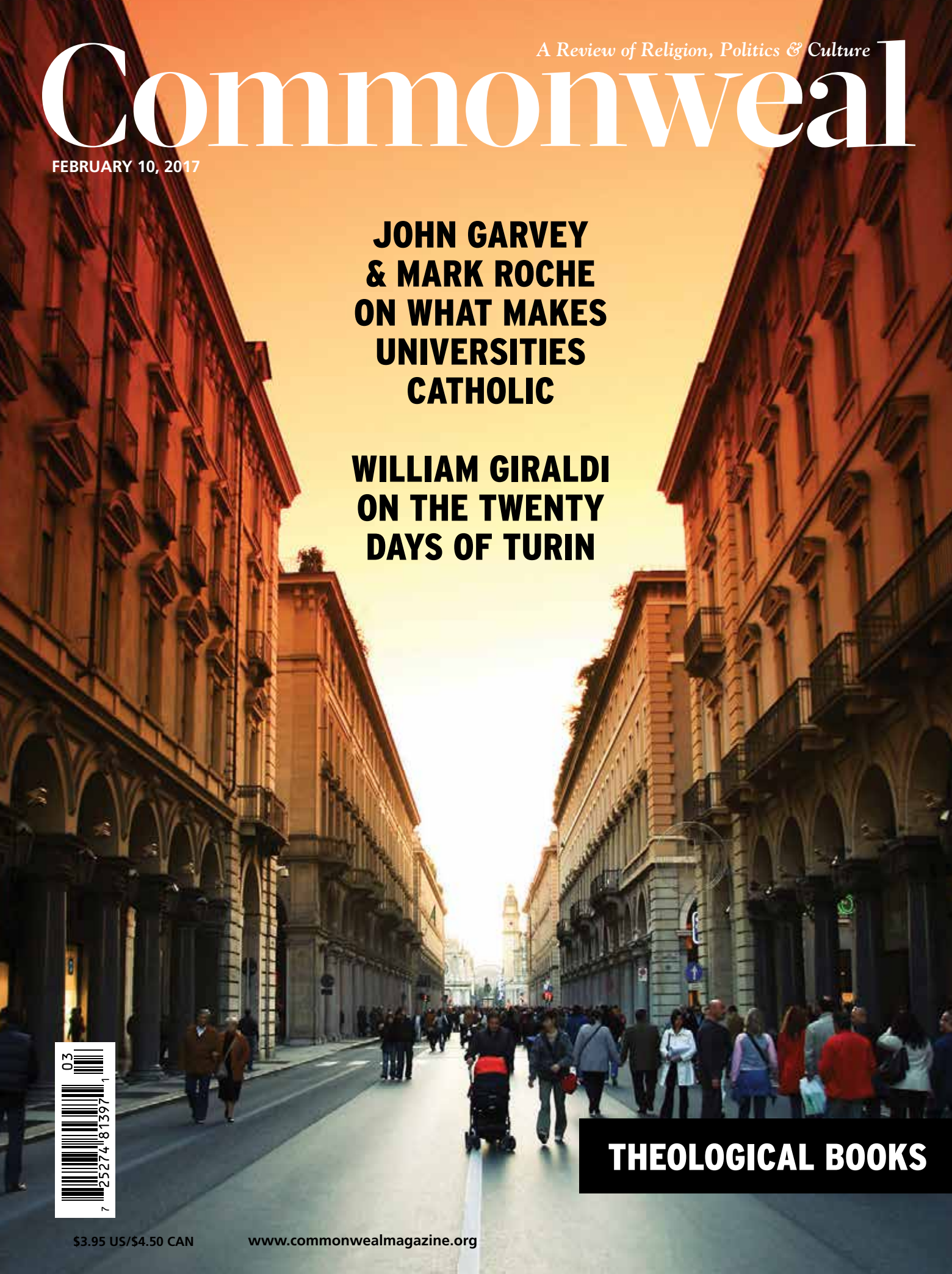
A Review of Religion, Politics & Culture

Commonweal

FEBRUARY 10, 2017

JOHN GARVEY & MARK ROCHE ON WHAT MAKES UNIVERSITIES CATHOLIC

WILLIAM GIRALDI ON THE TWENTY DAYS OF TURIN



THEOLOGICAL BOOKS

$3.95 US/$4.50 CAN

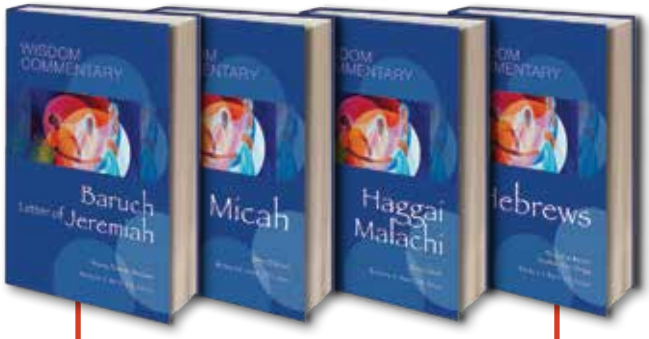
www.commonwealmagazine.org

WISDOM COMMENTARY

NOT JUST ANOTHER COMMENTARY

Wisdom Commentary brings together today's best scholars to provide modern readers with a truly fresh look at every book of the Bible. Available in beautiful hardcover editions and eBooks, formatted to aid preachers and teachers in their advancement toward God's vision of dignity, equality, and justice for ALL people.

NEW VOLUMES!



Currently Available

Each book is hardcover with dust jacket, 6 x 9.
eBooks also available.
Based on the NRSV translation.

"An extraordinary achievement!"
Elizabeth Johnson, Fordham University

"A truly innovative and deeply enriching way of reading the Bible."
Susan Niditch, Amherst College

"The offer of the Wisdom Commentary, with its accent on feminist reading, is welcome and much needed."
Walter Brueggemann
Columbia Theological Seminary

To see currently available volumes, the list of contributors, and more, go to:

WisdomCommentary.org

LITURGICAL PRESS litpress.org • 1-800-858-5450

Commonweal

FEBRUARY 10, 2017 • VOLUME 144 • NUMBER 3

Theological Books Issue

Founded in 1924
Commonweal

Editor
Paul Baumann

Associate Editors
Matthew Boudway, Matthew Sitman

Production
Tiina Aleman

Digital Editor
Dominic Preziosi

Assistant Digital Editor
Maria Bowler

Editorial Assistant
Regina Munch

Contributing Editors
Rand Richards Cooper, unagidon, Rita Ferrone, John Gehring, Michael Peppard, Massimo Faggioli

Editor at Large
Mollie Wilson O'Reilly

Copy Editor
Susanne Washburn

Interns
Rebecca Collins, Kate Massinger

Business Manager
James Hannan

Development
Christa A. Kerber

Community & Events Manager
Ellen B. Koneck

Poetry
Rosemary Deen

Film
Richard Alleva, Rand Richards Cooper

Stage & Television
Celia Wren

Columnists
E. J. Dionne Jr., Anthony Domestico, Rita Ferrone, Luke Timothy Johnson, Cathleen Kaveny, Jo McGowan, Charles R. Morris, Mollie Wilson O'Reilly, Margaret O'Brien Steinfels

Subscription Information
855-713-1792
subscriptions@commonwealmagazine.org

Advertising Manager
Regan Pickett
commonwealads@gmail.com
540-349-5736

Publisher
Thomas Baker

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

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, and Book Review Index. *Commonweal* articles are available at many libraries and research facilities via ProQuest and OpinionArchives. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional offices. Copyright © 2017 Commonweal Foundation. Single Copy, $3.95. Yearly print subscriptions, U.S., $65; Canada, $70; other parts of the world, $75. Special two-year rate: U.S. $108; Canada, $118; other parts of the world, $128. Add $45 for airmail. For digital and online subscription options visit www.commonwealmagazine.org/digital.

Cover design: Cecilia Guerrero Rezes
Cover image: Pexels

LETTERS

Benedict, Nouwen, Trump, etc.

MONKS AND MOBILITY

In "The Virtue of Staying Put" (October 7), Gerald W. Schlabach writes: "Unlike participating in other forms of Christianity, being Catholic necessitates a refusal to leave in protest when the going gets tough, or to start a new church, or to shop around for another identity, or to bandy about threats of schism." But if a Franciscan decided to become a diocesan priest, or a Jesuit decided to become a Benedictine, would Schlabach regard the decision not to stay put as un-Catholic? Much changes for a cradle Catholic when he learns to regard the component churches of Christianity the way he once regarded the Catholic religious orders. No, they're not all the same, but they are all parts of the same Mystical Body of Christ.

JACK MILES
University of California, Irvine

GERALD SCHLABACH REPLIES:

The short answer to the immediate case Miles presents is that there are canonical means for priests and religious to transfer or change their affiliation. For an individual to try to make such a change autonomously, however, would indeed reveal the sort of unstable quasi-Protestant attitude that I would indeed argue to be non-Catholic in significant ways. Miles is hinting at deeper questions, though, which I treat at length in my book *Unlearning Protestantism*. In a tradition that traces back to Abram's departure from Ur, Christians must of course anticipate that mobility can be a faithful response to God's calling. But there are ways to depart that do not initiate the rupture of relationship, and ways to call the bluff of those who expel someone genuinely trying to stay in relationship. In hard times, stability may thus have to express itself as loyal dissent, which holds these tensions together. The new situation of ecumenical mutual recognition offers opportunities to learn new kinds of stability. I simply want to make sure we unlearn the habits of hyper-modern mobility so that Protestants and Catholics alike can benefit from these opportunities.

A GREAT, GAY PRIEST

Thank you for Michael W. Higgins's fine article on Henri Nouwen ("Priest, Writer, Mentor, Misfit," December 16). However, while reading it, I was distracted by the discomfort that I felt from reading the announcement of the Congregation for the Clergy just a week earlier. It seemed to disqualify people with homosexual tendencies from being ordained priests. What a loss for the church and the world if Fr. Nouwen had been thus rejected!

FR. DENNIS LYNCH
Diocese of La Crosse, Wisc.

KIDDING?

Richard Haas's recent letter to the editor on Trump ("What About Trump?" January 27) is a skillful satire. Making virtues of vices, he offers with approval a portrait of a figure who is Mammon personified, alarmingly immature, and a stew of the Seven Deadly Sins, especially pride and greed, and recommends him enthusiastically as a model of political behavior. I am afraid, however, that the irony will be over the heads of Trump supporters, who will relish the portrait and fail to see that Haas is kidding. He is kidding, isn't he?

PETER FARLEY
Brooklyn, N.Y.

A BIRTH CONTROL CAVEAT

As much as I admire Professor Schlabach's reasonable and balanced strategy for potentially fruitful discussion between both camps on the divisive issue of abortion ("Abortion & Social Justice," January 6), I find it odd that he does not mention the problem faced by prolife, feminist Catholics for the past forty-plus years. *Humanae vitae* is the rope tying your arms and legs together as you attempt to swim the widening channel between "prolife" and "prochoice" Americans.

LYN ISBELL
San Francisco, Cal.

From the Editors

American Carnage

In his new book on New York City's Bellevue Hospital, David Oshinsky traces the remarkable role of this public, city-run institution in serving the common good. Over the course of three centuries it has given care to everyone brought to its doors, no matter their malady, ethnicity, or ability to pay, while providing unmatched training for medical students (among them, future novelist Walker Percy). Chronically underfunded, typically overcrowded, Bellevue, Oshinsky writes, nevertheless kept its credo intact: "When it came to treating the sick, whatever the circumstances, there was always room for one more."

Let it stand as a counterexample to the apparent credo of the new administration and its collaborating majority in Congress: When it comes to policymaking, there's always a chance to help millions fewer. Though Donald Trump in his inaugural address hailed an end to what he bizarrely called "this American carnage," he may in fact be its herald. The day before he was sworn in, reports surfaced of his plan—modeled on a draft from the conservative Heritage Foundation—to cut $10.5 trillion from the federal budget. The list of potential targets reflects the predictable urges of the modern GOP: the Justice Department's civil-rights division; programs that provide legal aid for the poor; programs for protecting women from violence; programs for helping women- and minority-owned businesses. Medicare and Social Security, which during the campaign Trump promised to preserve, are not specifically mentioned. But with House Speaker Paul Ryan at last free to inflict his "Better Way" policy agenda on the American people, the fate of these and other safety-net programs, including food stamps, is in doubt. This, of course, comes on top of the first concrete steps taken by congressional Republicans to repeal the Affordable Care Act, the undoing of which could strip 18 million Americans of their health insurance this year and up to 32 million by 2026, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. "I think there's a potential by the August recess for Congress to pass policies that do more to increase poverty and hardship and widen inequality than we've seen in half a century," said Robert Greenstein of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, an advocacy group in Washington.

It remains to be seen whether such dire predictions come true. But little reassurance could be found in the confirmation testimony of Trump's cabinet nominees. Ben Carson, the retired neurosurgeon tapped to oversee Housing and Urban Development, averred that poverty is a lifestyle choice. Education pick Betsy DeVos, whose hostility to public schooling is well documented, obligingly displayed her ignorance of important educational policy debates. Nor did she convince anyone that her ultimate goal isn't to help private schools at the expense of the public-school system. Tom Price, Trump's Health and Human Services appointee, faced questions on his alleged use of insider information to purchase stock in a biotechnology company that could benefit from Republican action on health care. These are, of course, just three of the millionaires and billionaires selected for Trump's cabinet. They share with many of their counterparts in Congress the belief that health care, education, and housing are nothing more than commodities, to be delivered by the market, or not at all.

Markets can be useful, but as Catholic social teaching stresses, they are not an absolute good. John Paul II made this clear in the encyclical *Centesimus annus*, declaring that any market system needs to work first "in the service of human freedom in its totality." Pope Francis has condemned the "sacralization" of markets. In a January address at the Catholic University of America, San Diego Bishop Robert McElroy cited both popes in exhorting the church to join workers, the poor, and the elderly in countering the "growing imperialism of market mechanisms within American life… [T]his coalition must witness powerfully to the unacceptability of linking vital public benefits to market mechanisms that will inevitably diminish support for the neediest while exempting the wealthy and powerful from the call to sacrifice." Using such mechanisms, he further warned, "will unleash a series of silent killers all the more invidious because they are aimed at those without power."

At this moment there is a special imperative to act according to these convictions. The daily sideshow antics of the president should not be a distraction. As Americans and as Catholics, we have a shared obligation to work for the basic well-being of our fellow citizens, especially those most vulnerable to the destructive forces that appear to be arrayed in Washington. ■

January 24, 2017

Rita Ferrone

Reform of the Reform

ROME REVISITS '*LITURGIAM AUTHENTICAM*'

The tightly controlled and highly centralized approach to the translation of liturgical texts that has reigned in the Roman Catholic Church over the past fifteen years is likely coming to an end. In a move that is widely expected to open the door to more pastoral guidelines and approaches, Pope Francis has inaugurated a review and re-evaluation of the 2001 document *Liturgiam authenticam*.

The move was at least a year in coming. To understand what happened, however, it is necessary to know some background. Championed by a handful of conservative bishops and advocates, the principles of translation articulated in *Liturgiam authenticam* were intended to reassert the primacy and priority of the Latin text of the liturgy. It aimed at creating a "sacral vernacular" through a word-for-word translation of the Latin. It looked backward rather than forward. Ecumenical cooperation in crafting common translations was discouraged, cultural adaptation was discouraged, and concessions to modern developments, such as gender-inclusive language, were absolutely ruled out. Because the episcopal conferences could not be trusted to maintain such tight adherence to the Latin, Roman authorities centralized the process and retained the option to impose a translation if they wished.

The new translation of the Roman Missal into English, implemented in 2011, was guided by these principles. The resulting prayers did not in fact resemble the Latin, as those who know and love the Latin language attest, for Latin has its own genius. An awkward prayer in English does Latin no honor. Yet this was the inevitable result of *Liturgiam authenticam*. Many of the prayers translated according to its principles were rendered long, complex, and stilted in English; hard to proclaim and difficult to understand. Even some of those who had been in favor of a new translation found the final text disappointing. A 2014 survey of U.S. priests by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University, showed that only 27 percent felt the translation had lived up to expectations.

The English translation of the Roman Missal, the first of the new translations produced under the principles of *Liturgiam authenticam*, was supposed to be a brilliant success and a model for other language groups. Instead, it became a terrible warning. Other language groups—such as German, Dutch, French, Italian, and Spanish—prepared translations according to these principles, but they did not implement them. Faced with the prospect of giving up well-known and well-loved vernacular texts, and replacing them with unidiomatic and problematic ones, the bishops balked.

In response, Cardinal Robert Sarah of the Congregation for Divine Worship (CDW) took a hard line. When the German-speaking bishops raised objections, he lectured them on obedience. When the francophone Canadians and Belgians insisted that prayers that their bishops voted unanimously to retain be retained, he said no. These examples are not exhaustive by any means. In short, Pope Francis did not decide to re-evaluate *Liturgiam authenticam* on a whim. Never a popular instruction, *Liturgiam authenticam*'s stock was plummeting. Something had to be done.

Liturgiam authenticam was produced without consultation. Pope Francis's approach has already shown a marked contrast with that style. When conservative Vaticanologist Sandro Magister broke the news this week that a commission was being formed at Francis's behest to "demolish" *Liturgiam authenticam*, Archbishop Arthur Roche, second in command at the CDW, had already been meeting with various groups of bishops to solicit their input into the review. Indeed the new roster of members of the Congregation for Divine Worship bodes well for a full consideration of the issues. Bishop Arthur Joseph Serratelli of Paterson, who chaired the International Commission on English in the Liturgy during the implementation of the new translation, is well placed to defend the status quo. But Archbishop Piero Marini, the former papal master of ceremonies who has been critical of the instruction, will also have his say. Several of the new appointees either are or have been at the head of episcopal conferences, such as Ricardo Blázquez Pérez (Spain), John Olorunfemi Onaiyekan (Nigeria), John Atcherley Dew (New Zealand) and Denis James Hart (Australia). They will surely weigh in on questions of oversight and decentralization from their experience. Bernard-Nicolas Aubertin, who is president of the Francophone Episcopal Commission for Liturgical Translations, is well informed on translation issues as well.

What all this will mean for the English liturgy over the long run remains to be seen. I certainly hope that those texts that have been translated according to *Liturgiam authenticam* but never implemented (RCIA, Baptism, etc.) will be placed on hold until church leaders discern a future direction under Francis's guidance. As for the Missal we have now, the U.S. bishops will no doubt be loath to revise it. But just as the experience of the English-speaking world helped other language groups to see what they had to do, so the insights and experience of other groups may help English-speaking bishops to find a way forward. The way to begin is by trusting our own people and our own wisdom concerning prayer in our native tongue. ■

MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

"The MTS is an academically rigorous program that takes the demands of living out the Christian vocation seriously; I could not be more pleased with the ways in which faith and reason consistently reinforce one another within the theology department at Loyola. This has been integral to my own growth as a scholar and as a Christian."

- Philip Porter, MTS '15
Th.D. candidate at Duke University

LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY MARYLAND
Loyola College of Arts and Sciences

APPLY BY MARCH 1 | loyola.edu/mts | LoyolaMTS | @LoyolaMTS

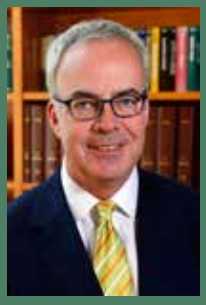
The Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities

2017 Award Recipients

The Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, CSC Award
For outstanding contributions and extended service to Catholic higher education
Rev. Michael J. Sheeran, SJ
President, Association of Jesuit Colleges & Universities

The Monika K. Hellwig Award
For outstanding contributions to Catholic intellectual life
Sr. Margaret Carney, OSF, S.T.D.
President Emeritus, St. Bonaventure University

The Presidents' Distinguished Service Award
For personal service of exceptional quality to Catholic higher education
Dr. Thomas M. Landy
Director, Collegium, College of the Holy Cross



Awards will be presented at the
2017 ACCU Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, January 28–30.
www.accunet.org/2017AnnualMeeting
#ACCU2017

David Mills

2 + 2 Can Equal 5

ANTONIO SPADARO AND HIS CRITICS

Pope Francis with Fr. Antonio Spadaro on November 25

Fr. Antonio Spadaro, SJ, recently amused a great many people, though he didn't mean to. Facebook and Twitter lit up with sarcastic responses to a tweet in which the editor of *La Civiltà Cattolica*—a close ally of Francis who has been called "the Pope's Mouthpiece"—wrote, "Theology is not mathematics. In theology 2 + 2 can equal 5. Because it has to do with God and real life of people..."

Conservative Catholics jumped on it. *Catholic World Report*'s editor Carl Olson wrote on his Facebook page: "Fr. Spadaro might be a close confidant of the pope, but I wouldn't want him teaching catechesis to my kids. Good grief." On his website, he said the tweet "has a decidedly nominalist (or voluntarist) bent to it, for it rests on the apparent belief that God can indeed act contrary to what and who he is." Catholic Culture's Phil Lawler accused Spadaro of having an "irrational faith" and possibly believing that "God can and will violate the laws of logic."

Some lectured Spadaro on his lack of logic. "1. Theology does embrace the principle of non-contradiction. 2. So does reality. What is wrong with Spadaro?" Some responses assigned political motives: "In order to control you need to eradicate any certainty." Others wrote things like "From the film version of *1984*" or parodies like "Theology is not veterinary science. In theology your cat can be a dog."

What was the poor man actually up to? Spadaro was trying to make a point in an imaginative way. He wanted his readers to see how theology works by describing it with a startling contrast. The writer wants readers to say "Wait, no, that's...oh, I get it."

I felt for him. I use a lot of analogies and images in my own writing, and I know how easy it is to create one that can make you look dumb. You're trying to help your readers see one thing they don't understand by describing it in terms of something they do understand. In between the two things lies lots of room for mistakes.

Most people don't speak theology, or speak it as you would speak Korean after one mail-order language course. Metaphors and analogies help them learn the language. For a writer, using them is a bit of a high-wire act, a kids-don't-try-this-at home performance.

Was Spadaro's metaphor such a big mistake—or a mistake at all? I don't think it was, but even if he did fall off the high wire, these things happen. "Nice try" would have been a reasonable response. I once played with the same metaphor to make a similar point and decided not to use it. I thought that readers would get too caught up by the fact that 2+2 *doesn't* equal 5 and miss my point. It's a good metaphor, though it might have worked better with more context than a 140-character tweet can provide.

My guess is that Spadaro was trying to make a point about pastoral care, though he said "theology." The rules are necessarily general and simple, and many people's lives don't fit them. Everyone knows this.

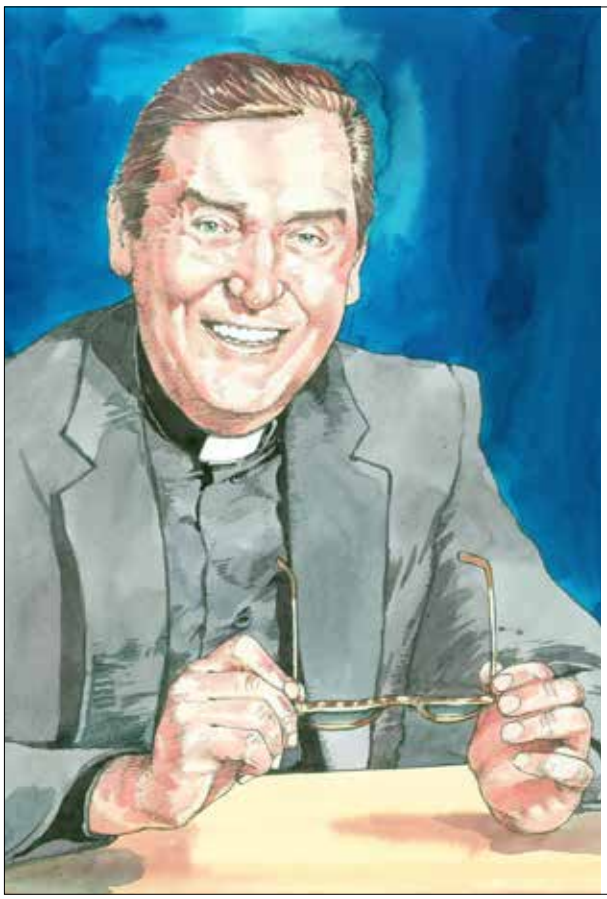
Years ago, before I entered the church, I spent a couple of hours with an Opus Dei priest who complained about the people who applied the rules mechanically. He called them "manualists," if I remember right. He said something very like what Spadaro said. Another conservative priest told me that he quietly admitted to Communion couples in irregular marriages if he saw serious progress toward resolving their situation. He thought this was right to do though strictly speaking against the rules. He did it (this is my reading) because it has to do with God and the real life of people.

I'm fairly sure that many of the priests who laughed at Spadaro treat pastoral care as if 2+2 does sometimes equal 5. And that many of the laity who laughed at him have enjoyed similar pastoral indulgence. Everyone's a rigorist about someone else's sins. The real problem with the response is that instead of just saying they thought Spadaro's image didn't work, a host of internet critics used it to try to show that he (and by implication the pope) was an idiot.

Had one of the conservative celebrity priests used the same metaphor, they would not have made fun of him. They would have read him as trying to do what he was trying to do. They may disagree with Spadaro on every possible issue, but they should play fair. ■

David Mills *is the editorial director of* Ethika Politika *(www.ethikapolitika.org) and a columnist for* Aleteia *(www.aleteia.org/author/david-mills).*

CNS PHOTO / PAUL HARING



The George W. Hunt, S.J., Prize for Excellence in Journalism, Arts & Letters

The Hunt Prize seeks to recognize the best of literary intelligence and imagination in a variety of genres.

The 2017 Hunt Prize will be awarded in the category of Fiction and Drama.

The winner of the Hunt Prize:
- Will receive a $25,000 monetary award
- Will deliver an original lecture at the Saint Thomas More Chapel & Center at Yale University
- Will have the lecture printed as the cover story in America magazine

Nominations open from January 22 to March 31, 2017.
For more information please visit **www.huntprize.org**

America | Media
A Jesuit Ministry

Saint Thomas More
The Catholic Chapel & Center at Yale University

The Curran Center for American Catholic Studies of Fordham University presents

The Future of the Catholic Literary Imagination
The Catholic Writer in a Post-Religious Age

April 27 to 29, 2017
Fordham University | Lincoln Center Campus

Plan to join us at a discussion forum for writers, scholars, editors, publishers, and readers.

PANELS
Contemporary Catholic Fiction
Contemporary Catholic Poetry
Catholic Memoir
Catholics in Television and Theatre
The Irish Catholic Imagination
The Jesuit Imagination
Catholic Biography

PLENARY SPEAKERS
Dana Gioia
Richard Rodriguez
Alice McDermott
Mary Gordon
Michael O'Siadhail
Paul Mariani

For more information, visit fordham.edu/cacs2017conference.

FORDHAM
THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
The Francis and Ann Curran Center for American Catholic Studies

Commencement Day 2016 at the Catholic University of America

Hiring for Mission

Why It's Necessary, Why It's Hard

John Garvey & Mark W. Roche

John Garvey

The blueprint for building a great university is fairly simple. It's like the plan for building a great baseball team: hire great players. In a fundamental sense, the faculty are the university. Students pay to learn what they profess. If the faculty are great scholars and teachers, the university will be great.

The blueprint for building a Catholic university is also simple. It was laid out in 1990 by John Paul II in the apostolic constitution *Ex corde ecclesiae*. John Paul was himself a university professor, so he knew how universities worked. *Ex corde* runs almost fifty pages in the English translation; but the kernel of the document is four short lines near the end. In Part II, a section titled "General Norms," John Paul says that in order for a university to be Catholic, a majority of its faculty must be Catholic.

What I most admire about this prescription is its modesty. John Paul did not say that he and the other bishops should superintend the Catholic character of Catholic universities. On the contrary, he began his observations about the university community by conceding that "the responsibility for maintaining and strengthening the Catholic identity of the University rests primarily with the university itself." Bishops are not academics. (John Paul and Benedict XVI were exceptions.) *Ex corde* says to university faculties and administrators, in effect, "We don't know how to run a Catholic university. That's your job. The only thing we insist on is that you choose Catholics to do it."

This is, as I say, a fairly simple plan. If a university follows it, it will be Catholic. If it does not, it won't. But it has met with resistance in the academy. I want to discuss one line of argument against it that I find both powerful and well considered, but wrong.

CNS / DANA RENE BOWLER, CUA

Harry Keyishian was an adjunct English professor at the University of Buffalo in the 1960s. The university was once a private school, founded by Millard Fillmore (this was before he became president) in 1846. But in 1962 it merged into the New York state university system. That made Keyishian a state employee, subject to something called the Feinberg Law, which required him to sign a certificate saying he was not a Communist. I'm not sure whether he was or not, but Keyishian was at least scrupulous about signing the certificate, and so his contract was not renewed.

He sued the New York Board of Regents and won. The Supreme Court held that the Feinberg Law and several earlier New York sedition laws that it enforced were inconsistent with the academic freedom guaranteed by the Constitution. Here is how Justice William Brennan put it:

> [T]he First Amendment...does not tolerate laws that cast a pall of orthodoxy over the classroom.... The classroom is peculiarly the "marketplace of ideas." The nation's future depends upon leaders trained through wide exposure to that robust exchange of ideas which discovers truth "out of a multitude of tongues, (rather) than through any kind of authoritative selection."

Let us be careful in parsing this. It's not a postmodern argument. The Court does not say that all ideas deserve equal protection because one is as good as another, that there is no such thing as truth. It argues for a free market of ideas on instrumental grounds. If we want to discover the truth, Brennan says, we should prefer "a multitude of tongues" to "orthodoxy" and "authoritative selection."

The most famous version of this argument is made by the utilitarian philosopher John Stuart Mill. Mill had this in common with Keyishian: when it came time for him to apply to college, he refused to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, and so was ineligible to attend Oxford or Cambridge. He went to University College, London.

On Liberty, the best known of Mill's political writings, was published in 1859, a little more than a hundred years before the *Keyishian* decision. Chapter 2 of *On Liberty* is an extended defense of the liberty of thought and discussion. Justice Brennan assumed that free trade in ideas was the surest path to truth. Mill offers three reasons why this may be so.

First, the opinions we suppress may turn out to be true. "All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility." Think about Galileo and Urban VIII. Turns out the earth really does revolve around the sun. Second, it may be the case that "conflicting doctrines, instead of one being true and the other false, share the truth between them." Chemists in the nineteenth century debated whether inanimate catalysts or living cells caused fermentation. Turns out they were both right. It's caused by enzymes (inanimate bodies) pressed out of living cells. Third, suppose that the received opinion is entirely true. Unless we are forced to consider

THE FORDHAM CENTER ON RELIGION & CULTURE

is honored to present

THE SAPIENTIA ET DOCTRINA LECTURE

AN EVENING WITH

HOLLAND COTTER

Pulitzer Prize-winning senior art critic at *The New York Times*

Mr. Cotter's presentation will be followed by a conversation with Lynn Neary, NPR arts correspondent and frequent host on *Morning Edition* and *Weekend Edition*.

Thursday, March 9, 2017 | 6 p.m.

12th-Floor Lounge | Corrigan Conference Center
Fordham University | Lincoln Center Campus
113 West 60th Street, NYC

FREE ADMISSION

RSVP: crcevent@fordham.edu

More info: fordham.edu/CRC

175 FORDHAM 175 Years of Service

objections to it, Mill says, our reception of it will in time become a mindless and reflexive attachment. "Truth, thus held, is but one superstition the more accidentally clinging to the words which enunciate a truth."

You can probably see where this leads, in the discussion about *Ex corde ecclesiae* and building a great Catholic university. Some people draw from Mill and his disciples the conclusion that a great Catholic university is a contradiction in terms. If we hire a majority of Catholics (instead of a multitude of tongues), we will have a harder time discovering truth than schools that reject "orthodoxy" and "authoritative selection." Without dissent and disagreement, without the intellectual give and take that characterizes a free market of ideas, we are bound to lose our way and have no one to call us back.

Or so the argument goes. The funny thing is, it is easy to find examples of great universities that contradict Mill's thesis. Consider the University of Chicago. The Chicago School of Economics developed around Milton Friedman and George Stigler in the 1950s. It embraced a neoclassical approach to economics based on rational expectations. The Chicago School spun off parallel movements like Law and Economics and public-choice theory. The university's website lists twenty-eight Nobel Prize winners who spent some part of their careers at Chicago as faculty, students, or researchers.

In building up this great school Chicago preferred people who shared its peculiar orientation rather than Keynesian economists. They wanted faculty who believed in markets and worried more about government regulation than they did about private monopolies. Chicago was the very embodiment of free-market thinking, yet it did not seek a multitude of tongues for its faculty. Paul Douglas, once a professor at Chicago and later a U.S. senator, wrote that he left the university because economist Frank "Knight was openly hostile [to me], and his disciples seemed to be everywhere."

Here's another example. The Bauhaus School was an art school that operated in Germany from 1919 to 1933, when it was closed under pressure from the Nazis. It featured faculty like Walter Gropius, Hannes Meyer, Marcel Breuer, and Mies van der Rohe. Painters Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky joined in the 1920s. Bauhaus gave birth to architectural modernism, a style that features simple forms, a stress on function and rationality, and an effort to infuse mass production with artistic spirit. Think of the Pan Am building (Mies) or the Whitney Museum (Breuer) in New York. Or the Lake Shore apartments in Chicago (Mies).

In building this school the directors sought faculty who shared their passion for newness. They did not want classical architects and painters. They were not interested in a baroque revival. They would not have hired Bernini. They liked flat roofs, right angles, and minimal ornamentation. They used dull colors—a lot of white and black. Bauhaus was a revolution that influenced a century of architecture. But the school was not assembled from a multitude of tongues.

I could add other counterexamples: the Yale School of literary criticism, the Cambridge School of political thought, the Frankfurt School of critical theory. What they all have in common is a dedication to a common project, usually a departure from some academic orthodoxy, and a sense that the group is working on its own to build something new. They all laid the foundations of great intellectual movements. And yet they were built up on principles that seem inconsistent with Mill's idea of academic freedom. In building their faculties, they did not seek out a multitude of tongues. How can this be?

Building a great university is a complicated thing. There is some truth in Mill's thesis. But there is more to the project than that. Let me illustrate the point with a brief account of another of my intellectual heroes.

Michael Polanyi was the fifth child born into a family of secular Jews in Hungary in 1891. His father built railroads. His mother's father was the chief rabbi of Vilnius. He got a medical degree, then a PhD in chemistry. (His son won the Nobel Prize in 1986.) In 1919 he converted to Christianity. In the 1920s he taught at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin. When the Nazis came to power in the 1930s he moved to England, where he taught at the University of Manchester until his retirement.

Though he was a pretty famous scientist, he is better known for his writings about epistemology and social science. In 1962 he gave a lecture at Chicago's Roosevelt University titled "The Republic of Science," about building intellectual communities. During and after World War II there were efforts in England to direct the progress of science into channels that would better serve the public welfare. Polanyi compared these to Soviet schemes for having the Academy of Science guide research, the better to support that country's Five-Year Plans.

Consider the case of Trofim Lysenko, a Soviet biologist who worked at improving wheat-crop yields during the Depression. Lysenko rejected the developing science of genetics as a product of bourgeois capitalism. He believed that acquired traits could be inherited. If this were true, it would allow fairly rapid reengineering of plant and animal life. So the theory appealed to the Soviet leadership. Lysenko became a protégé of Joseph Stalin. Scientists who disagreed with him were sent to the gulag. The result was the essential destruction of a branch of science in the Soviet Union for several decades.

Though Polanyi appreciated the sentiments that inspired these British and Soviet efforts, he found their aim misguided. Science is a particular kind of joint task that requires the spontaneous coordination of independent initiatives, not central control. Imagine, he says, that we have a very large jigsaw puzzle, and we are trying to put the pieces together in the shortest possible time. We can speed things up by hiring more helpers.

Notice, though, how this is different from hiring a dozen

people to shell peas. There each worker can tend to her own pile. The total number of peas shelled won't vary if the workers are isolated from each other. With the jigsaw puzzle the helpers must work in sight of each other, so that each time one fits a piece in, the others can see what further steps become possible. This is what we mean by saying that their work is coordinated.

But it is also independent. If we try to organize the helpers' behavior under a single authority, we lose the benefit of their individual initiatives and "reduce their joint effectiveness to that of the single person directing them from the centre." This is what happened with Lysenko in the Soviet Union.

This is a powerful argument for academic freedom. But I want you to notice three interesting things about it. First, it is implicit in the jigsaw-puzzle analogy that there is a correct solution. The pieces don't fit together any which way. There is one right arrangement. Polanyi was no postmodern; he did not subscribe to epistemological and moral relativism. He believed that truth is real. But how do we know when we have found it? Who's to say?

This is the second interesting thing. If truth is real, there are right and wrong opinions, an "orthodoxy of science," as Polanyi puts it. And if there is an orthodoxy, there is an authority to judge about it. It can't be any single person. (That again is the lesson of Lysenko.) Rather, it is to be found in the scientific community, which is responsible for maintaining professional standards.

Though each scientist is competent to judge only about his own small corner of studies, he will have some sense about standards in immediately adjacent areas. If we consider the larger community of scientists, we will find a network of overlapping competencies that together generate uniform standards of scientific merit. Consider again the helpers working on the jigsaw puzzle. It wouldn't work if each person had a different understanding of the job (if, for example, one person believed that puzzle pieces ought to be stacked rather than fitted together). The community of scholars must share the same idea of what problem they are working on, and what counts as a good solution.

This is the third point. For the community of scholars to be authoritative, there must be standards for admission to it. In Polanyi's view "the authority of science is essentially traditional." It is transmitted from one generation to another the way artistic, moral, and legal traditions are transmitted. Scientists learn their trade by apprenticing with people who have already mastered the tradition. To be accepted into the trade, they must submit to "a vast range of value-judgments exercised over all the domains of science."

Universities play a uniquely important role in the creation of this republic of science. The "justification for the pursuit of scientific research in universities," Polanyi says, "lies in the fact that the universities provide an intimate communion for the formation of scientific opinion, free from corrupting intrusions and distractions."

You can see where I am going with this. *Ex corde ecclesiae* takes a similar approach to building a Catholic university. The encyclical does not undertake to regulate, Soviet style, the teaching of theology, or physics, or literature. It does not prefer or condemn particular theories or schools of thought. It does not say that an undergraduate curriculum must include twelve hours each of philosophy and theology. It says instead that:

> [t]he responsibility for maintaining and strengthening the Catholic identity of the university rests primarily with the university itself.... [T]his responsibility...calls for the recruitment of...personnel, especially teachers and administrators, who are both willing and able to promote that identity.

The central thing John Paul insists on is that the people who build the university community be apprenticed in the Catholic tradition, as Polanyi's scientists were formed in the scientific tradition, and committed to the common project of building the Catholic intellectual life.

Building a Catholic faculty is not tribalism, any more than building a republic of science is. It is a recognition that, in order to create a distinctively Catholic intellectual culture, we need to build an intellectual community governed by a Catholic worldview. A shared commitment to Catholic ideas about Creation and Providence, of human beings made in the image of God, will spur creativity and the development of a culture that expresses these ideas.

Let me close the circle by returning to Mill's arguments. There is a distinction between embracing the Catholic tradition as a constitutional principle and regulating particular activities in research and teaching. Polanyi wrestled with this issue too. There is an internal tension in science between the need to adhere to orthodox professional standards and the demand for originality in research: "The professional standards of science must impose a framework of discipline and at the same time encourage rebellion against it." Kepler's theory of elliptical orbits grew out of an effort to defend Copernicus's ideas about uniform motion. Newton relied on Copernicus and Kepler to find answers unthinkable to them. The defense of originality does not demand the rejection of orthodoxy. On the contrary, it is impossible without it.

This is why *Ex corde ecclesiae* can include a stout defense of academic freedom alongside its insistence on hiring a predominantly Catholic faculty. It says: "The church... recognizes the academic freedom of scholars in each discipline in accordance with its own principles and proper methods[.]" This is not mere lip service to an ideal the secular academy prizes. The church really means it. The process it favors for keeping the faith is not compulsion and censorship, but building up the body of Christ.

John Garvey *is president of the Catholic University of America.*

Mark W. Roche

John Garvey cites John Paul II's prescription that for a Catholic university to be truly Catholic a majority of its faculty must be Catholic. Garvey, a distinguished legal scholar as well as president of the Catholic University of America, calls this "a fairly simple plan." The plan may be simple, but its execution is complex. I would like to flesh out Garvey's somewhat abstract reflections by discussing the struggles and strategies I had as dean at the University of Notre Dame in trying to hire outstanding Catholic faculty.

Long before the publication of *Ex corde ecclesiae*, Notre Dame had already declared in its mission statement that the university's Catholic identity "depends upon, and is nurtured by, the continuing presence of a predominant number of Catholic intellectuals." When the university had modest academic ambitions, it could easily hire a majority of Catholics. As Notre Dame raised its standards, the challenge became greater. The university was no longer simply looking for qualified Catholics; it was competing with the world's most outstanding universities for the best scholar-teachers.

So how has Notre Dame's faculty nonetheless remained more than 50 percent Catholic? Here are some of the lessons I learned and practices I advocated in dealing with several hundred faculty searches.

The best strategy is to articulate a compelling vision for the place of Catholicism in the university, such that everyone in the community supports the idea of hiring Catholic faculty. Space limitations prevent me from articulating such a vision here, but it should include wanting faculty members who can participate in reciprocal dialogue with the church, who are willing to roll up their sleeves in supporting a distinctive mission, and who offer diverse models of lived Catholicism. Such an ideal will certainly motivate some faculty members and surely motivated John Garvey when he was a faculty member at Notre Dame's law school.

But vision alone does not suffice. Faculty members tend to identify more with their academic disciplines than with their institutions. The gulf between disciplinary standards and the idea of Catholic hiring can border on the grotesque. The Modern Language Association, one of the world's largest scholarly organizations, publishes a list of dos and don'ts for interviewers, including the following: Don't ask questions about religion. Interviewers are not obliged to follow the prescriptions, but it is a bit awkward to preface a question by saying, "You probably think this question is inappropriate, perhaps even illegal, but..."

How does one get faculty search committees to support potential faculty contributions to mission when such criteria are not part of their background or mindset and viewed by many as illegitimate? Here are five principles I advocate.

Never compromise on quality. No one is interested in a Catholic university that is mediocre—not other faculty, not students, not donors, and certainly not policy-makers who turn to universities for scholarly guidance. However, when faculty focus only on disciplinary standards, two potential dangers arise: a faculty that has an insufficient number of Catholics or a dean who must veto proposed faculty hires. The former means mission drift, the latter wasted political capital and the ugly specter of quotas. I am not suggesting that quality Catholic scholars are not available. I am stating, based on experience, that in almost any pool of candidates, conflicts will arise. How then does one ensure high quality and Catholic numbers?

Be creative and strategic. As with hiring for racial or gender diversity, one needs incentives, guidelines, and support structures when hiring with the Catholic identity of an institution in mind.

Search committees sometimes fear that if they do not find a faculty member in a given year, the faculty position will be taken away. As a consequence, they have an absurd incentive to hire less-than-ideal candidates. The appropriate response is clear: the dean should guarantee that the search can continue across several years. A failed search is not when you don't hire a person. A failed search is when you hire the wrong person. Patience increases the chances of success.

Positive incentives are also helpful. Because in any one year, some positions are likely to remain unfilled, the dean should have temporary funds to make "pre-hires." In other words, upon the recommendation of a department, the dean hires someone in advance of a future retirement or departure. In short, a department may temporarily receive an additional position while it waits for an established position to become available.

Searches should not be for narrow academic specializations; instead, they should be wide enough to ensure a larger pool. The pool can be expanded also in professorial rank. For example, in the case of a superior Catholic candidate, an assistant-professor opening might be elevated to a senior position to attract the right scholar.

Competitive searches are another innovative strategy we employed. Invite more departments to search than you have positions available, telling them that you will hire only the best candidates. That quickly motivates departments to satisfy an institution's vision for itself and an administrator's expectations. Depending on where faculty end up, you can raise or lower various departments' expected contributions to the common curriculum, and you can challenge departments to compete more efficaciously for hires in the future. This encourages departments to search for candidates, instead of simply sifting through applicants, raises the bar on faculty quality, and avoids the politically awkward situation where the dean must veto a candidate. In this case, the dean simply states that the candidates in other departments are stronger.

We also conducted interdepartmental searches and placed on the search committee persons who were attentive to Catholic hiring. Such searches are ideal in interdisciplin-

ary areas that resonate well with mission, such as religion and literature.

Finalists for a position should be approved at a higher level before on-campus interviews are scheduled. If the finalist pool does not include any Catholics, the department must answer the question "Who was the strongest Catholic in the pool, and why did she not make the cut?" Canceling searches midstream, because of inattention to mission, is more effective and efficient than vetoing potential hires.

To send a message about Notre Dame's support for recruiting Catholic faculty, we created an office to identify the greatest possible number of Catholic scholars of high quality at all ranks and in all disciplines as well as excellent scholars of the Catholic tradition. The goal was to have resources available to help departments. The database greatly increased our capacity to identify potential Catholic candidates from around the world.

Development offices find mission more an opportunity than a challenge. Many donors want to give specifically to a university's distinctive mission. At Notre Dame, for example, donors have endowed chairs for faculty members who are Catholic or for faculty members who work in fields central to our mission, such as religious history or sacred music. Such positions certainly help with Catholic hiring.

Move beyond the Catholic numbers. A preponderance of Catholic faculty may or may not be necessary to protect and advance mission. It is certainly not sufficient.

We insisted that not only campus visits but interviews at academic conferences include questions on mission. How might candidates contribute to Notre Dame's Catholic mission, broadly understood? What about Notre Dame's distinctive identity attracts them? The goal was to ask an open-ended question that allowed for an almost inexhaustible number of possible responses, but an inability to engage the question in any meaningful way was a sobering sign.

Although I kept track each year of Catholic hires, I also recorded what I called "mission hires," persons who, irrespective of faith, worked on topics that were a superb fit for a Catholic university or who exhibited a deep understanding of, and an unusually rich desire to contribute to, our distinctive mission.

Mission hires often contribute more in advocating for mission or in developing distinctive programs than faculty members who simply happen to be Catholic. After interviewing a candidate, I once called a chairperson to say that the candidate had done poorly on the mission question, and I could not imagine hiring him. The chairperson said, "But he's Catholic." If incentives are oriented toward the percentage of Catholics and not candidates' general capacities to contribute to mission, administrators may end up hiring Catholics who fail the mission question over superb mission candidates who are not Catholic. What one can unambiguously count and easily report is not always what matters most.

Make faculty hiring one piece of a larger puzzle. New faculty, even Catholics, often need help in understanding a school's distinctive mission. Orientation begins with interviews, inviting candidates to reflect out loud on their potential contribution to the Catholic character of the university. New faculty members need to be integrated into the continuing conversation about how to understand mission, and the institution needs to allow the mission to be enriched by their voices.

Socializing faculty members is important. New faculty are usually eager to learn about a college's vision, history, and customs. The first year and the year after tenure, when faculty are especially curious about their newly permanent home, offer wonderful opportunities for a college to articulate its vision and priorities, to cultivate solidarity with that higher purpose, and to benefit from the ideas of faculty members.

Ideally, one has a year-long series of events, including time with the president and common readings. Similar events can be planned for those who are embarking on administrative roles. Besides ensuring that faculty meet colleagues from other disciplines, thus widening their horizons, such an orientation fosters loyalty and community. It ensures that faculty understand how the missions of their current and former educational institutions differ.

Faculty seminars can be helpful: summer seminars, compact seminars, reading groups, lecture series, or sets of discussions. At Notre Dame we sponsored an annual yearlong seminar on topics such as the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Catholic social tradition. Recognizing that many faculty members could not give the requisite time to such a demanding initiative, we also sponsored each semester single-afternoon workshops on aspects of Catholicism. Each workshop offered an introduction to Catholicism, explored a classic work in the Catholic tradition, or engaged a topic involving Catholicism and contemporary society.

Incentives can be introduced for new courses and scholarly projects that bring disciplines into contact with Catholicism. We also offered to reduce course loads for teachers to study the Catholic intellectual tradition. Faculty members could enter a competition to receive a one-course release from teaching in order to take a course or independent study in philosophy, theology, or another discipline on aspects of

If hiring for diversity results in Catholic universities' losing their religious identity, then American higher education as a whole will become less, not more, diverse.

the Catholic intellectual tradition. These experiences were designed to enrich their teaching, scholarship, and connection to the university.

Do not underestimate language. Academic leaders need to articulate why one should emphasize, rather than hide, a distinct identity, what its advantages are for faculty members, how it can give an institution focus and foster community, and how it can be used to attract faculty. When articulating the ideal of a Catholic university, leaders need to find language that, on the one hand, appeals to persons of diverse backgrounds and faiths and, on the other, ensures that distinctively Catholic dimensions are fully integrated into a university's intellectual culture.

Even if one agrees that a majority of the faculty should be Catholic, speaking of quotas is counterproductive. It alienates faculty who are of other faiths or nonreligious, and it raises concerns about quality. The language of goals works better. For Catholic hiring I introduced a minimal goal of 50 percent, an expected goal of 55 percent, and an aspirational goal of 65 percent.

When departments prominently described Notre Dame as a Catholic university in job ads, they discovered that more candidates self-identified as Catholic or gave reasons why they wanted to work at a Catholic university. We therefore moved from recommending to requiring such language.

With respect to students and their parents, mission is almost always an advantage, but faculty, too, can be attracted to a distinctive institutional identity. In many cases, they will leave higher-ranked departments or universities to help create or advance a university with a unique mission. Leaders must be prepared to counter the argument that hiring for mission is too burdensome, that it is difficult enough to hire for quality and diversity; hiring for mission will reduce the number of persons and lower the quality. That bias is simply not true.

After my first seven years as dean, I reviewed the more than one hundred fifty tenure-track and tenured faculty members hired. I sought to identify what most people would agree were the top one-third of these hires: those who had previously earned tenure at higher-ranked institutions, such as Harvard or Stanford; those who had received multiple offers of employment, including offers from higher-ranked departments; and those whose records had simply been stunning, for example, at the time of promotion and tenure. For each faculty member I sought to identify the most significant factor or, if there were several, the multiple factors that led him or her to choose Notre Dame. By a two-to-one margin over the next highest factor, the Catholic mission, broadly understood, was the most significant. The Catholic identity of an institution can be a great competitive advantage. The exercise was useful because mission hiring is often viewed by faculty as a third hurdle after quality and diversity. When one adds Catholicism to the mix, it may seem unduly complex and constraining, but one can take a different view and suggest that by stressing our Catholic mission, we could hire above our academic ranking.

Faculty members want their universities to become diverse internally. Such diversity, including intellectual diversity, has value, but if hiring for diversity results in Catholic universities' losing their religious identity, then American higher education as a whole will become less, not more, diverse. The greatest brakes on such homogenizing tendencies are a distinctive vision and effective hiring. ■

Mark W. Roche *served as dean of arts and letters at the University of Notre Dame from 1997 to 2008.*

NOVEMBER 9, 2016

Miserere nobis.

Caliban clove the fetters
that hobbled the people of hate,
sprung Stars & Bars, and howls
of White Power!, Immigrants Out!,
brayed Lock her up! through the agora,
and dismembered the moral order.

The sun did not explode,
wind groomed the trees
and buried gutters under leaves,
lobsters scrabbled from littorals
to deeper, warmer offshore seas,
no instrument distinguished the day
sixty-three million Americans
blew illusions about them away.

In the gathering shadows
the outer dark takes stock
of tribal loathing, tribal fear
that gnaw heartland and its Kaiser,
cockroaches in the gene,
primeval, ugly, adamantine
that spy an enemy in every stranger,
twin vandals, that for a lark torch a hijab
while its wearer waves for a Yellow cab.
And in sum, we are afraid.

—Dan Burt
(December, 2016)

Dan Burt is a writer whose poetry and prose have appeared in PN Review*, the* TLS*, the* Financial Times*, and the* New Statesman*, among others. He lives and writes in London, Maine, and St. John's College, Cambridge, of which he is an Honorary Fellow.*

Holy Horror

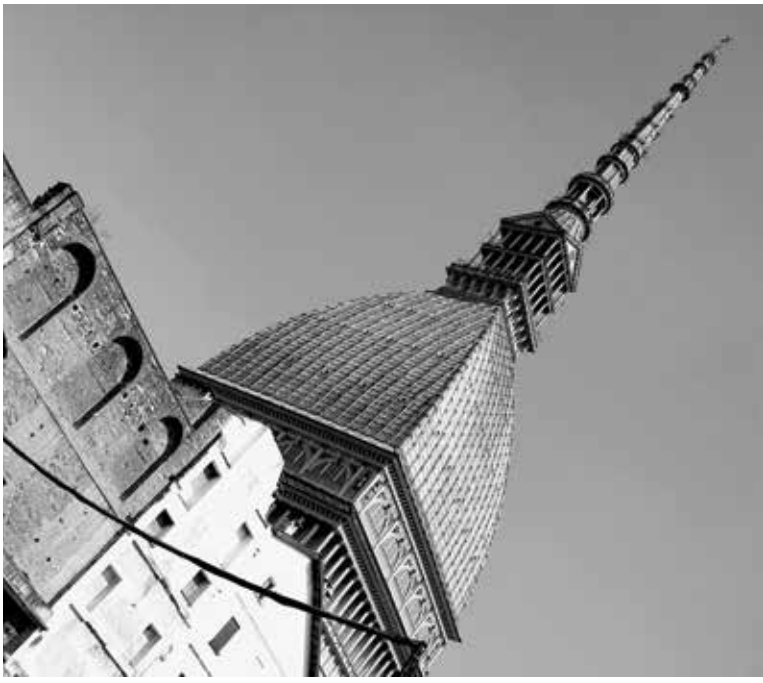
Giorgio De Maria's The Twenty Days of Turin

William Giraldi

At the end of 1977, something extraordinary happened in Italy: the musician and writer Giorgio De Maria (1924–2009) published a horror novel called *The Twenty Days of Turin*, a Poe-esque fever dream that anticipated and described, with chilling precision, the birth of the internet and the many ways it would warp us. De Maria was a classically trained pianist and avant-garde musician, an anticlerical leftist before a bout of spiritual trauma in the 1980s turned him into a traditional Catholic. He never earned the renown of his exalted contemporaries—Eco, Calvino, Levi—but he and *The Twenty Days of Turin*, his fourth and final work, achieved a potent underground status. It is only now, after four decades, making its English-language debut, expertly translated and introduced by Ramon Glazov.

The novel's plot is straightforward enough: an unnamed Turinese man begins investigating an affliction of mass insomnia that struck the city a decade earlier, an affliction that lasted twenty days and during which several people were slaughtered in public places, in full view of the insomniacs who had gathered there, and yet no one could name the killer or explain how the murders happened. His investigation uncovers ominous truths about his city and fellow Turinese before it leads to his own awful end.

At the hub of this mystery lies a church-sponsored outfit called "the Library," a massive depository that housed the anonymous, depraved confessions and pleas of Turin's citizens, located in a wing of the city's insane asylum, tellingly called the Little House of Divine Providence. Anyone could enter the Library to donate or read the journals, diaries, and fragmented memoirs that revealed a bottomless grotesquerie and desperation to express, to connect, to be heard. If a reader wished to learn the identity of a certain confessor, he could submit a fee and the Library would put him in touch. The Library is central to understanding the mass insomnia and subsequent murders, though the narrator can't work out exactly how, and he gets little help from his fellow Turinese. He need only mention the Twenty Days and they are frightened into a numbed hush.



Mole Antonelliana in Turin

PHOTO: BARBARINO

Like the internet, the Library was "presented as a good cause, created in the hope of encouraging people to be more open with one another." What kind of person would deposit his unchecked expressions for anybody to read? "The typical patron of the Library was a shy individual, ready to explore the limits of his own loneliness and weigh others down with it. This only helped to seal him further in a vicious cycle of fear and suspicion." Some confessions read like personal ads that would fit cozily among the adulterous zest of Ashley Madison: one confessor "asked to be called 'Evelina' and insisted that she was still an attractive woman, even in her forties.... She was seeking an understanding individual who could assist her, since her husband didn't want any part in satisfying her." Other confessions matched the self-obsession and ardently pointless minutia of so many blogs and social-media posts: "Page after page told of her torments and her

William Giraldi*'s most recent book is a memoir,* The Hero's Body. *He is a contributing editor at the* New Republic *and fiction editor for the journal* AGNI *at Boston University.*

need for liberation. One whole chapter was devoted to her bathroom reading."

The Library's mysterious founders sound precisely like the enthusiastic, pre-libidinous Zuckerbergs of Silicon Valley: "little more than boys," they were "perky, smiling youngsters…without a trace of facial hair" who "looked designed to win people's trust" and "came calling at your door, inviting you to chat." Here's their eager pitch to citizens:

> We're not interested in printed paper or books. There's too much artifice in literature, even when it's said to be spontaneous. We're looking for true, authentic documents reflecting the real spirit of the people, the kinds of things we could rightly call popular subjects…. Is it possible that you've never written a diary, a memoir, a confession of some problem that worries you?... There's definitely someone who'll read it and take an interest in your problems. We'll make sure to put them in touch with you and you'll become friends; you'll both feel liberated. It's an important thing we do, considering how hard it's gotten for people to communicate these days.

You'll become friends: how vacuous that sounds now that so much friendship, like so much of everything else, has been downgraded into a glowing phantasm, a swiping, clicking chimera. Once these Turinese began expressing and confessing and confiding, the narrator says, "it was hard to stop! The prospect of 'being read' quivered in the distance like an enchanting mirage…. I will give myself to you, you will give yourself to me: on these very human foundations, the future exchange would happen." Sound familiar?

If it often seems that the internet was invented for sex, the Library was no different: one seventy-year-old lecher wrote of his lust for an eighteen-year-old virgin: "My dear, my delectable little girl, I'm still keen and equipped.... Come hither, little girl." Another confessor had an "inexplicable need to fill thousands of sheets of foolscap paper with seemingly meaningless words." It's not for nothing that the Library was housed in a hospital for aberrations, "rumored to harbor the pitiably deformed," those manifold rejects "with no desire at all" for "regular human communication." If that doesn't perfectly describe the legions of sallow outcasts who pass their lives online, I'm not sure what does. De Maria also anticipated the dreaded troll, those sadists with keyboards and nothing else to do: their contributions to the Library "were conceived in the spirit of pure malice: pages and pages to indicate, to a poor elderly woman without children or a husband, that her skin was the color of a lemon and her spine was warping." The Library, like the internet, didn't create sadism, only revealed it, only permitted the ideal platform for it to thrive.

The Library was supposed to "break that cycle of loneliness in which our citizens were confined," but of course the balm was an illusion, "the illusion of a relationship with the outside world: a dismal cop-out nourished and centralized by a scornful power bent on keeping people in their state of continuous isolation." Google, Amazon, Facebook: they want to keep you shackled right where you are, up all night in your illuminated cell, clicking yourself catatonic. The mayor of Turin offers the narrator a hint to how the Library might have been linked to the insomnia: "If I'd left any of my confessions in that place, I'd probably have lost sleep too." Think of all the recent articles that make clear how our gadgets of distraction are rattling our rest, or how many times you've been pestered by sleeplessness because of impulsive typing. De Maria's foreseeing of our online dystopia, our all-around plugged-in anomie and the misfits who make it happen, is so accurate it seems outright wizardly. The mayor tells the narrator: "Do you think human beings are really like bottomless wells? That we can drain ourselves endlessly without sooner or later finding our souls depleted?" Those questions contain their own answers. Such depletion, the mayor says, occasioned "the most extreme consequences."

He means the demons that wafted into the city, nebulous, murderous entities that defied eyewitness and emitted "a terrible war cry, with something dismal and metallic at the heart of it." Enormous ghouls, they clutched their sleepwalking victims by the ankles, held them like cudgels, and battered them against trees, against monuments. The zombified insomniacs seemed to welcome them, as if they understood that they deserved such battering. To some, the murders during the Twenty Days were "a phenomenon of collective psychosis," to others they were "part of a providential design, a dire warning signal from on high addressed to humanity." One of the narrator's interviewees, a lawyer named Segre, says that the entities "were expressing a hatred alien to our feelings, but somehow, within the being of that hatred, we could recognize ourselves."

De Maria's reality in *The Twenty Days of Turin* is necessarily askance; even when he's giving you what appears a natural bit of realism, something is skewed, something sinister, something other. An acrid vinegar scent fouls the air. Statues have switched places. Strangers stand strangely on street corners. At one point, the narrator admits: "I felt a touch out of place…. I didn't know enough to say what my rightful condition could be." He has misplaced his aims, forgotten his own terms of selfhood, and as the novel proceeds it becomes more and more forgetful, more fabulist. De Maria is suggesting a connection between insomnia and amnesia. If you've ever gone several days without sleep, you know that your memory is the first casualty. Insomnia and amnesia, both intensely personal, individual, have become communal, collective, as if to punish a people, to exact a revenge for crimes they can't recall. Theirs is a diseased society that whips up and releases irrational forces determined to destroy at random.

Segre employs the terms "evil" and "absolute evil" to describe whatever killed his fellow Turinese a decade ago: "the evil is too deep-rooted," and "absolute evil couldn't have taken a more unassailable form." Hannah Arendt remarked in 1945 that "the problem of evil will be the fundamental problem of postwar intellectual life in Europe"—it is the

fundamental problem of this novel, too. De Maria makes the important distinction between evil and sin: they are not different degrees of wrong but different categories of wrong. As in the razing of Sodom and Gomorrah, sin often prepares the conditions for evil. De Maria would no doubt assent to the prophet Amos, who asked: "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" The sister of the first victim of the Twenty Days says to the narrator: "How could we—poor mortals—fathom the Lord's inscrutable designs!" Whatever sins the Turinese committed to bring on those deadly designs, they were Old Testament sins, not just Original Sin but those Levitical transgressions against code: disobedience, deformity, deviation. They are the sins of corrupted souls, indifference and malaise en masse.

The Italian critic Pier Massimo Prosio likened *The Twenty Days of Turin* to the breed of horror practiced by Edgar Allan Poe, and not only because Poe remains the go-to mind for anyone wanting to place a writer in a certain horror camp. In Poe the horror is normally ejections from a cramped mind, a turbulent self making nightmares at noontime, and that certainly applies to *Twenty Days*. But Glazov quotes De Maria as saying that "it was reading Kafka, reading *The Trial*, that forever converted me to literature: an epiphany, pure and simple"—and there the suggestion becomes more tantalizing. *The Twenty Days of Turin* is the novel you get when you cross the demonical complexities of Poe with the malignant banalities of Kafka, and yet De Maria has added his own ingredient, the national-historical ingredient that aids in making this novel so unforgettably menacing.

The Twenty Days of Turin is the novel you get when you cross the demonical complexities of Poe with the malignant banalities of Kafka, and yet De Maria has added his own ingredient, the national-historical ingredient that aids in making this novel so unforgettably menacing.

Except in the most oblique ways, Poe's tales are never about America, and Kafka's might as well be taking place not in Prague but in some claustrophobic purgatorio, but *Twenty Days* is a thoroughly Italian story: Italy is infused in the novel's genome, in its primal understanding of itself. The entities, overheard on radio waves, speak not some garbled ghost tongue, but Italian, and as an occultist tells the narrator, "that ought to be a sign that we were the ones who spawned these things; that it was our social—and I'll risk saying it, urban—environment that gave rise to them." Glazov quotes Prosio as saying that De Maria's work is in keeping with "a rather peculiar and exotic tradition of Italian fiction, a writing that lies at the juncture of real and surreal."

Pondering the out-of-reach status of whoever committed the murders, Segre says: "Those who are beyond suspicion… and yet soaked in blood…have always found ideal living conditions and absolute safety in our country." Italian police thought that the *Twenty Days* might be ideological, "politically charged," which is De Maria's unambiguous reference to the Years of Lead, a time, writes Glazov, "when Italy was tormented almost daily by terror attacks and police-state crackdowns," when it had "roughly a dozen militant political organizations, from Marxist 'armed cells' to clandestine neofascist networks." The Years of Lead killed hundreds, wounded thousands. The most destructive attack happened at the Bologna rail station in 1980, a bombing that killed eighty-five people. Gore Vidal, writing just a year after the publication of *Twenty Days*, asserted that "since World War II, Italy has managed, with characteristic artistry, to create a society that combines a number of the least appealing aspects of socialism with practically all the vices of capitalism." Italy, he wrote, is "a land where ideology has always tended to take the place of ideas," and "for most Italians, a political party is never a specific program, it is a flag, a liturgy, the sound of a trombone practicing in the night." De Maria comprehends ideology, whether political or religious, as having its own special stamp of evil.

De Sade, writing in 1800 about the debauched Gothic novel *The Monk*, called it "the necessary fruit of the revolutionary tremors felt by the whole of Europe." Every terrorist is a revolutionary in that he wants to topple the existing order and supplant it with his own ideology, and so De Sade conceived of horror in fiction as the artistic result of terror in life, which is partly what De Maria is up to in *Twenty Days*. As terrorists do, the murdering sprites hurl their fury in those public places "deeply rooted in Turinese tradition," exactly where the sleepwalkers assemble, and there De Maria jabs at knee-jerk adherence to tradition, groupthink, an uncritical fealty to the past. Glazov believes that the neofascist terror cells are the most obvious Italian model for De Maria's murderous demons: "forever untouchable, hiding in plain sight while authorities round up desperate, ill-fitting scapegoats." But Glazov also makes the point that in De Maria's vision, "the Cosmos itself has become terroristic."

Aside from its being De Maria's home, and its recent history of political bloodshed, why should Turin be the location for this unleashing of supernatural horror? Turin

is a city that melds dichotomies: not just the real and surreal but the secular and sacral, the past and present, the occult and quotidian. It's also a city of sanguine appearances: its forced smile, its compulsory good cheer, masks a base underbelly. As Clive James once put it: "Turin is a tight-lipped town"—and the tight-lipped have something to hide. In a personal correspondence with me, Glazov relates Turin to Japan or Thailand, "where it's a big faux pas to look unhappy or aggrieved, even in front of your worst enemy. The Turinese place huge importance on being diplomatic, treating everything with a smile, and acting amiable and warm." Such aggressive sunniness casts weighted shadows, and in those shadows dwell the Satanic, the esoteric, the damned. "In De Maria's universe," Glazov told me, "evil is always friendly and approachable. Charm always goes with brutality. It's the Turinese style of evil." The attorney Segre tells the narrator: "In this city, demons lurk under the ashes."

In *La Stampa* in 1978, De Maria had this to say: "Turin is not a neutral city. Even if you don't outwardly know anyone and no one knows you, you always get the impression you're being watched." As Glazov reminds us in his introduction, Turin is nicknamed "the City of Black Magic" and "has a long reputation for everything disquieting and spooky." The city also has a bloodily martial past: Hannibal destroyed it in 218 BC on his way to bludgeon Rome; the Gauls, the Goths, the Lombards, Charlemagne, the Savoys, Napoleon—all had a piece of it at one time or another. It's startling to recall those luminous minds that suffered melancholy or madness in Turin, as if the city itself was the final siphoning factor on their vitality: from Tasso to Rousseau to Nietzsche to Levi. Let's remember, too, that Turin is the nest of the most popular relic in Christendom: the shroud that many Christians believe was the burial cloth of Christ.

After his own spiritual trouble in the 1980s, De Maria embraced the traditional Catholicism of his youth, but at the time of *Twenty Days* he was still a prickly unbeliever hostile to the church (Glazov told me that he considers De Maria's anticlericalism more "dystheistic than atheistic"). When the narrator visits a church in Turin, he thinks: "I was investigating mysteries, and yet the 'mystery' that sustains a large part of our national life seemed to me, right then, unworthy of my recognition. I was annoyed simply by its clingy bombasticism." There are faintly pagan strains in De Maria's storytelling sensibility, and perhaps that's no surprise when you consider the pagan remnants that pulse in Roman Catholicism, how both paganism and Catholicism are sure that the corporeal world is infiltrated by the netherworld.

De Maria's employment of religious horror was his way of animating the spiritual at a moment when individuals didn't seem to have much practical use for it, despite the papacy's ubiquitous sway in Italy. You see the cord from religion to supernatural horror: many holy books contain their own breed of horror fiction, and both essentially concern themselves with the struggle of good against evil and with the reality of an afterlife. At its spine, all supernatural horror is about belief, about the God question. In De Maria's conception of the heretical and unholy, *sola fide* will not save you. The darkling elements care nothing for your faith.

What we typically call "horror" the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries called "terror": a beguiling awareness of the supernatural, the possibility that we somehow survive our deaths, and the continuity between this life and the next one. Remember Freud's famous definition of the uncanny: "that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar." Ghosts must be about the past, must be from the past: there are no ghosts from the future. They might be concerned with contemporary strife—indeed they would not be present unless something was wrong, something off, in the now—but their presence is the expression of historical realities: they are a renovating of ancient myths to address current terrors. The ghosts of literature are not bored invigilators pointlessly spooking the living: they are entities with wishes, and for the writer they are at once practical and metaphorical, presence and absence.

It's the uncommon ghoul who preys upon the guiltless. For Jung, ghosts were the embodiments of psychic states—madness made manifest—and in that way you can see how the collective psyche of a city could bring such forces into being. De Maria both adopts and does away with the familiar psychoanalytical grasp of the ghostly as the projection of inner devils, as a haunting that happens in the psyche. His ghosts might have been stirred up by the defiled psyche of a city and nation, but they are very much out there. We have the ruined bodies to prove it. And so he has it both ways: with Poe and the psychoanalysts he's externalizing a shaky interiority while also establishing an actual physical, historical threat.

Without revealing too much about the novel's Dantean conclusion, or hinting at who or what the murderous entities are, I'll note that near the end of his investigation the narrator suspects that a fresh "hidden power" once more stalks the city, that the Library is beginning to be resurrected, insomnia resurging. I'll note too that the ending offers no tying up of loose ends, no pat attempt to edify or explicate. The best horror stories complicate our attempts to pin them down, to achieve the satisfaction of understanding, since existence itself sternly resists our reductions, our packaging of tidy comforts. Considering supernatural stories, Virginia Woolf wrote of "the strange human craving for the pleasure of feeling afraid," and added that "it is pleasant to be afraid when we are conscious that we are in no kind of danger." But if you buy into De Maria's worldview in this novel, we *are* in danger: the danger of an unstanchable evil conjured by our own sins, by a broken covenant, followed by the danger of an afterlife more demonic than divine. *The Twenty Days of Turin* is a much-needed homage to the liberating darknesses of intelligent horror, to those confusions that recall us to the extraordinary. ■

Richard Alleva

Character Studies

'MANCHESTER BY THE SEA' & 'FENCES'

Even a frequent moviegoer rarely comes across a film that captures the drift and flow of daily life and conveys its pungent poetry. But Kenneth Lonergan's *Manchester by the Sea* achieves this.

Manchester is not a story that strides toward a dramatic climax. It's more like a dossier that shows us how Lee Chandler (Casey Affleck), a handyman for a Boston apartment building, has become the quirky man he is. Dealing with the tenants' needs and complaints (a lot of them plumbing-related, of course), he works efficiently, though his minimal courtesies don't encourage warmer relations. Yet he gets into trouble constantly. Confronted with a neurotically aggressive renter, he responds with an obscenity that earns him the management's ire. Soon after, he starts a bar fight for the lamest of reasons. Affleck's performance, alternating between suppressed sensitivity and unsuppressed sore headedness, presents Lee as a thoroughly self-isolated guy.

But he can't keep the world at bay. When his brother in Manchester-by-the-Sea dies of heart failure, Lee finds himself the guardian of a teenaged nephew, Patrick, who insists that his uncle remain in the Chandler family's hometown so that the boy won't be separated from his schoolmates, sweethearts, and garage band. (His mother, a drunk, fled when she learned of her husband's precarious health.) Waiting for the designated cemetery plot to unfreeze in the midst of a cold snap, Lee abides in low-simmering torment while driving his nephew from place to place and preparing for the funeral. What's eating him? Lengthy flashbacks scattered throughout the film fill us in on the horrible tragedy that broke Lee's spirit and led him to leave his hometown for Boston, while present-tense scenes show him reencountering ex-wife, friends, and relatives, who respond to him with varying degrees of compassion, puzzlement, and distaste.

Manchester isn't "heartwarming," thank God, but its candor and compassion stir the emotions by reminding us how messy our own lives are, how our warmest affections are muddied by resentment and our seemingly unbearable misfortunes are often lightened by the goodwill of our fellow bipeds. Consider one scene. Lee, just informed of his brother's death, is conferring with hospital staff and friends in a hospital corridor when the reality of his loss suddenly penetrates his numbness and reduces him to silence. Then, almost involuntarily, he blurts out an obscenity, goes mute again, and finally apologizes before making practical arrangements for the funeral. All the ingredients of the scene—the naturalistic talk and the breakdown of talk, the furtive glances of embarrassment, the antiseptic look of the hospital corridor clashing with the pain churning within Lee—perfectly render the jagged emotions of a terrible loss.

Yet there is also raucous humor throughout. When Lee and Patrick are having a noisy tiff on the street, a passing pedestrian (played by Lonergan himself) snidely remarks, "Nice parenting." The way Affleck instantly turns his somewhat restrained anger at his nephew into ballistic rage at the meddler is both hilarious and completely characteristic of Lee's haywire personality. And the loving but tense tug of war between Patrick and Lee—the former (played by Lucas Hedges) so cockily certain of how and where he wants to live, the latter so pathetically uncertain of anything except his own guilt—keeps the story nicely balanced between roughhewn comedy and delicate pathos.

While Lonergan examines the nature of many kinds of relationship, Jody Lee Lipes's cinematography lovingly renders nature itself, making us feel the chill of a New England winter, the crunch of old snow, the glare of sunlight on aluminum siding, the uninviting beauty of freezing coastal water. The real Manchester-by-the-Sea, a New England friend reminds me, has its upscale beauties and aristocratic residences, but Lonergan has visualized it as one big proletarian neighborhood.

The cast is uniformly superb, each role thoroughly inhabited by its actor. If Lee Chandler is often on the verge

ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS / AMAZON STUDIOS

Michelle Williams and Casey Affleck in Manchester by the Sea

of becoming wearisome, it's not Casey Affleck's fault but an indication of an inherent limitation of the character and perhaps of the movie itself. Lonergan clearly wanted to make a character study rather than spin a great yarn, but even character studies need some final revelation, some last push forward into self-understanding, for us to feel that the study is complete. But there's no lifting of Lee's depressive inertia and, though he does finally arrive at a common-sense solution about what to do with his nephew, that solution entails no major shift in his nature or circumstances. True to life? Certainly, but what differentiates a dossier from a drama is that in the former our information about the subject increases while in the latter the hero's understanding deepens along with our own.

Because I felt, after two of the film's two-and-a-half hours, that I'd learned as much as I ever would about Lee, my attention began to slacken, and though I was never overtaken by boredom, I felt it waiting in the wings. At one point, I actually yearned for Gretchen Mol, who plays Patrick's mother—a recovering alcoholic now married to a pious and clean-living prig—to take over the movie for a while. Mol's comic brio shows us a woman in transition, and transition is dramatic. Unlike her, Lee is on an emotional treadmill: in motion but basically going nowhere.

Nevertheless, some dossiers are almost as compelling as great drama. *Manchester by the Sea* is one of them.

Jovan Adepa and Denzel Washington in Fences

Denzel Washington has brought August Wilson's powerful play *Fences* to the screen with great skill. The choice of camera angles, the editing, the beautifully textured cinematography by Charlotte Bruus Christensen that conveys the look and feel of a poor but respectable black neighborhood in 1950s Pittsburgh, and, most of all, the superb cast, headed by Washington and Viola Davis—all combine here to keep the tragic downfall of the story's hero, Troy Maxon, as lively as possible, even though the script is essentially the same as the stage play, and the dominant setting is a single yard next to Maxon's house. (Wilson completed the screenplay just before his death in 2005.) Washington's emphasis on visual realism and his (or Wilson's) insertion of brief, mostly wordless episodes set in other Pittsburgh locales are obviously designed to make us forget that *Fences* began its life in the theater.

Yet, in a sense, this cinematic realism works against the true nature of the story. Yes, *Fences* the play is historically specific, its social background important, and its dialogue superficially naturalistic, but theatrical tragedy is always at odds with the inherent naturalism of most movies—with the look of real sunlight and the background noises of car engines and playing children. And dialogue that is colloquial enough on stage tends to sound like rhetoric when uttered onscreen. The necessary artifices of theater do not always translate well to film.

Troy's predicament embodies many of the woes suffered by black men since Emancipation, but *Fences* is closer to *Oedipus Rex* or *King Lear* than to a typical domestic drama. Despite his great talent for baseball, Troy got into the game too late—after serving a long prison sentence for manslaughter—to make the big leagues. Now, still brimming with resentment, he claims to take pride in holding the steady job of garbage collector so that he can be a responsible family man, but that pride turns out to be hubris, and drives every member of his family away from him. The would-be patriarch winds up an isolate, daring death to take him. Troy both resists his destiny and takes part in his own destruction. A tragedy of such lacerating power, dominated by a self-dramatizing individual who spouts lengthy monologues and interacts with only four other characters, cries out for the starkness of live theater. On the big screen, Troy's outsized intransigence can come off as irritating cussedness, and his slangy eloquence threatens to become hot air.

Yet the movie finally produces a feeling of profound loss that clings to you. And how many stage productions will have a cast of this stature? Washington may not have the barrel-chested swagger that James Earl Jones brought to the original New York stage production, but he gradually makes Troy's frustrations so palpable that he keeps us worried about the harm, physical and emotional, he may do to others before he destroys himself. Affronted righteousness has always been Washington's forte, and here it becomes menacing. As his wife, Viola Davis—she of the blank stare that turns into an x-ray—conveys a long backstory just by the way she slumps onto a kitchen chair and leans her forehead against her hand.

Go see this film, but don't expect a movie-movie experience. It's more like taking a time machine back to fifth-century Athens, where an American playwright is competing with Sophocles. ■

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Thomas Baker

The Perils of Apartness

Seminary Formation
Recent History, Current Circumstances, New Directions
Katarina Schuth, OSF
Foreword by Cardinal Blase J. Cupich
Liturgical Press, $24.95, 212 pp.

Last fall, I attended a challenging Boston College conference on the future role and influence of Hispanics in the church in the United States, and at the center of the conversation were the startling growth numbers and demographic changes facing church leadership. What, the conference organizers wanted to know, did we think had to happen for the church to respond?

In my small-group breakout session, one answer was unanimous: seminaries must respond by educating our future priests about all this—teaching them Spanish, preparing them to minister in a church that will be so different from the one they may imagine. It was a logical answer, but I remember thinking wistfully: this is just one of a hundred other urgent things we wish future priests could learn about and know how to respond to.

In *Seminary Formation*, Sr. Katarina Schuth gives us a reminder of the growing expectations we place on those future priests—but also of the institutional and political environment in which such innovation is supposed to happen. Seminarians study course after course on philosophy, theology, and Scripture, as well as homiletics and canon law. Based on what they face after ordination, you could easily want them also taking management, marketing, counseling psychology, and spiritual direction. And yet seminaries are also built as much for the preservation of priestly identity as for the needs of the times.

The apartness, some might say isolation, of seminary formation isn't an accident. Since the Council of Trent required that each diocese have a college dedicated to the formation of priests, seminaries have often been a separate world, forming a powerful (and male) loyalty to the church, and similar in this respect as a police academy or military basic training. Serving as rector of a seminary has long been a valuable stop on the career path toward the hierarchy; they are places where both theological orthodoxy and enthusiasm for the traditional role of the priest can find visible expression.

After a post–Vatican II period of modest experimentation in which many seminaries welcomed lay students alongside candidates for the priesthood, the papacies of John Paul II and Benedict saw some retrenchment. Schuth closely analyzes more than forty years of papal and USCCB documents governing seminary curricula and policies, and she notes an especially sharp turn after John Paul II's *Pastores dabo vobis* (1992). A Vatican seminary visitation report in 2008, for example, required that the "clear distinction between the common priesthood and the ministerial, hierarchical priesthood needs to be emphasized more." The mixing of lay students and seminarians was discouraged. Formation departments were to be headed by priests; faculty in Scripture and theology should all be priests.

Seminaries have struggled to meet these requirements in an era of declining numbers and pressured church finances. For example, the U.S. bishops'

CNS PHOTO / REMO CASILLI, REUTERS

Pope Francis exchanges skullcaps as he poses with a group of seminarians from the Pontifical North American College on September 28 in St. Peter's Square.

OKINAWA AQUARIUM

Framed & mounted on the wall, a dolphin's stomach, splayed:
inside, plastic bags, bottle caps, condoms, broken
coke bottles, tampons, lighters, dentures, toys and bubble
wands. If God cut me open with a scalpel, what

would He find inside me? My beached body:
heavy with a human gospel. Removing each piece from me,
God would say: *I gave you so many trees to eat from.*
I might say: *I felt so full—even briefly, I thought I was really filled.*

—Meg Eden

Meg Eden's work has been published in various magazines, including Rattle, Drunken Boat, Poet Lore, *and* Gargoyle. *She teaches at the University of Maryland and is the author of four poetry chapbooks.*

2005 document on priestly formation required that professors in the "sacred sciences" and philosophy should have an advanced degree from an institution recognized by the Holy See; Schuth's primary research, however, points out that the proportion of faculty actually holding such degrees has declined significantly. Almost half of seminary faculty now have responsibilities other than teaching or research; in other words, they are part-time. And as the number of available priests qualified for seminary teaching shrinks further, it will become even more difficult to adhere to the traditional model.

Schuth's suggestions, in a brief final chapter, for the future of the thirty-nine theologates in the United States are sensible and knowledgeable, although she couches them in the restrained words of the professional researcher. In particular, she calls for education in "the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for authentic collaboration" with future pastoral co-workers, many of whom will be laywomen with strong theological formation of their own.

She also points out how little post-ordination research there is to show whether the seminaries we have produce the priests and pastors we need. Certainly seminary life can attract candidates who want some of that traditional apartness, both from laypeople and from contemporary culture generally. Some will nevertheless turn out to be good at their future job. Others will find a constant disconnect between their piety and orthodoxy and the day-to-day reality of running one or more struggling parishes, filled with people they must persuade as leaders but also work alongside as equals.

What none of the official documents on priestly formation ever seem to mention is the numbers, and they, of course, are the elephant in the seminary. Despite recent reported increases in seminarians, which Schuth points out are largely illusory in terms of future ordinations, the 74 million–strong U.S. church ordains only about 500 priests a year, roughly equal to the annual number of new podiatrists. Several times that number would be needed each year just to cover looming baby-boom priestly retirements. Schuth also points out that a alarmingly low percentage of seminary candidates are Hispanic, compared with more than half of current lay theology and ministry students.

Reading through some of the voluminous requirements for priestly studies bishops have produced over the years, we can admire the seriousness of the effort but should also notice how few results the system produces. Surely it's not for a lowly reviewer to suggest that the years of philosophy, theology, and Scripture courses required of future priests are misspent—I mean, do we want our future preachers to have less formation in these areas? Yet the heavily academic, priest-centric world of some seminary life does create the impression of, say, a medical school where future doctors don't touch a cadaver, much less a living patient, early or often enough. Over the same forty-five-year period when the priesthood has plummeted in numbers, the American church has managed to build a force of more than eighteen thousand permanent deacons, most of whom ministered in parishes and earned a living in secular workplaces, the whole time they were in formation. (Full disclosure: I'm one of them.) Surely there's something about the diaconate experience—even aside from the absence of the celibacy requirement—that can be applied to the crisis facing the priesthood.

The traditional definition of how priests should be trained, and who can become one, is either gloriously countercultural or, given current realities, remarkably unimaginative. Either way, it is powerfully shaping the future of our church. Recently I've been part of my diocese's deliberations for reducing the number of parishes. A key, if generally unacknowledged, force driving the process is the shortage of men to lead these parishes. In the next ten to twenty years, it will bring a crisis in church life that no one can easily picture. Like a struggling car producer, perhaps seminaries need to retool entirely, so they can produce a higher volume of more agile new models. *Seminary Formation* is a valuable guide to a venerable system that is overdue for fresh and courageous approaches. ■

Thomas Baker *is the publisher of* Commonweal.

Elizabeth Kirkland Cahill

Girl Uncorrupted

How I Stayed Catholic at Harvard

40 Tips for Faithful College Students

Aurora Griffin

Ignatius Press, $15.95, 184 pp.

Being a mother—my primary occupation for the past twenty-five years—is the most wonderful piece of good fortune that I have ever had. It is also a job where success is measured out in gradually larger helpings of loss. Parenthood means letting go, over and over and over again, the stakes getting higher as the years pass. Whether it is discreetly following an ambitious nine-month old who has decided to tackle the stairs, letting a nine-year-old don hockey gear and pursue his NHL dream at the local skating rink, or putting a nineteen-year-old on a plane to the Middle East for language study (and not exhaling until he returns three months later), we parents regularly have to jam our hands in our pockets to keep from clinging to these precious people as they head out the door. We hope that they have absorbed all the sage advice we have imparted over the years (and up until the minute the plane door closes), but in the end, we have no choice but to relinquish the illusion of control, trusting that we have done enough to guide them as they grow up.

For my children's generation, growing up has become unprecedentedly complex, challenging—and lengthy. In his *Souls in Transition*, sociologist Christian Smith of the University of Notre Dame points to the social and cultural trends that have changed the game for young adults. Higher education has expanded to a far broader population than in the past. The average age of marriage has been delayed into the mid-to-late twenties. Transformations in America's economy, and the world's, have darkened the prospects of job security and career stability and emphasized the need for ongoing training and even re-invention; some young people spend up to ten years trying out different job and career paths before settling on one. Parents who have the resources are providing far more assistance to their young adult children than in the past, and many more of those children are moving back home after college. The result is a prolonged period of transition, marked by vacillation between fetters and freedom. "Emerging adults," as they are now known, go through an extended phase of self-exploration accompanied by uncertainty and confusion, a focus on self, and the feeling of being "in between." Counterbalancing these challenges is the sense of almost limitless options, with parallel feelings of optimism and hope. As these almost-grown-ups totter like toddlers between dependence and autonomy, they experience the exhilaration of experimentation and the anxiety of instability. By any measure, it is not an easy time.

Among the tasks that face any emerging adult who has been raised in a family where faith matters—hardly a given in our so-called "post-Christian" culture—is the need to come to terms with the religious faith of his or her childhood. This process may begin in college and extend well into one's twenties. It may have a variety of outcomes. Some young adults jettison religion altogether, floating indifferently into the secular mainstream, for a time or forever. Others manage to hold onto the faith they learned as children, making incremental alterations to fit their more mature and cosmopolitan souls. Still others find new spiritual identities by converting to an entirely different faith tradition.

From a Catholic parent's perspective, this bumpy stage of the faith journey can be an especially discomfiting experience. Observing the falling off of a child's Mass attendance, hearing doubt or skepticism about cherished beliefs, sensing hostility towards church teaching—all these may well engender concern and even alarm about the faith of the next generation. As parents, we long for and pray for any tools that might help our children, or ourselves, manage this time of change and disruption.

A Eucharistic procession at Harvard University

AMERICANSATANISM.COM

Along comes Aurora Griffin, 2014 graduate of Harvard, Classics major, Rhodes Scholar, with her book *How I Stayed Catholic at Harvard: 40 Tips for Faithful College Students*. Subdivided into four units—Community, Prayer, Academics, and Living It Out—the book offers practical advice to young Catholics for growing in their faith during their college years. The underlying message of the title, of course, is that if the author could maintain and increase her faith at the godless bastion of secularism known at Harvard, students anywhere can do the same (although my hunch is that a book titled *How I Stayed Catholic at Central Michigan University* would not be quite as marketable).

What to make of this book? Not unlike the young adults for whom it is written, *How I Stayed Catholic at Harvard* seems unsure of its identity. Griffin aspires both to write a personal testimonial and to assemble a universal toolbox for college students. Unfortunately, the genre-hedging dilutes the book's impact. Material that might make an interesting memoir of one young woman's approach to guarding her faith from worldly encroachments sounds preachy when couched in the vocabulary of self-help. For example, reflecting on her successful campaign to prevent a Satanic black mass on Harvard's campus—which garnered national press attention—she cites abortion as another evil that staunch young Catholics should fight, piously assuring her readers, "Your courage in defending life will be a jewel in your heavenly crown."

As a reader, I approached this book wearing metaphorical bifocals, interpreting it from two distinct perspectives: as a fellow Harvard alumna who has many experiences in common with the author, and as the parent of four young adults. Like Griffin, I majored in Classics at Harvard (studying with some of the same professors she cites in her acknowledgements). Like her, I graduated *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa, and went on to Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. Like her, I managed to sustain and even deepen my faith throughout my four years at Harvard. Beyond the shared credentials (and three decades in age!), however, our roads diverge.

For starters, I did not stay Catholic at Harvard because I did not arrive Catholic at Harvard. Rather, I was a devout Episcopalian: years in the church choir, meaningful engagement in Episcopal youth groups, dynamic young priests as mentors and role models, a family in which the practice of faith was a given. In college, I maintained this trajectory, participating faithfully and happily in the worship life of Harvard's Episcopal Chaplaincy. I suppose I was one of those Protestants whose "misguided belief[s]" Griffin is at pains to correct for her readers in Chapter 5, "Explore Christian Fellowships" (although she does concede, "there are so many things I admire about Protestants").

After graduation, my story and Miss Griffin's diverge further. My time at Oxford marked the beginning of a wilderness period where faith deserted me, or perhaps more accurately, I deserted faith. Those were years of spiritual uncertainty and intellectual insecurity. I was at sea, and—through no fault of the Episcopal Church—I simply could not find what I needed in the faith of my childhood. Eventually, thanks to some providential encounters with Jesuits and the devout religious observance of the man who would become my husband, I found my way to Catholicism, which has been my home now for more than twenty years.

I was drawn to the Catholic faith not by its institutional framework of rules and requirements, which seem of paramount importance to Griffin (see Chapter 6, "Just Be Catholic"), but by the prospect of its spiritual and intellectual expansiveness. I had the sense that I was entering a garden of religious delights, through which flowed a deep and life-giving river of theological inquiry, liturgical beauty, and spiritual conversation, where walked giants of the past like Thomas Merton, Ignatius of Loyola, William Byrd, Julian of Norwich, Edith Stein, and Dorothy Day. Dante's description of Eden in the closing cantos of *Purgatorio* captures it: *la divina foresta spessa e viva*, or in the translation of Robert M. Durling, "the divine forest, thick and alive." It was the rich variety of ways to be "Catholic" that drew me to the faith, not a monolithic culture that laid down "musts" and "oughts." Had I not lost one faith, I would not have found the other, which makes me a bit more trusting of the journey away from home base.

Three decades have passed like a flash, and now I have children the author's age, granting me a second perspective on Griffin's book. Two are recent college graduates, one is midway through college, and the youngest is in high school. Recognizing that I am not Griffin's intended audience, I empaneled these four age-appropriate experts to advise me. Although actual practice varies slightly among the four, as far as I am aware each of them still maintains a meaningful connection with the Catholic faith. I hand-picked a few chapters—for a child who had participated in Greek life in college, Chapter 4, "Join a Catholic Fraternity or Sorority," and for the teenaged digital native, Chapter 37, "Consume the Right Media"—and asked for their responses.

While there was some variation, they all agreed that the book seemed targeted to a very specific audience and that they were not that audience. They did not relate to the author's extreme piety, which extends to starting a chapter of the Catholic sororal organization the Daughters of Isabella, or to the insularity of her social network, which seemed to consist mostly of like-minded Catholics (even though one of her tips is "Make Friends Who Aren't Like You"). An example: she rhapsodizes about her sorority experience, "We got to look at what it was like to be Catholic women—to talk about motherhood, Marian spirituality, and becoming nuns." This did not resonate with my sorority alumna, to put it mildly. I know more than a few college-aged women, and many young Catholic women in general. I cannot imagine them talking about motherhood and becoming nuns;

it doesn't mean they don't, and it doesn't mean these are not worthwhile topics, but there is a world of other issues for devout women to talk about—Walker Percy novels, Pope Francis's encyclicals, the role of religion in public life, or ethicist Sr. Margaret Farley's *Just Love*, to name a few.

These are not for our author, who positions herself squarely on the conservative end of the Catholic tradition. While my reviewers keep the faith, they don't feel at home in the world of black-and-white pieties: they have friends of wildly diverse backgrounds and views, and they question some of the teachings of the church that seem to run contrary to what their divinity school-trained mother might call the *sensus fidelium*, and they don't see any of this as inconsistent with being Catholic, at least so far. While I don't consider it fair to judge a book because I take issue with its opinions, I did find the section on theological dissent rather scary coming from such a young person. And as a happy veteran of the institution, I dearly wish Griffin had not presumed to share her understanding of marriage: "At its best, marriage offers the consolation of companionship, sex, and security. But marriage also involves incredible self-sacrifice and personal risk." Well-intended as it may be, coming from a twenty-three-year-old, this has a false ring to it.

Griffin's worldview is relevant here in that it hinders her from reaching the mainstream Catholic students who might otherwise benefit most from her tips. The secular forces that seep into the culture of even the most Catholic universities, let alone the religiously unaffiliated ones, do not exactly encourage religious commitment, nor do they naturally embrace faith perspectives. Yet the treacly, sanctimonious tone she adopts is likely to turn off any student (other than a fellow conservative Catholic) who might pick up this book. I have trouble actually envisioning college kids practicing the Opus Dei "heroic minute," which is "when your alarm goes off in the morning and you spring out of bed, kiss the floor, and offer up your day to God." These and other experiences are not described or explained in a way that would appeal to worldlier or less pious kids.

To be sure, with confusion about the overall purpose and direction of higher education, rising economic pressures, the proliferation of identity politics, and a dysfunctional sexual environment marked by hook-ups and roiled by cases of sexual assault, the culture of many colleges and universities feels morally adrift. As Donna Freitas observed in her eye-opening book on sex and religion on college campuses, *Sex and the Soul*, it is not so much the formal religious affiliation that makes a difference, but the presence of a powerful religious culture that is "meaningfully integrated into campus life." Aside from evangelical colleges, how many institutions of higher education truly have such a culture? (And before alumni of Catholic colleges take to the email ramparts, consider Freitas's finding that "though many students at Catholic colleges profess attachment to an amorphous spirituality, traditional religious attitudes and practices among them are negligible.")

What, then, accounts for the fact that some students manage to hang on to their faith? The answer is both encouraging, and not: as Christian Smith summarizes, "The best predictor of where people are going is where they have come from." Or to paraphrase James Carville's famous line, "It's the parenting, stupid."

Simply put, the easiest way for a student to stay Catholic in college is to have been brought up Catholic. Young adults who have been brought up within the Catholic tradition—religious education; the sacraments of reconciliation, First Communion, and confirmation; youth group participation; even a simple thing like grace before meals—start college with a huge faith advantage. Indeed, many students who were religiously unaffiliated or identified themselves to Freitas as merely "spiritual," attributed their lack of a developed spiritual life or religious practice to their parents' reluctance to impose on them in matters

Lenten Prayers for Hungry People

You can help create hope and opportunity by using and sharing with others the ***2017 Lenten Prayers for Hungry People.*** A 6 x 9 inch "table tent" includes scripture readings (from Year A of the Revised Common Lectionary), prayers, and actions for each of the five weeks of Lent as well as Holy Week. You may order multiple copies—free—for distribution to members of your church or community.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on March 1, so order your *free* table tents today.

© HELEN SIEGL

You may order *Lenten Prayers for Hungry People* at

www.bread.org/lent

or call toll-free **800-822-7323**

breadfor**the**world

HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

425 3rd Street SW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20024
www.bread.org

XA17-CW

of faith and belief. This hands-off approach left students without any mooring at a time in their lives when they most needed it. Often these parents were reacting to their own strict and coercive upbringing, which they did not want to impose on their children. In other cases, lip service was paid to church attendance or religious-education classes, but there was no religious sensibility or practice woven into the fabric of family life. Freitas sums it up: "The broader familial message was that religion wasn't that big a deal, expendable even."

Aurora Griffin is clearly one of the fortunate few whose parents did not consider religion expendable—she begins one chapter with an anecdote about her father brandishing airline tickets to send her to a silent retreat the weekend after her high-school graduation. She was well-grounded in Catholicism by the time she arrived at Harvard, and she seems to have dug deeper, if not wider, into her faith once there. Her approach is neither supple nor particularly engaging, but it worked for her.

The subtitle of the book—*40 Tips for Faithful College Students*—points to the limitations of the author's approach. Griffin preaches to a choir of the already-faithful: conservative young Catholics just like her, who find meaning in Eucharistic adoration and attending Opus Dei retreats. Perhaps their numbers are growing on college and university campuses around America, but they are not the audience that most needs advice. Rather, it is the thousands of emerging adults, unmoored from a belief system and uncertain of how to integrate school, life, and faith, who could benefit from such a handbook. The book that needs writing would show everyday college students—B+ kids, in faith matters as well as academics, not the outstanding Christian soldier-students like the author—how religion is relevant to their lives, and why faith matters as they go about the work and the play of college. Any takers? ■

Elizabeth Kirkland Cahill *is the co-author, with Joseph Papp, of* Shakespeare Alive!.

Nancy Dallavalle

Our Man at *Newsweek*

Getting Religion

Faith, Culture, and Politics from the Age of Eisenhower to the Era of Obama

Kenneth L. Woodward

Convergent, $30, 447 pp.

A theologian friend of mine has reminisced more than once about the formative parish life of his youth, during the seventies, when homilies brought the texts of Vatican II and the writings of Karl Rahner into dialogue with the Sunday readings. He learned to think in church, he would say, an experience that seems to be rarer today. One suspects that many of the folks in the pews these days lack the sort of catechetical formation, let alone an exposure to the Catholic intellectual tradition, that would help them make sense of such homilies.

Kenneth Woodward was lucky enough to get both growing up in Ohio in the middle of the last century, and in *Getting Religion: Faith, Culture, and Politics from the Age of Eisenhower to the Era of Obama* he laments the disappearance of what used to be called the Catholic subculture. At the University of Notre Dame, he soaked up the excitement and teachings of the Second Vatican Council. As a journalist who covered religion for *Newsweek* for four decades, he became a nationally known writer, reporting on the social and political movements, the ideas and personalities, that drove not only religion, but the culture at large. In his new book, he opines on the Dalai Lama and the theologian Mary Daly (*Beyond God the Father*), on Billy Graham and Bill Bright, on the Episcopal Bishop James Albert Pike and the Sandanista Fr. Ernesto Cardenal, who was notoriously scolded in public by John Paul II. After explaining why the liberal Protestant theologian Robert McAfee Brown deserved to be on the cover of *Newsweek*, Woodward proceeds to unpack Brown's point about the difference between Catholics and Protestants with a quote from the comedian Lenny Bruce. In short, he can get a reader's attention and hold it.

Woodward's focus in *Getting Religion* is on the 1960s and '70s, an era when he exercised curatorial authority about the story of religion in America from his perch at the popular weekly magazine. Against the changing shape of the American family and his own witness, he deftly sketches the revolutionary movements that emerged in the '60s and the social and political fragmentation that followed.

Woodward places much of the blame for that fragmentation and discord on feminism, and it is with that curious move that his grip on the narrative slips. That the Bible would attract the attention of feminist critics seems to strike him as odd, a view that shows either his Catholic blinders to the value of Scripture or a lack of understanding of the ways in which traditional Christianity was responsive to extrinsic forces. He can recognize the primacy of Mary of Magdala as "the apostle to the apostles," but only because this is part of "the androcentric Christian tradition." He never wonders if the androcentrism of that tradition was precisely why that undeniable distinction was promptly lost, and she became a whore. Those who seek a different path, away from the church, are of course "embittered." Yet he is also unhappy with women who stay, finding the high percentage of lay ministers and church volunteers who are women to be the source of a problematic "feminization of religion." How exactly is it that *women* are the problem here?

Woodward finds feminism to be illustrative of larger forces shaping religion and society, forces that are essentially individualistic and self-expressive, whether these are Americanized forms

of Buddhism or the "enlightenment" of the gurus of therapy. For Woodward, these fads are symptomatic of an adult population of baby boomers that craves youth culture—and doesn't grow up.

Woodward is nostalgic, somewhat conservative, and occasionally curmudgeonly. Priests who leave the priesthood are unsympathetic figures; they "abandon" their vows. In Woodward's mind, this is personal: "I felt betrayed by every priest who left." Liturgical reform is always awkward in this telling; Catholics should not sing "Amazing Grace." The writing of Dietrich Bonhoeffer? Meh, says Woodward. His opinion of women in jeans—what do you think?

Kenneth L. Woodward

At the same time, he acknowledges that the return and persistence of religion as a significant factor in U.S. politics continues to surprise. The rise of the Moral Majority and, in a later development, the alliances formed between Catholic bishops and the Republican Party, were unexpected in a culture that had recently asked, via a *Time* magazine cover, "Is God Dead?" For Woodward much of so-called liberal religion is little more than "Religion as Politics," where the language of rights slides way too comfortably into a stance of "righteousness." To make his point, he elicits a telling phrase from Hillary Clinton's former youth minister: "We Methodists know what's good for you." When it comes to the story of religion on the right, he concedes that the hypocrisies are too numerous to catalog.

Who "gets" religion now? Surveying the current scene, Woodward is attentive to the link between the decline in religious affiliation and the broader loss of confidence in all institutions. A recent Pew study finds that 39 percent of those between eighteen and twenty-nine years old do not identify with a religious tradition. Worse, that alienation is now more likely to be life-long (the Nones are not coming back). Similarly, family structures are changing just as the stakes for raising children have gone up. With the rise of a strict socio-economic pattern of "assortative mating,"—the well-off pairing their children more carefully than minor European royalty—the seams in our tattered social fabric will be strained more than ever. As Woodward observes, the loss of religious affiliation—even those who belong are more loosely connected (former weekly Massgoers are now content with a monthly appearance)—is just part of the puzzle: "the more encompassing fact is that most young Americans between the ages of eighteen and thirty do not readily identify with any institutions—political, civic, academic, or religious." This basic shift, more than any other, leaves him feeling estranged from the younger generation, and deeply worried about its future.

How to address this? In the closing pages of this book, one dedicated to Notre Dame's fabled Fr. Ted Hesburgh, Woodward turns to the role of college as the finishing school and social laboratory for young adults. He echoes popular narratives about colleges as enclaves of upscale fitness centers, drinking and sexual assault, where trendy thinking and grade inflation, not academic rigor, is the norm. Crucially, these young people are cut adrift from the humanizing effect of a real engagement with the life of the mind that Woodward remembers from his undergraduate days. They are morally adrift as well, having little exposure to serious adult mentors, leaving them with a "soft-core moral relativism." Woodward laments their self-absorption, and the lack of a communal identity that so animated his own youthful encounter with the intellectual wealth of the Catholic tradition.

This critique leaves out a lot. More than half of young adults do not go to the kinds of schools Woodward has in mind. If "getting religion" means, for Woodward, getting the value of being attached to an institutional narrative, the college students he finds to be godless and pampered are at least attached to something. How will we offer "religion"—or political party, or civic group, or even the Rotary Club—to the rest, who are mostly cut off from anything more than the service jobs of the gig economy? I don't have an answer to that question, but we surely need one. ■

Nancy Dallavalle *is vice president for mission and identity and associate professor of Religious Studies at Fairfield University.*

Eleanor Sauers

Beyond Brick & Mortar

Great Catholic Parishes

How Four Essential Practices Make Them Thrive

William E. Simon Jr.

Ave Maria Press, 224 pp., $17.95

At a time when many Catholic parishes in North America are faltering or failing, William Simon has set out to analyze ones that are thriving. How exactly does a parish thrive? Simon (son of the late William E. Simon Sr., Treasury Department chief under Nixon and Ford) focuses on parishes recommended by the Leadership Network, or by local dioceses, and led by pastors seen as innovators. His organization, Parish Catalyst, specializes in providing support to parishes and priests, and his effort to help struggling parishes adopt more salutary practices is based on far-reaching and comprehensive research, using data from parish surveys along with testimony from various pastors.

Great Catholic Parishes begins with an historical review of the American Catholic Church, enumerating the challenges it faces today, from the fallout of the sexual-abuse crisis to the church's failure to attract millennials. Simon remains hopeful that the church can survive, and even thrive, despite these difficulties. As he reports, thriving parishes exhibit four common characteristics: leadership is shared between clergy and laity; spiritual maturity and discipleship are fostered; Sunday liturgies are a constant focus; and evangelization is a priority. Each of these dimensions of parish life is discussed in detail, with special attention given to the challenges that parish staff face.

I applaud Simon's research and goals, and embrace his list of best parish practices. In some respects, however, his approach seems based more on a business model than a faith model. Take, for instance, his emphasis on the importance of cathedrals, beginning with his allusion, in his introduction, to Saint-Exupéry's remark about how in the eyes of an imaginative person, a mere pile of rocks is the beginning of a cathedral. Now, while building cathedrals is a great testament of faith, it should not be our first priority; stirring peoples' hearts and souls is the Gospel's first demand. The life of a parish is much more than bricks and mortar, or programs and offerings for that matter. It is essentially about the soul of the place, that mysterious coming together of shared vision, collaborative leadership, engaged people, and generous and intentional outreach, all of it with Christ at the center. If I were choosing something from Saint-Exupéry, it would be these famed words from *The Little Prince*: "it is only with heart that one sees rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye." The importance of the role of the Holy Spirit, and of reading the signs of the times, cannot be overstated. Parishes live in the intangibles.

Writing about shared leadership, Simon credits Pope Francis as a model, and indeed Francis's welcoming pastoral approach generally plays well in the contemporary American parish, with its emphasis on collaborative teams that draw on the strengths of different participants. Allocating responsibilities broadly among parishioners and staff produces a more balanced and effective ministry, and keeps the burdens (and privileges) of leadership from concentrating on any one individual. In discussing spiritual maturity and discipleship, Simon points to the necessity of meeting parishioners where they are and encouraging them to progress in the spiritual life. He presents a good review of the many programs available

Worshippers at a Mass in New York City

CNS PHOTO / GREGORY A. SHEMITZ

for building discipleship, and advocates small groups as the best means of fostering a sense of belonging in a parish community.

These are positive points, though overall there is a hint of the formulaic about them as they are presented in Simon's book. In contrast, I think about the passage in C. E. Morgan's novel *All the Living* where a country preacher sermonizes on how discipleship often unfolds, recalling that "grace hammered me, it was like my bones breaking." Grace, he continues, "doesn't always feel like something good. It cut up my heart...my innermost heart was exposed, facing the world and not my own self." It is precisely this action of hearts breaking open, of our seeing and hearing and recognizing for the first time the Christ among and within us, that invites and enlists disciples. All the formation, classes, and programs in the world—all the magnificent cathedrals in the world—cannot compete with an experience of grace as a catalyst for discipleship.

How then do we create an environment that can facilitate such experiences? God is mystery, and mystery cannot be defined or contained or even effectively spoken about in concrete terms; but it can be approached through symbol and metaphor. One such symbol is the Communion line, a visual representation of humility before God, of acceptance of sacrament and grace to garner strength for the journey. Symbol and metaphor inspire and engage people's imaginations, giving rise to wonder, awe, and belief. It is the sound and the feel of five hundred congregants belting out "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" that lifts the spirit and opens up hearts, and in doing so makes the mystical tangible. Our faith is caught as well as taught. Combine this with a warm welcome, a well-thought-out and well-executed liturgy, a scripturally grounded (and brief!) homily, plus plentiful opportunity to be of service within and outside the parish, and you have the makings of a successful parish. And when a parish succeeds in creating an environment that invites, empowers, and inspires, it makes community outreach much more effective.

Great Catholic Parishes is a good resource for any parish seeking ways to thrive in a time of straitened circumstances. If parishes are to teach as Jesus did, and to lead as Francis does, this resource should be combined with a healthy respect for the unique culture of each parish, and for the challenge of building structures that draw on, and showcase, the essential wonder and joy of Christian faith. Creating an environment that moves from a sense of obligation to one of celebration is the job of a thriving parish's leadership team; what happens next is up to the Holy Spirit. ■

Eleanor Sauers *is the director of religious education at St. Anthony Parish in Fairfield, Conn., and teaches at Fairfield University.*

The Catholic University of America, located in Washington, D.C., is a place where the search for truth ranges across 12 schools, 120 disciplines, and every continent. Learn more about our programs in the schools of:

- Architecture and Planning
- Arts and Sciences
- Business and Economics
- Canon Law
- Engineering
- Law
- Music
- Nursing
- Philosophy
- Professional Studies
- Social Service
- Theology and Religious Studies

Learn more at **discover.cua.edu**

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY of AMERICA

Catholic University admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, or disability.

Molly Farneth

Endure or Resist?

Tolerance among the Virtues

John R. Bowlin

Princeton University Press, $39.50, 265 pp.

In an interview on the Christian Broadcasting Network in 2013, former RNC chairman and now White House chief of staff Reince Priebus was asked to "put evangelicals at ease" over whether the Republican Party intended to become more "tolerant." Interviewer David Brody noted that evangelicals were concerned that Republican leaders were saying that "we have to be more tolerant.... Evangelicals start to grab the Excedrin bottles when they hear 'tolerance,' because they think, 'Oh no, the GOP's changing.'"

Priebus reassured Brody and distanced himself from that objectionable word: "I don't know if I've used the word 'tolerance,' I'm sort of—I don't really care for that word myself. I don't have a problem with it, I just think it has another meaning politically that can go another direction."

Evangelicals and GOP leaders are not alone in their discomfort with talk of tolerance. Tolerance has critics across the political spectrum. The evangelicals that Brody and Priebus had in mind worry that tolerance entails indifference to things, such as homosexuality and same-sex marriage, that they think should be condemned. Others, often at the other end of the political spectrum, suggest that tolerance involves nose-holding condescension toward religious, racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities who they think should be respected, not merely put up with.

And yet, we find ourselves in diverse communities. Some of what our family members, friends, and neighbors believe and do strikes us as wrong and even, at times, harmful. The goods of the families, friendships, and communities that we share with them come packaged with these differences and disagreements. How can we sustain these goods in the midst of these differences? What do we owe to one another and to our shared societies? These questions, often ignored by the critics of tolerance, lie at the heart of John R. Bowlin's wise and timely *Tolerance among the Virtues*. Bowlin contends that we need a better way of answering these questions. Drawing on Aquinas and Wittgenstein, he develops a vocabulary for talking about the differences that divide us and the ways we ought to respond to those differences.

Tolerance, Bowlin argues, is a moral virtue. Like other moral virtues, it is a habit that disposes people to think and act well—in the right ways, at the right times. Tolerance is the disposition to distinguish among the differences that divide us, to be a wise judge of which are objectionable and which aren't, which call for patient endurance and which do not, and then to act in accordance with those judgments. Bowlin writes:

> With the consistency of habit, [the tolerant] will single out those differences that are in fact objectionable and treat them differently from those that are not. They will distinguish those objectionable differences that are intolerably harmful from those that are harmlessly disagreeable, and they will know how to respond to each, dispensing coercion, correction, prophetic critique, and patient endurance in accord with these judgments and as the circumstances warrant. And they will determine which unobjectionable differences deserve our acceptance and recognition, if not celebration and admiration, which deserve our indifference, if not apathy and inattention, and which deserve both responses—sometimes the one, sometimes the other.

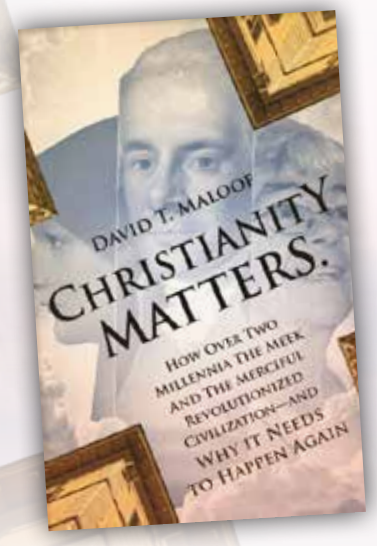
Critics of tolerance go astray when they confuse tolerance with acts of toleration, or patient endurance. On Bowlin's account, the tolerant know when the act of toleration is the virtuous response to difference and when it is a mere semblance of the virtue.

Tolerable?

If a difference is not objectionable, an act of toleration is unjust. I may think that my neighbor's Christmas decorations are a tacky eyesore. But is this the sort of thing that's properly called *objectionable* difference? Does it call for me to suffer our differences, or, alternatively, to come to view them as a matter of indifference? I'm imperfectly virtuous, to be sure, but my instinct is the latter. At the other end of the spectrum, if a difference is not only objectionable but also threatens the common goods of our shared society, then an act of toleration is unjust from the other side. If a professor at the college where I teach used his authority over students' grades to coerce students, the just response would be condemnation and correction. To tolerate his grading practices and enable him to undermine the common goods of civil peace, freedom from domination, and fellowship in learning would be unjust.

Bowlin's account of tolerance is powerful. It tells us that we need tolerance, but that tolerance is demanding. Like justice, tolerance is a natural virtue that is appropriate to the kind of creatures we are and the kinds of societies we inhabit. And like justice, tolerance is hard to achieve consistently and habitually. Most of us can muster acts of toleration here and there, but few of us can claim to have perfected the virtue. Can we respond virtuously, with the consistency of habit, to those whose beliefs about same-sex marriage differ from our own? How many among us can even discern what the virtuous response is? Bowlin doesn't offer a programmatic answer to these questions by telling us whether same-sex marriage—or objections to it—ought to be accepted, patiently endured, or condemned. But his account of tolerance suggests that societies cannot make do without the cultivation of the virtue by which we might get better at sorting them out. The fact that tolerance is hard to achieve—and that it is often confused with its semblances—is no reason to abandon it. Bowlin thinks that it's reason to get clear on what the virtue is and what it isn't, and then to cultivate it.

FOR THE NEW YEAR –
GET THE NEW INTELLECTUAL
CHRISTIAN'S MANIFESTO



"A hopeful account of how faithful Christians have contributed to a better world ... clear evidence that one person can make a difference ... a challenge to each of us to live what we claim to believe."

– Marie Dennis
Co-President of Pax Christi International

"A lovely book and an accurate one."

– Professor Rodney Stark,
Baylor University,
Author of The Rise of Christianity

NOW AVAILABLE AT AMAZON.COM
ENTER WITH QUOTATION MARKS "CHRISTIANITY MATTERS."

Justice & Mercy Shall Kiss
LGBT Catholics in the Age of Pope Francis
New Ways Ministry's 8th National Symposium




April 28-30, 2017 Chicago, Illinois

Plenary Leaders

LISA FULLAM
Associate Professor, Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley

LESLIE GRIFFIN
Professor of Law, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

REV. BRYAN MASSINGALE
Professor of Theological and Social Ethics, Fordham University

FRANK MUGISHA
Executive Director, Sexual Minorities Uganda

Prayer Leaders

SISTER SIMONE CAMPBELL, SSS
Executive Director, NETWORK

BISHOP THOMAS GUMBLETON
Retired Auxiliary Bishop, Detroit, Michigan

BISHOP JOHN STOWE, OFM, CONV
Diocesan Bishop, Lexington, Kentucky

Information and registration:
www.Symposium2017.org



New Ways Ministry
4012 29th Street
Mount Rainier,
Maryland 20712
301-277-5674

Like Aquinas, from whose account of moral virtue he draws inspiration, Bowlin is a master of definition and distinction-drawing. The first several chapters of the book consider what tolerance is, what its semblances are, and how critics confuse the two. On these points, Bowlin is admirably clear and precise. The book becomes more complicated when it turns from these definitions and distinctions to discussion of the messy business of determining what will and won't be tolerated in liberal societies. Early in the book, Bowlin notes that tolerance is an *acquired* moral virtue, one that is natural to our humanity but that must be cultivated through activities and social practices of imitation and habituation. "Most of these activities have institutional supports (legal codes, educational curricula, religious rites, civic rituals, and so on) and reproduce various relations of power. The same can be said of intolerance the vice." Most of us are shaped by some combination of these virtuous and vicious influences. We are, at best, imperfectly tolerant. In a liberal society, our decisions about what to tolerate are likely to be imperfect as well.

Under such conditions, Bowlin suggests, everyone with a stake in the goods of the shared society ought to have a say in what will and won't be patiently endured within it. One problem that arises is this: debates about what to tolerate are hard to disentangle from debates about the boundaries of the society itself. Debates, for example, about how the long-term residents of a small town in Maine ought to treat the newly settled Somali refugees in their midst are, in part, debates about who constitutes the real membership of the town. Who ought to have standing in those debates? Well, everyone who has a stake in the goods of the shared society. But who shares the society? That's precisely the question in this and other contentious debates in contemporary American public life about Muslims, refugees, and immigrants. Bowlin recognizes as much, but doesn't tell us whether or how thinking of tolerance as a virtue might help us. In fact, he suggests, debates about who counts as part of the society are often *harder* to resolve than those about what deserves toleration. "When we ask about the just extent of our patient endurance we are often asking about the just boundaries of the community. Who belongs in its give-and-take of tolerance? Who deserves standing, and who has been unjustly denied? Who receives recognition, and who does not but should? Settle these matters and quite often the question of tolerance answers itself."

While the tolerant among us may know how to respond to these questions, the rest of us muddle through. We look to moral exemplars for guidance, and we hope for congregations and communities that will help us cultivate the virtue ourselves. But our current political moment, and its obsession with policing the borders and boundaries of America in the interest of making it "great again" is not firm ground for that hope. In a passage that's painfully relevant to us now, Bowlin writes:

> In the end, it's shared membership and mutual recognition in a flourishing moral and political community that matters most, that makes the patient endurance of objectionable difference possible, and that enables a regime of tolerance to survive the disappointment of dissenters. Undermine that community and you threaten its regime of tolerance.

Partisan politics aren't Bowlin's topic, at least overtly, with one exception. In the epilogue, Bowlin describes a cockfight he attended in Collinsville, Oklahoma, in 2000. There was to be a statewide referendum on the practice, and Bowlin wanted to see it and judge for himself. "In small towns and distant counties, many with Hispanic or Native American roots, cockfighting was considered a noble activity, an ancient inheritance, and a mark of resistance against a wider culture that has little regard for rural lives and local traditions. In the suburbs and cities it tended to elicit disgust and, most prominently embarrassment." Bowlin hoped to side with the friends of cockfighting, who were asking their fellow citizens not for acceptance or indifference to the practice, but for tolerance of it. Watching a group of children at the fight imitating the cocks, pecking and pinching another child while shouting "Get him! Get his eyes!," Bowlin determined that he could not count cockfighting among the things to be patiently endured. Cockfighting was banned in the state of Oklahoma in 2002. Despite his conclusion, Bowlin's description of the cockfighting club in Collinsville and the people he met there exhibits humility and charity, a model for the sort of discourse we might desire in a society in which our differences are significant and likely to persist.

Much has been written in the wake of the 2016 presidential election about America's rural-urban divide, and about the condescension and resentment warping relations among citizens. I couldn't help but read Bowlin's story about cockfighting in light of all that, and to see not only a story about tolerance but also a story about shared membership and mutual recognition, or lack of it. My worry is whether we recognize enough goods in common to give us a stake in cultivating the capacities of the tolerant across all that divides us—from cockfighting to gun control to same-sex marriage. *Tolerance among the Virtues* seems to suggest that neither the virtue of tolerance nor the act of toleration is the panacea for what ails our contemporary politics. There are deeper ailments than the ones tolerance can treat. If tolerance emerges from shared society, it is to the health of that shared society that we must now tend by fighting to protect the common goods of civil peace and freedom from domination and by listening to one another's views on how to do this with humility and charity. If we are good nurses and patients, then perhaps virtuous tolerance may emerge again. ■

Molly Farneth *is assistant professor of religion at Haverford College. Her book* Hegel's Social Ethics *will be published by Princeton University Press in summer 2017.*

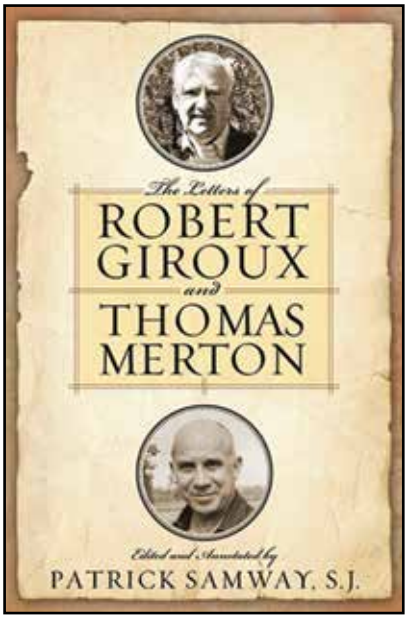
RELIGION BOOKNOTES

Luke Timothy Johnson

The Letters of Robert Giroux and Thomas Merton

Edited and Annotated by Patrick Samway, SJ
University of Notre Dame Press, $29, 397 pp.

Even casual readers of Thomas Merton catch frequent glimpses of the talented group of men—including Ed Rice, Jay Laughlin, and Robert Lax— who remained his loyal friends from college days to his death. Among them, Robert Giroux was perhaps most prominent as the gifted editor of such notable authors as T. S. Eliot, Flannery O'Connor, Virginia



Woolf, and many others, first at Harcourt Brace, then at Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy. Giroux's secure place as one of the most successful editors and publishers of the twentieth century was enhanced by his being Merton's editor from *The Seven Storey Mountain* (1948) to *Mystics and Zen Masters* (1967), and was considerably complicated by his also being the devoted friend of an author who was both astonishingly prolific and consistently unpredictable.

The extensive professional and personal correspondence between Giroux and Merton is here presented with extremely helpful footnotes, biographical introduction, epilogue, and index. Readers are thus able to follow the sometimes complex interactions between the two correspondents and the many other people whom they name and events to which they allude. The letters make clear the critical role played by Giroux, especially in the early days: his editing hand is deft and decisive, and he is responsible for some of Merton's most memorable titles, such as *Sign of Jonas*, and *No Man Is an Island*. They also reveal how Merton grew increasingly restive under his contractual obligations, and found a variety of ways (conscious or unconscious) to subvert them.

Letters dealing primarily with the business of editing and publishing may not appear to be a promising source of insight, but this collection yields more than might be expected. Take for example the realization of how much business could be done efficiently before e-mail through dictaphones, secretaries, typewriters, and the U.S. mail: at times, letters go back and forth between Giroux and Merton every few days, and a single manuscript of *Bread in the Wilderness* floated from place to place without being lost. Such efficiency, however, was also inhibited by the constraints of monastic obedience: Merton and Giroux sometimes had to wait inordinate periods of time for censors to do their work, and the vagaries of monastic practice with Merton's mail exacerbated misunderstandings between writer and publisher. By the same token, the burden placed on Merton's superiors in handling all the business matters generated by the prolific monk becomes more evident.

Concerning Merton himself, the correspondence mostly confirms what we learn from his journals: his movement from a total concentration on monastic life to a wider engagement with the world in politics, literature, and spirituality; his restlessness and energy that enabled him to produce a prodigious body of work; his desire to please, which entangled him in countless small enterprises that drew him away from larger projects; and, in the end, his willingness to live under obedience, with all its difficulties, as a monk of Gethsemane. The correspondence shows how hard Merton was willing to work to make his manuscripts better. But it also reveals that he could test the friendship of his editor and publisher by his frequent indecisiveness, inattention, and occasional inability to concentrate.

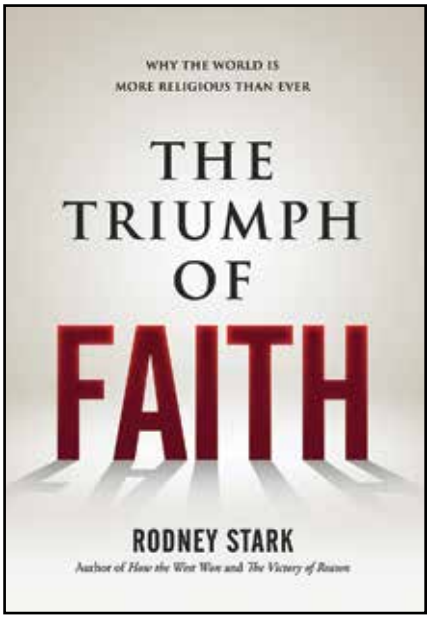
The Triumph of Faith
Why the World Is More Religious than Ever

Rodney Stark
ISI Books, $24.95, 258 pp.

Rodney Stark is notable as a creative and contrarian sociologist of religion who is nothing if not bold. "The world is more religious than it has ever been," he begins, and enters into a sustained attack against what he calls "the secularization faithful"—the social scientists and students of religion who adhere to the opposite theory—who hold that particularly in North America and Europe, religion is in steep decline. Stark quotes a 2015 Pew report on the United States: "The

country is becoming less religious as a whole, and it's happening across the board." Among those holding the position that religion is on the decline in the First World is the philosopher Charles Taylor, who proposes that people in the West no longer inhabit an "enchanted" world (*A Secular Age*).

Stark's counter to this popular thesis rests on three foundations. First, he gathers material from every part of the globe, thereby enabling a far sounder basis for comparisons. Second, he uses the numbers of the Gallup Organization's World



Poll, which began an unusually broad and thick assemblage of statistics in 2007; Stark then combines the findings of all those years to yield still more significant quantitative data. Third, he makes a critical distinction between "churched" and "unchurched" forms of religiosity, or what might be called "organized religion" and "spirituality." As a consequence, he insists that the numbers concerning people who profess belief in spirits or who visit the graves of relatives are as significant for determining levels of "faith" as are those for people who claim to have attended church, synagogue, or mosque in any given seven days.

He opens with a set of framing questions that directly challenge the sociological conventional wisdom about secularization. Even taking the most conventional markers of religiosity ("Did you attend worship?" "Is religion important in daily life?") respondents in the United States scored significantly higher than the average of European respondents, and only slightly lower than respondents in Muslim lands and sub-Saharan Africa. And around the globe, over 70 percent of respondents declared religion to be important in their lives. In contrast, the numbers of those declaring themselves to be atheists is far lower than supposed by apologists of the "New Atheism" (in the United States, 4.4 percent; in Western Europe, 6.7 percent, in Asia, 11.3 percent, and in Islamic nations, 1.1 percent). When Stark's more expansive definition of religiosity is factored in, the case for the world-wide "triumph of faith" is strengthened.

It is in his more detailed analysis of religion in different regions that Stark's most provocative pronouncements appear. Europe never was that churchgoing, he declares of the myth of medieval piety, and the reason why religion is relatively stagnant today is because of "lazy, obstructionist state churches." In contrast, he regards healthy competition as the key to the renaissance of religion in both Americas. In South America, Catholicism was stimulated by the success of Pentecostal Protestantism, and its resurgence owes nothing to liberation theology and everything to a competitive form of charismatic Catholicism. Similarly, in the United States the comatose condition of more liberal "mainline" Protestantism that creates such hand-wringing obscures the powerful emergence of non-denominational Evangelical Protestants and conservative Catholics. Given relative birthrates, these versions of Christianity will win out, just as for the same reason, Orthodox Jews will eventually far outnumber Conservative and Reform Jews.

As valuable as his numbers are, and as stimulating as many of his arguments may be, Stark sometimes swings wildly and misses. He insists that modern science, for example, arose "because only Christians and Jews conceived of God as a rational creature and concluded that therefore the universe must run according to rational principles that could be discovered." Well, no. This broad statement leaves out ancient Greek, Roman, Arabic, Persian, and Chinese science. Ponder the numbers, enjoy the arguments, but test Stark's conclusions.

We Have Been Friends Together & Adventures in Grace

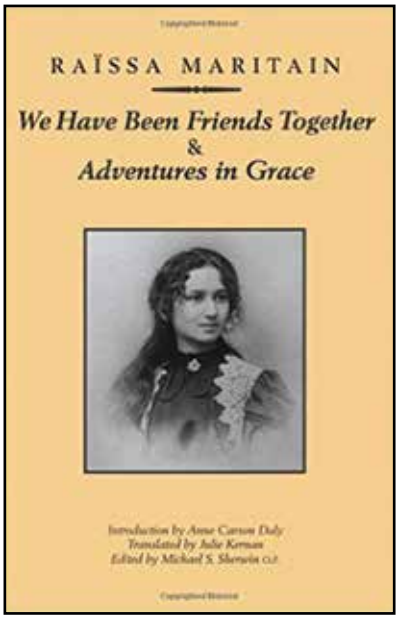
Raïssa Maritain
St. Augustine's Press, $40, 416 pp.

In 1940, when she and her husband Jacques were exiles from their beloved France and living in a New York apartment, Raïssa Maritain began a memoir of her childhood in Russia and her coming of age as an intellectual at the Sorbonne. The tone of *We Have Been Friends Together* is elegiac; she had little hope for an allied victory, and the rich intellectual and cultural life she and her friends had enjoyed seem irretrievably lost. She wrote a second volume, *Adventures in Grace*, in 1944, when victory over Hitler seemed more possible and the recovery of France something more than a dream. A third volume was planned but never written. This reissue of the two volumes together uses the original translation by Julie Kernan, with some emendations by the editor, Michael S. Sherwin, OP, who has also added a substantial body of footnotes, including some illuminating reflection and remembrance by Jacques Maritain himself.

A distinct pleasure in reading this memoir is learning Raïssa's own story. She was a precocious intellectual in her own right, who walked with her young husband through the same stages of disenchantment, discovery, and faith, and actually preceded Jacques in finding Thomas Aquinas. *The Angel of the School*, as her short biography of Aquinas terms him, gave a foundation for their faith-based philosophy. She also had, consistent with the delicate prose and indirect style of speaking hard truths

in her memoir, a more irenic and gracious spirit than that of her husband, who tended toward active proselytizing and polemics.

More broadly, Maritain's memories of her husband and their friends represent an important first-hand witness to a time of remarkable spiritual awakening in French Catholicism in the early years of the twentieth century, in which both Jacques and Raïssa Maritain played key roles. Together they found the philosopher Henri Bergson, and through him the possibility of thinking about



reality in a manner more fruitful than that offered by the Sorbonne's social scientists. Together they became intimates of the complex and compelling Léon Bloy, whose simultaneous embrace of poverty and the pursuit of sanctity drew many to the faith. Their circle of friends included intellectual Dominicans like Humbert Clerissac and Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, the great poet Charles Péguy, and the soldier-writer Ernest Psichari—both of whom were killed in the early days of the Great War—the painter Georges Rouault, and the actress Eve LaValliere, and embraced such unbelievers as Charles Maurras and André Gide. Spiritual transformation and religious conversion among such talented folk testifies to the power of personal influence.

There is some shadow to this mostly sunny account. Raïssa carefully distances herself and Jacques from the intimations of anti-Judaism that seemed to be a corollary to this newly resurgent Catholicism, particularly in the work of her great hero, Léon Bloy. Not only is she touchingly loyal to her own heritage as a Russian Jew, but the events of the World War II made any form of anti-Judaism more repugnant. Similarly, she must deal gingerly with Jacques' embarrassing (if temporary) infatuation with Charles Maurras's *Action Française*, which wedded Catholicism to an antidemocratic politics that presaged mid-century fascism. In her proposed third volume, we would have found more of an exposition of Jacques' philosophy, which she began to write in the latter part of the second volume. She gives us just enough to suggest that she was not only the soul-mate and intellectual inspiration of her husband, but also one of the best interpreters of arguably the most important Catholic philosopher of the twentieth century.

Flourishing
Why We Need Religion in a Globalized World

Miroslav Volf
Yale University Press, $28, 280 pp.

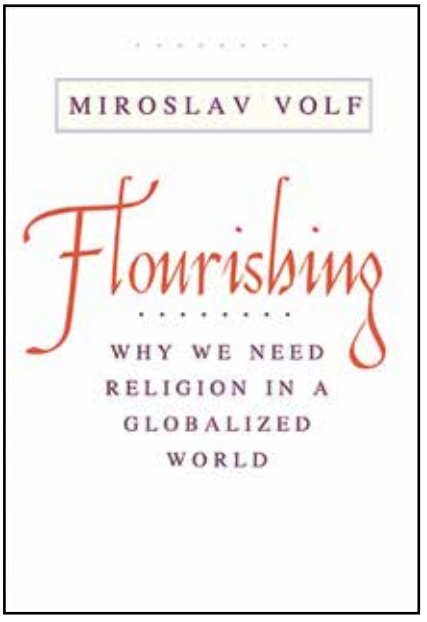
Miroslav Volf teaches theology at Yale Divinity School and is best known for his award-winning *Exclusion and Embrace* (1996). Readers of that impressive work will find similar traits here: an engagement with large public issues, a firm evangelical perspective, and a desire for reconciliation and peace among humans. The difference in this effort is its higher level of generalization. Volf recognizes the difficulties in speaking about something so huge and unwieldly as "globalization," which are matched by the difficulties of speaking coherently about "world religions," and which are multiplied when trying to address the ways globalization and religion intersect. So conscious is Volf of these difficulties that he spends considerable effort in acknowledging them, while still trying to say something meaningful.

His basic argument is that "a vision of flourishing found in the quarreling family of world religions is essential to individual thriving and global common good." He recognizes that the current version of globalization, grounded in economic interdependence and technological progress, has enabled an unprecedented level of prosperity and comfort for many. At the same time, it falls short in providing such "flourishing" for all the world's peoples—the disparity of rich and poor grows ever greater, and the risk of ecological disaster draws ever nearer. Nor does it offer a meaning of life greater than mere material prosperity. Thus, a globalized world "needs religion" if it is to extend well-being to all humans through the alterity proclaimed by religion at its best. Although Volf shows no sign of having read Rodney Stark (see above), he emphatically agrees that religion is not disappearing, but is more pervasive and powerful than ever. But can religions, which historically have tended to exclusivity and self-interest, actually perform the leavening function Volf proposes? Are they not more the problem than the solution? Might a globalized world "need religion" only if religions stop acting the way they almost always have?

Volf's argument, then, proceeds by way of mutual correction between his two great abstractions. For example, as a product of the Enlightenment globalization has much to say to rivalrous religions on the question of mutual acceptance and toleration. And the best truth claims of religion on the nature and destiny of humans can instruct a world enthralled by technology on a meaning of existence that transcends physical well-being. But because Volf works at such a high level of abstraction, the reader can be distracted by the irritant of particularity: is globalization really as regnant as proposed? Are Judaism and Hinduism really "world religions" in the manner that Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity are? Can we bracket the contemporary forces of hatred and

violence fomented in the name of religion as incidental rather than essential to a religious outlook? How, specifically, does "religion" as an abstraction speak to "globalization" as an abstraction? When Volf does touch ground, his analysis can be helpful, as when he shows how religious exclusivism need not be translated into political exclusivism; his appeal to Roger Williams is powerful precisely because it is particular.

The phrase "well-meaning" might have been coined for books like this. Volf is fair, generous, large-minded, and in the best sense liberal; he seeks



only what is good for the world. His final chapter on "Conflict, Violence, and Reconciliation" revisits the themes of *Exclusion and Embrace* with a plea for mutual understanding and support rather than mutual destruction. No one can complain about this ideal, but carrying it out in the highly particular and resistant arena of actual human behavior is the real task. ■

Luke Timothy Johnson *is emeritus Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at Emory University and a frequent contributor to* Commonweal. *His latest book is* The Revelatory Body: Theology as Inductive Art *(Eerdmans).*

CLASSIFIED

RATES: $1.25 per word; 3-line minimum. Discounts: 3 times, 5 percent; 6 times, 10 percent; 12 times, 15 percent. Advance payment required. Discounts and monthly billing available for repeat advertisers. For additional information, contact Regan Pickett at: commonwealads@gmail.com.

Periodical

TODAY'S AMERICAN CATHOLIC, an independent Catholic periodical, seeks to discern, express, and advance Christ's message. Often provocative, but faithful to the Spirit, TAC provides a forum for lay as well as clerical voices on issues vital to our faith community. For a complimentary copy call 860-676-2280 or send e-mail to TACoffice@att.net.

Discernment Retreats

How is God calling you? The Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Atonement offer quarterly Discernment Weekends in Garrison, NY, to help you discover the answer. If you are a single, Catholic young adult, 18-40, considering God's call to servanthood, whether as a priest, sister, brother or lay person, you are invited to participate in this discernment retreat. For more information, visit http://www.atonementfriars.org/discern or contact Paul Krenzelok: 845-424-2122, pkrenzelok@atonementfriars.org.

Liturgist needed at Villanova University

Villanova University is seeking a full-time Campus Liturgist. This Campus Minister for Liturgy is responsible for facilitating the worship life of the Villanova University community by coordinating and providing quality liturgical experiences that celebrate and strengthen the journey of faith of students, faculty and staff. More information is found at the following link: jobs.villanova.edu

Catholic, Independent, Opinionated.

Four ways to connect with the Commonweal community.

HOW TO subscribe

cwlmag.org/subscribe
Or call 855-713-1792

SUPPORT Commonweal

Your tax-deductible membership of $50 or more brings you our Associates Newsletter and an annual listing in the pages of *Commonweal*... but most important, you'll be helping make *Commonweal* a better, stronger lay Catholic voice.

cwlmag.org/associates
Or call 212-662-4200 x5

FREE STUDENT subscriptions

We make free subscriptions available to all current undergraduate and graduate students, as well as to recent graduates (degree awarded in the past three years).

Visit cwlmag.org/freestudent

FREE EMAIL newsletter

Delivered twice weekly, it's the best way to keep up with all our online-only articles and reviews, as well as with each print issue as soon as it's published.

Visit cwlmag.org/newsletter

Stand & Wait

Kelly Scott Franklin

Suffering changes how you read poetry. For eight months out of the year, I work to show my undergraduates that literature matters—that it speaks to our lives, and that our literary heritage offers real answers to some of our deepest questions. But last fall, that lesson came home to me in a profound way when I taught John Milton's Sonnet 19.

I had read Milton's poem before, but now my wife and I had entered the long struggle with infertility, and his verses suddenly resonated with my real life outside the classroom. Angry with God and denied one of the fundamental missions of marriage, I found Milton speaking to me in his poem, offering his own difficult consolation for the pain of waiting.

At the age of forty-three, sometime early in 1652, John Milton went completely blind. He would never read on his own again. He would never again see and correct the drafts of his poems. He would even have to compose his greatest work, *Paradise Lost*, entirely by dictation. A brilliant and educated writer, Milton lived and breathed a life of letters; to gaze blindly ahead at decades of perpetual darkness and reliance on others must have been terrifying indeed. Out of this crisis sprung his famous Sonnet 19: "When I consider how my light is spent," he begins, "Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide…."

Middle-aged, but with a sense that his best work was still to come, Milton feels the weight of his blindness stifling his God-given calling to write. He meditates on the parable of the talents in Matthew 25, but chafes at the seeming unfairness of God. Unable to return his gift to the Master with interest, Milton feels forced by his blindness to bury it instead:

And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide...

Will I, Milton wonders, be cast out into the darkness with the unprofitable servant of Christ's parable, when God himself withholds the ability to use my talent? "Doth God exact day labor," he asks, "light denied?"

As my wife and I faced the facts of infertility and childlessness, I struggled like Milton with an apparently unfair God who made demands, but who withheld the ability to obey. Why could we not fulfill the command of God, repeated in Genesis, to "be fruitful and multiply?" As time wore on, I had settled into despondency, but in his agonized sonnet Milton now offered me a surprising answer: "God," he writes, "doth not need / Either man's work or his own gifts..."

It's a humbling proposition, and a mysterious one, much like the answer God gives to Job. God does not, in himself, need Milton's writing or my fatherhood. Our work and those gifts are in fact "his own" already. God is most satisfied, Milton goes on to suggest,

with those who patiently accept his mysterious will: "who best / Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best…."

This sounds like the cold comfort of resignation—until Milton offers us the final metaphor of his sonnet. Speaking of God as a monarch ruling from the center of his court and kingdom, Milton writes:

his state
Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.

The King's countless servants—both angels and men—already traverse the globe doing his will. But there are other ways to serve the Master: Milton's metaphor of the royal court calls to mind the image of courtiers, pages, and other loyal subjects simply awaiting the King's command. They wait, not in passive apathy, but with the attentiveness of which the Psalmist speaks in Psalm 123: "as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters." For Milton, those who wait in humble expectation are in fact actively serving God: "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Fortunately for all of us, Milton did not have to wait forever. His blindness did not signal the end of his art, for he later went on to write his three most brilliant works. Doubtless, his private suffering shaped his depiction of the fall of man—a fall whose effects Milton bore in his body as he composed *Paradise Lost*. In our own journey of infertility, the suffering of our expectant wait continues. As we feel our way forward, sometimes blindly, through the mystery of God's plan for our family, I carry Milton's words with me into the darkness. Like him, we find ourselves wondering how we can serve the Master with our talents. And like him, for now we will stand and wait. ■

Kelly Scott Franklin *is an assistant professor of English at Hillsdale College, and writes on topics of literature, culture, and faith.*

Journal of Catholic Social Thought
Announces an Upcoming Conference and Call for Papers

Pope Francis, A Voice Crying Out in the World: Mercy, Justice, Love and Care for the Earth

April 13–15, 2018

The Institute for Catholic Social Thought at Villanova University invites you to join us in celebration of the fifth anniversary of the election of Pope Francis. The goal of the conference is to provide a theological and historical analysis of this pontificate.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers

Cardinal Óscar Andrés Rodríguez Maradiaga, SDB, Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Cardinal Joseph Tobin, CSSR, Newark, NJ
Margaret Archer, President, Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences
John O'Malley, SJ, Georgetown University
Jeffrey Sachs, Columbia University
Agbonkhianmeghe Orobator, SJ, Hekima University, Nairobi, Kenya
Antonio Spadaro, SJ, Editor, *La Civiltà Cattolica*
Anna Rowlands, Durham University, UK
Massimo Faggioli, Villanova University

Call for Papers

Suggested concurrent session themes include: Francis' Theology of the Church, Francis and Vatican II, Francis' Vision of Mission and Discipleship, *Amoris Laetitia* and Moral Theology, Francis' Critique of Inequality, *Laudato si'* and Creation, Francis and International Affairs. Proposals for concurrent sessions due by May 1, 2017. Papers due by December 1, 2017 to Executive Editor: barbara.wall@villanova.edu. For more information visit: www1.villanova.edu/villanova/mission

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY