of a frog being burned to celebrate the putting aside of past misfortunes. But our narrator, it seems, is not up to this opportunity.

He admits that daily communication with R. by Skype is getting in the way of his writing. It is as a writer, and not in his relationship with R., that he ultimately thinks he must negotiate the deepest issues of selfhood that this book investigates. Greenwell often writes beautifully, with a quiet, compelling, carrying rhythm that suggests an unconscious labor of giving shape to the self. Nietzsche claimed that he was more courageous than most in doing a rigorous self-vivisection of his own psyche. Greenwell performs a brave vivisection of the tangle of sexuality, violence, shame, and degradation within the self, rather than presenting queer life at its most appealing or reader-friendly. One story portrays a political demonstration against the Sofia government, a protest where some anti-government demonstrators supposedly on the good side of things are happy to beat up those carrying the rainbow flags of the Gay Pride movement. He uses Whitman's poetry to suggest that an unconscious animal solidarity with crowds, a reminder of his own sexuality, must be joined to the ability to think. Greenwell's reflections generally move toward the politics of the inner psyche rather than the politics of Bulgaria, though he does capture the almost-complete crumbling of the Communist political legacy and the great physical ugliness it left behind in its buildings.

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COURTESY OF MACMILLAN

The God Trick

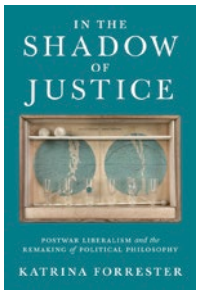
SUSAN MCWILLIAMS BARNDT

Given all the absurdities worthy of comment in the impeachment trial of President Donald J. Trump, history will probably overlook the appearance of the political philosopher John Rawls in Trump's defense. The story of Rawls is not central to the trial of Trump. But the trial of Trump might tell us something about the story of Rawls.

On January 27, Trump's lawyer Alan Dershowitz repeated in the Senate Chamber an argument that he had been making in public for more than a year: that a "colloquial" use of Rawls's philosophy cautioned against Trump's impeachment. Imagine, said Dershowitz, that the terms of the impeachment were the same—but that the President was a Democrat. Calling this the "shoe on the other foot test," Dershowitz said that any Democrat who had objected to the impeachment of President Bill Clinton should be bound by that test to object to the impeachment of Trump.

Dershowitz has not yet explained why this test should not also apply to those Republicans who were gleeful in their pursuit of Clinton's impeachment. Shouldn't they, too, other-foot their shoes and allow Democrats to run roughshod with a Special Counsel? But equal application of the equalizing principle is not really Dershowitz's aim. Mostly, he uses the "other foot test" to claim his own "nonpartisan" apprehension of justice: Dershowitz opposed Clinton's impeachment. Now he opposes Trump's impeachment. As, he implies, would Rawls.

The "shoe on the other foot test" sounds a lot closer to the Golden Rule than to the Rawlsian "veil of ignorance," a fact which Dershowitz has sometimes come close to admitting. But that a Harvard Law School professor would choose to associate himself with Rawls rather than Jesus suggests the extent to which, in certain academic circles, Rawls is the point of divine reference—even as few Americans would recognize his name.



IN THE SHADOW OF JUSTICE
Postwar Liberalism and the Remaking of Political Philosophy

KATRINA FORRESTER
Princeton University Press
$35 | 432 pp.

Katrina Forrester's excellent recent book, *In the Shadow of Justice*, tells the story of how this came to be: how Rawls's highly intricate and deceptively simple brand of abstract liberal egalitarianism—first articulated in his *A Theory of Justice* in 1971—came to take over academic philosophy, particularly via "a small group of influential, affluent, white, mostly male analytical political philosophers who worked at a handful of elite institutions in the United States and Britain" in the late twentieth century.

Around that time I entered graduate school at one of those institutions and, like most Americans, had never heard of John Rawls. Within days of my arrival, I learned that I must never forget him: that Rawls would be the nucleus of my graduate education, around which we were all to revolve. As I recall, the syllabus for our course in "Liberalism and Its Critics" devoted fully half of our class sessions to Rawls—and most of the other half to his late-twentieth-century interlocutors. On that liberal campus, Rawls *was* liberalism.

Rawls had so much authority in that historical moment in part because he claimed to be speaking from beyond it. Aspiring to what he called a "higher level of abstraction" in political philosophy, Rawls asks his readers to imagine inhabiting an "original position," prior to and outside the particularities of individual, historical, and cultural experience. From that imagined position—in which you exist behind a "veil of ignorance" that prevents you from knowing what your individual traits, beliefs, or material resources might be—you choose the basic structure of society. The thought experiment should move us, Rawls argued, toward an apprehension of "justice as fairness" in which the diminishment of inequality and the nondiscriminatory distribution of property are paramount objectives.

In retrospect, the ahistorical nature of Rawls's philosophy seems tailor-made, as Forrester notes, for that late-twentieth-century period of liberal optimism that had some proclaiming "the end of history." Rawls gave a philosophical

justification for that liberal optimism, arguing that the basic job of politics is to reform and improve a legitimately triumphant liberal consensus. Political possibilities outside liberal egalitarianism need not be considered, or need only be considered as alternative doctrines that could be accommodated (or not) within the sphere of liberal public discourse. The heart of this discourse lay in what Rawls termed "public reason"—justifying your beliefs by using reasons that people from different moral or political traditions could accept.

More than that, among many left-liberals, Rawls was taken to provide an impartial framework for settling—in favor of left-liberals—some of the great cultural standoffs of the age. Behind the veil of ignorance you would not know your sexual preferences, for instance, so you would not support policies that criminalize homosexuality (though you might still allow individuals to voice their objections to those policies, provided those objections fit the requirements of Rawlsian public reason).

Within a predominately left-liberal academy, and especially within the self-enchanting space of elite university discourse, Rawlsian frameworks were trotted out to provide "impartial" defenses of popular campus beliefs: animal rights, abortion rights, and the like. (I remember a classmate in graduate school who asked why, in our imagination of the veil of ignorance, we should not assume the possibility of being *in utero*, in which case we would certainly object to laws allowing abortion. That very good question was met with derision and direction to a footnote on page 479 of Rawls's *Political Liberalism*—the 1993 update to *A Theory of Justice*—in which Rawls ventures the opinion that abortion should be allowed in the first trimester.) Though Rawls himself resisted some of those usages of his philosophy, the hermetical insularity of schools like Harvard and Princeton led to broad agreement among influential scholars about the policies that Rawlsian justice would require—which usually happened to be the policies that intellectual left-liberals would prefer.

John Rawls in Paris, March 20, 1987

Ironically, then, a philosophy largely concerned with creating spaces for public disagreement often served to shut down disagreement, at least within those rarified academic halls.

Even so, some of Rawls's first and most damning critics came from the left. The feminist philosopher Donna Haraway would, in the late 1980s, decry the "god trick" of claiming to see everywhere from nowhere, a critique to which Rawls's disembodied thought experiment was certainly subject. For his admirers, Rawls's work did take on the quality of sacred texts; during the same years when "WWJD" was a touchstone for many outside the academy, academic philosophers were preoccupied with questions about what Rawls would have us do in any given situation.

That may not be a coincidence. As a young man, Rawls was an orthodox Christian, and Forrester notes that some of what animated his early philosophizing was the desire to capture the ethical attitudes underlying Christianity. What she does not say, but what I suspect will become clearer in the future, is that part of Rawls's appeal in the late twentieth century has to do with the change in the status of Christianity in the American academy (and particularly in the Ivy League) during the postwar period. Colleges and universities that had been predominantly Protestant became, in a generation, first religiously diverse and then radically secular. Correspondingly, the idea that certain classic texts should

INTERFOTO / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

be "core" to a liberal-arts curriculum fell out of favor.

At that moment Rawls's philosophy arrived on the scene. It seems clear that, to a not insignificant degree, Rawlsianism gave academics a way to orient themselves around an authoritative core text, just when a lot of the old core texts had fallen out of favor. Moreover, one of the central concerns of Rawls's later philosophy is what to do when there are competing "comprehensive doctrines" in a society, and he reassures his readers that even in those conditions, there can be an "overlapping consensus" that transcends differences in religion and ideology. Most Rawlsians imagine that consensus to look something like a liberal principle of religious liberty. In so many ways, Rawls both spoke to and offered reassurance about the changing face of the academy in the twentieth century.

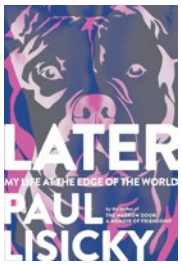
Near the end of her book, Forrester tells us that Rawls's philosophical ascendance is on the wane. In the face of recent political crises, most of which call into question the liberal consensus of the late twentieth century, scholars in philosophy and political theory seem less certain of Rawls's universal usefulness.

The very existence of Forrester's book may be even more proof that, despite the fact that Harvard professors still claim him publicly in asserting standards of justice, we are far past Peak Rawls. In reminding us that even political philosophers who claim to speak outside any particular time or place are, in fact, the product of a particular time and place, Forrester undoes the pretension to timelessness that Rawls claimed, at least for a time.

SUSAN MCWILLIAMS BARNDT *is Chair and Professor of Politics at Pomona College.*

Booknotes

Anthony Domestico



LATER: MY LIFE AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

PAUL LISICKY
Graywolf, $16
240 pp.

"Do not be afraid," Jesus says at the empty tomb. He said it before, at the Transfiguration; and before that, after walking on water; and before that, upon meeting the first disciples. We're often afraid, especially when we're told not to be. Yet as the suffering associated with the coronavirus pandemic grows, it's hard not to feel that this time is more fearful than most.

How bracing, then, to read Paul Lisicky's memoir *Later: My Life at the Edge of the World*. Lisicky considers the damage one suffers by living with fear as well as the grace displayed by those who endure it. The book's subtitle refers geographically to Provincetown, the seaside community "situated on the final joint of the longest finger" of Cape Cod where Lisicky lived in the early 1990s as a Writing Fellow of the Fine Arts Work Center. The subtitle refers existentially to the experience of being a young gay man at the height of the AIDS pandemic. "By the mid-1990s," Lisicky writes, "it will be said that 385 people died of AIDS in Town"—his name for the proudly artsy, proudly queer community of Provincetown. "Ten percent of the population. Sometimes I say it back to myself aloud, in hopes that it will sear me: *10 percent*. And yet I can't *feel* statistics."

What did it feel like to live in a time and place so haunted by death? Lisicky became a close reader of bodily changes and what they portended. He picked up the newspaper and read the obituaries first. He came to see everyone, his lover and himself, as a potential threat: "Look at a drop of your blood, your semen, your saliva, and think of it containing a thousand little grenades.… How would your life change? Could you ever disappear into yourself, into your skin ever again?" He felt fury at God's silence: "Looking at those changes straight on? Imagine trying to look at God, and if you think you can do that, God will find a way to break you."

Yet living in Town also allowed Lisicky to experience an excitement of mind and body, a tenderness of the soul and spirit, that he had never known before. A gay boy raised Catholic in the South, Lisicky had always lived in fear of himself and others. Now, for the first time, he was openly desired. He felt loved—by boyfriends and strangers, by writers and painters—and he loved in turn. And where there is love, there is freedom. Among other things, *Later* is a wonderful portrait of a community formed in and through extremis. Lisicky sketches the writer Elizabeth McCracken, also a Writing Fellow and possessed of "a distinctive speaking voice that sounds like it was made for singing," as well as the poet Mark Doty, then a man caring for his dying partner and, in the future, Lisicky's lover. We read about the bonds established in bars and at poetry readings, the intimacy afforded by living together in the midst of death and in the expectation of love.

The book's final sentence, yearning and elegiac, speaks both to Lisicky's years in Town and to our own moment: "I want to touch you while there's still time to touch you."

TEMPORARY

HILARY LEICHTER
Coffee House Press,
$16.95
208 pp.

Want to know why so many young people are attracted to the Left? Try entering the workplace with crushing student-loan debt only to be told that you really should grow up and buy a house. A more pleasant route to the same destination: try reading Hilary Leichter's debut novel *Temporary*, a book whose imaginative absurdity matches the real-life absurdity of life in our gig economy.

The novel opens like this: "I have a shorthand kind of career. Short tasks, short stays, short skirts. My temp agency is an uptown pleasure dome of powder-scented women in sensible shoes. As is customary, I place my employment in their manicured hands. With trusty carpal alchemy they knead my resume into a series of paychecks that constitute a life." There's a lot compressed into these crisp sentences: the pressure we find ourselves under when we define our lives by our work—especially when so much of our work consists of, to borrow from the anthropologist David Graeber, bullshit jobs; the increasing, quasi-magical power held by administrators and bureaucrats, regardless of profession; the understanding of workers as fungible goods. But it's all done with lightness, in a style that is quietly allusive (the "pleasure dome" calls up Coleridge's vision of Xanadu) and that relishes linguistic playfulness.

Temporary demonstrates, in exaggerated fashion, how our jobs, marked by insecurity and emptiness, can turn us

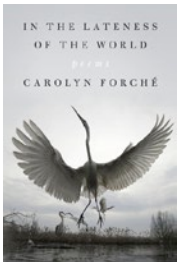
into assets or objects or automatons. The unnamed narrator longs for what people in her world call "the steadiness": a life and a job that don't exist under the sufferance of employers or macroeconomic forces. This personal and professional stability is the carrot that lures her on. She fears she'll never get that carrot, or that she won't recognize it when she does. But she keeps hunting. What else can she do, in such an economy, in such a world?

Temporary's sentences are sharp and spiky; its plot is shaggy and surreal. The narrator moves from job to job, each more absurd than the last. She shines shoes. She washes windows. She stands in "for the Chairman of the Board at the very, very major corporation, Major Corp." She works as a human barnacle. (No, really, she works as a human barnacle, hanging out on a rock, "filling in for a species on the brink of extinction.") She hands out pamphlets for a witch. ("Not a witch, per se," her temporary employer says. "I prefer Director of Pamphlets.") She temps for a murderer.

While Leichter's economic analysis is serious, her manner is delightfully goofy. She skewers corporate speak and pokes fun at workplace ambition and complacency. At one point, the narrator finds herself working on a pirate ship:

> My new crew was once a company of internet pirates, but they rebranded. Delete a few syllables and lo, you have a new profession.
>
> "There are only a few kinds of jobs in the world, it turns out," says the captain, who is the type to pontificate and listicle on subjects varied and profound. "Jobs on land," he continues, "jobs at sea, jobs in the sky, jobs of the mind, and working remotely." "You mean like working from home?" I ask. "No," the pirate captain says. "Working remotely is what we call being dead. Pirate lingo."

By now, many of us are familiar with the absurdity-unto-death that is working remotely: teaching via Zoom, meeting via Zoom, living via Zoom. It's nice to be reminded that we're not crazy for thinking that this is all, in fact, crazy.



IN THE LATENESS OF THE WORLD
Poems

CAROLYN FORCHÉ
Penguin Press, $24
96 pp.

Hilary Leichter responds to injustice with satirical laughter. The poet Carolyn Forché, in a very different style, meets injustice with moral witness.

The poems in Forché's latest collection, *In the Lateness of the World*, look at suffering and violence with an exacting and unsentimental vision. In "The Boatman," she imagines refugees approaching Italy from the sea: "Aleppo went up in smoke," the boatman reports. "Leave, yes, we'll obey the leaflets, but go where? / To the sea to be eaten, to the shores of Europe to be caged? / To *camp misery* and *camp remain here*. I ask you then, where?" Yet this pained witness is met by bold faith: faith in the power of witness itself; faith in the ever-broken, ever-resurrected world. "For if the earth is a camp and the sea / an ossuary of souls," Forché writes in "Mourning," "light your signal fires / wherever you find yourselves. / Come the morning, launch your boats." Mourning, we hope and believe, will eventually give way to morning. (Forché, herself Catholic, is a University Professor at Georgetown University.)

In 2019, Forché published *What You Have Heard Is True*, a memoir about her time spent in El Salvador between 1978 and 1980. *In the Lateness of the World* is her first poetry collection in seventeen years, and it displays impressive formal command. Forché works in couplets and long, unbroken stanzas. Sometimes her lines are Whitmanian in their extension, sometimes they are Dickinsonian in their concision.

In the Lateness of the World exhibits lateness of several different kinds. It is late in its frequently elegiac tone: Forché writes of and to poets who have passed away, parents who have gone, communities that have been destroyed. It is late in its attention to environmental degradation in the Anthropocene: "There is only the sea and its *yes*, lights in the city of the dead, / and a plastic island that must from space appear to be a palace." And it is late in its focus on memory—both personal memory ("Your cinerary box was light, but filled with you it weighed eight pounds," Forché writes in a poem dedicated to Leonel Gómez, the man who had first convinced her to bear witness to the war in El Salvador) and collective memory: in "Museum of Stones," Forché proclaims "all earth a quarry, all life a labor, stone-faced, stone-drunk / with hope that this assemblage of rubble, taken together, would become / a shrine or holy place, an ossuary."

Though this is a book that often looks to the past, it ends by looking to the future.

Though this is a book that often looks to the past, it ends by looking to the future. It may feel like we're late in the day, or that things are coming to an end. But Forché leaves us in a place of bewildering openness, maybe even a place of hope:

> in the surround rises, fireflies in lindens,
> an ache of pine
> you have yourself within you
> yourself, you have her, and there is nothing
> that cannot be seen
> open then to the coming of what comes

ANTHONY DOMESTICO *is Associate Professor of Literature at Purchase College, and a frequent contributor to* Commonweal. *His book* Poetry and Theology in the Modernist Period *is available from Johns Hopkins University Press.*

Living in Isolation

TIMOTHY RADCLIFFE

A few weeks ago, waiting to go through security in Tel Aviv airport, I watched the maneuverings of the young man before me in the queue. As we shuffled forward, he always had a suitcase five feet in front of him and behind, so that no one could get near him. He may have been wise, but it was a powerful symbol of what the virus means for millions of people: isolation, keeping one's distance. The very presence of others may be a threat, as one may be for them.

Isolation can be more terrible than death. We must all die, and for many it comes as a welcome relief. But isolation saps our very humanity: grandparents being isolated from their grandchildren, lovers separated from each other. We are touched into life by each other, from tiny touches to making love. A character in a novel by Jonathan Safran Foer says: "Touching him was always so important to me. It was something I lived for. I never could explain why. Little, nothing touches. My fingers against his shoulder. The outsides of our thighs touching as we squeezed together on the bus." When the coronavirus threatens, life-giving touch might become deadly.

The evening before I flew, I went to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and entered the tomb where Jesus is supposed to have lain for three days. The crux of the Christian faith is a man who died in utter isolation. He was lifted up on the cross above the crowd, beyond touch, made into a naked object. He seemed even to have felt separated from his Father, and his last words, according to Mark and Matthew's gospels, were: "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" In that moment he embraced more than just our deaths. He made his very own the loneliness that we all endure sometimes and that tens of millions live today.

On the night before he died, that isolation was already palpable. He gathered his closest friends around him for a last supper. One of them had already sold him to the people who sought his life; Peter, his Rock, was about to deny he even knew him, and most of the others would take to their heels. In this most chilling moment, he did something utterly startling, taking the bread and wine, and saying "this is my body and blood, given for you."

When the community was falling apart and everyone faced the future alone, he made the promise of a new communion, which would be stronger than betrayal and cowardice and which nothing could destroy, even death. When the churches are shut and public worship ceases for a while, that promise still holds and the gift is still given.

So, yes, this awful virus may cut us off from each other physically, and that is a profound deprivation. But Christians believe that all our loneliness is embraced in a communion that pierces through every barricade. The risen Lord comes through the locked door behind which the disciples had placed themselves in self-isolation and lifts their fear and loneliness.

Even if we cannot get to the Eucharist, we can still enact symbols of communion. In Northern Ireland, a hotel offered to deliver free meals to people stuck inside their homes: "Call us before 1 pm and order a meal. We will deliver dinner to you that evening—there is no charge for food or delivery." In Italy, people came out onto their balconies and sang to each other. Music reached into every room to embrace people in their loneliness.

Indeed, music has an ability to express a hope beyond our words. The opera about 9/11, *Between Worlds*, by Tansy Davies, had its world premiere in 2015. Some were shocked that anyone should compose an opera about such a horrible event, but perhaps it is the only way to face its brutality. Nicholas Drake, the librettist, said that "putting the transforming power of music at the heart of the drama, we thought, might allow us to weigh the tragedy of what happened on 9/11, and yet discover some kind of light in that darkness. Music even seems to have played a role in helping some people on that day. A security guard sang hymns to those descending the stairs, to give them courage. Some relatives, lost for words as they spoke to loved ones on the phone, sang together."

Yes, millions of us must endure isolation, but what are the gestures that we can make that put us in touch with those whom we cannot touch? It may be by buying food for those who cannot get out and leaving it on their steps, by phoning and texting. Small gestures can speak of profound belonging.

Every Eucharist recalls what Jesus did in the face of death, defying its threat of ultimate isolation. I was never so aware of this as I was while saying Mass in Syria, less than five miles from the frontline, when gunfire could be heard not far off. The threat of violence was ever present, and yet hope found expression in our singing and in reenacting that gesture of self-gift that nothing could destroy. Even when I cannot get out to join the community in prayer, God remains present, as St Augustine wrote, "in my deepest interiority." However lonely I feel, I am not alone, for at the core of my very being is Another.

TIMOTHY RADCLIFFE, *OP, is a former Master of the worldwide Dominican Order, which he entered in 1965. His new book,* Alive in God: A Christian Imagination, *has just been published by Bloomsbury.*

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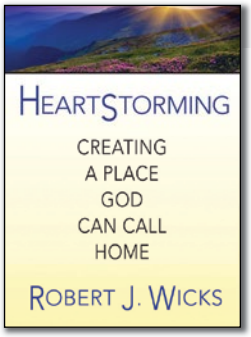

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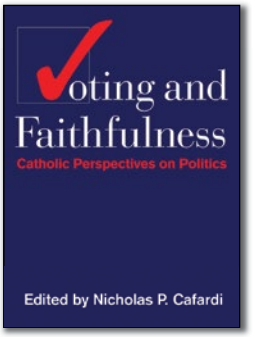

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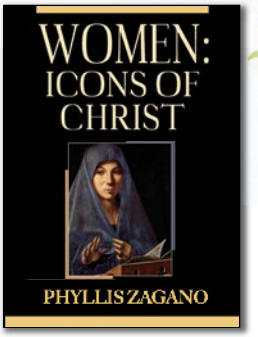

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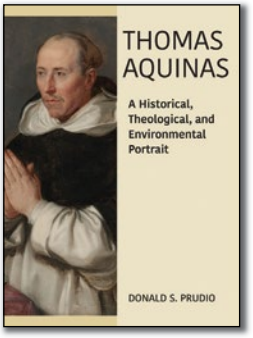

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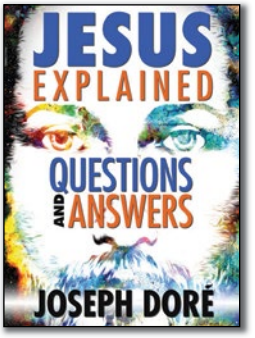

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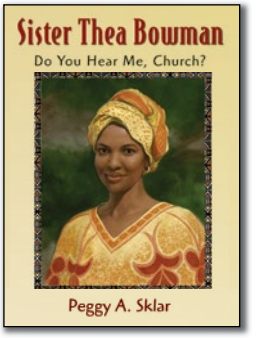

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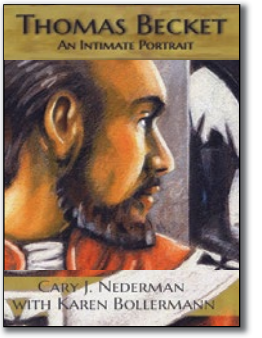

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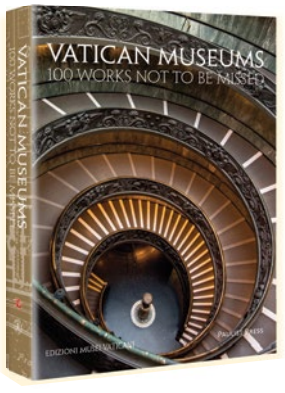

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