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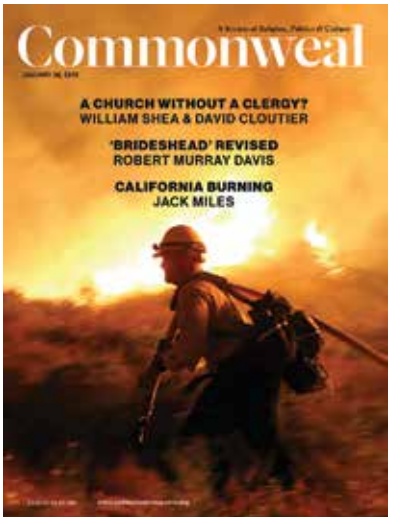
LETTERS

Temptation, peril, etc.

MISLEAD US NOT

Thank you for the Short Takes by Charles McNamara and Nicholas Frankovich ("Lead Us Not into Temptation?" and "Don't Overspiritualize Temptation," January 26). In citing the article by A.J.B. Higgins, McNamara draws needed attention to the antiquity of concerns about the meaning of the verb εἰσφέρω (and of *inducere*), concerns reflected in various translations of the Lord's Prayer through the centuries. (The Spanish example Frankovich mentions, *no nos dejes caer*, had long been current when I learned the prayer in the 1930s.)



But I find Frankovich persuasive when he argues that we should focus instead on the noun πειρασμός. Like its Latin counterpart, it has meanings that overlap but differ, meanings not usual for modern derivatives. So English "temptation" (and its cognates) may well mislead us. We expect it to mean an invitation to some action, especially an unwise or evil one. Instead, as Frankovich suggests, the prayer may be referring to a trial or a peril. Yet even then some of the ambiguity remains. Frankovich (like Pope Francis, perhaps) seems to mean by "trial" some sort of test, of faith or of perseverance in virtue. But may it not be a "trial" in a juridical sense, with the "peril" more like legal jeopardy? Recall Psalm 130: "If you, O Lord, mark iniquities, Lord, who can stand?" Then *ne nos inducas in tentationem* comes close to pleading, "Don't drag us before the judgment seat." (This is not some tendentious rendering of my own. I know it was set out decades ago by a biblical scholar. I'm almost certain it was John L. McKenzie, but I could not locate the passage when I searched several of his books just now.)

JULIAN IRIAS
Davis, Calif.

THE FINAL TRIAL

I enjoyed reading the Short Takes by Charles McNamara and Nicholas Frankovich on Pope Francis's suggestion that the translation of the verse of the Lord's Prayer, "And lead us not into temptation," be revisited and corrected. The pope had observed that "God does not lead people into temptation; Satan does."

As McNamara and Frankovich point out, this argument is not new or, contrary to the pope's critics, "an affront to tradition and orthodoxy." They did not mention that the pope's immediate predecessor, Emeritus Benedict XVI, had himself raised the issue in his masterful *Jesus of Nazareth trilogy*. Benedict writes, "The way this petition is phrased is shocking for many people: God certainly does not lead us into temptation." Instead of focusing on the meaning of εἰσενέγκῃς or *inducas*, as Francis and McNamara do, a wrangling with the contextual sense of "bring in" or "lead" that led to centuries of textual interpolations, Benedict takes up the meaning of "temptation." Concluding like Frankovich that "trials" are meant, Benedict reassuringly explains that

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"the object of the petition is to ask God not to mete out more than we can bear, not to let us slip from his hands." Thus, *pace* Francis, the problem is not that the verse suggests that God is leading us into temptation, but that the translation of πειρασμός as "temptation" misses the mark; as Frankovich and Benedict reveal, it's "trial."

Neither McNamara nor Frankovich draw our attention to the *Didache*, a first-century Christian pastoral manual for the instruction of Gentile converts. The Lord's Prayer is preserved here (8:2) as well, and the part of the verse in question is identical to that of Matthew 6:13 and Luke 11:4. Aaron Milavec's commentary to the *Didache*, drawing largely from the work of Raymond Brown and John P. Meier, is in agreement with Benedict and Frankovich on the sense of πειρασμός, but then makes an intriguing proposal: the "trial" is not an everyday "this-worldly hardship" described by Frankovich or the "burden of trials" of Benedict—rendered unlikely by the aorist imperative construction—but the eschatological crisis, the "trial" of the end times. In this interpretation, the final three petitions of the Lord's Prayer point "to the coming of the kingdom as it will affect us," just as the set of the first three "looks forward to God's final intervention in human history." Thus, the verse reads, according to Milavec, "and do not lead us into the trial [of the last days]." We are even more convinced of this when we recall Mark 14:38, "Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial [πειρασμόν]," and Revelation 3:10: "Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial [πειρασμοῦ] that is coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth."

This way of looking at the Lord's Prayer is exciting because it takes what seems on the surface to be somewhat disjointed petitions and unifies them all under the rubric of looking forward to the end times. This interpretation demands a reexamination of "give us this day our daily bread," but that fascinating topic will wait for another time.

MARK LAURENT ASSELIN
Bethesda, Md.

From the Editors

Serpents & Doves

China has been a puzzle and a challenge to the Catholic Church since the first Jesuit missionaries arrived on its shores in the sixteenth century. If the Gospel could take root there, in soil so different from Europe's, then surely it could take root anywhere on earth, as Christians had always believed. But *could* it really take root there, or did the vast cultural differences make Western theology, if not the Gospel itself, unintelligible in the Middle Kingdom? Which Chinese words, if any, adequately expressed what Christians meant by "God"? Debates about the necessity and risks of what the church would later call "inculturation" grew out of such questions, as missionaries experimented with new methods of evangelization that would make the faith comprehensible to China's people and tolerable to its rulers. Back in Rome, some worried that missionaries were making too many exceptions to the rules; the Dominicans feared that Jesuit improvisations would disrupt the pure harmony of Mother Church.

Today, many Catholics are understandably worried that the first Jesuit pope is about to make another dangerous exception by giving China's Communist government some say over the appointment of Catholic bishops. This would be a clear departure from current canon law and Vatican II's decree *Christus dominus*, which insisted that, "in order to safeguard the liberty of the Church…no rights or privileges be conceded to the civil authorities in regard to the election, nomination, or presentation to bishoprics." A pope can override canon law, but in light of all the harm civil authorities have done when they meddled with apostolic succession—from the eleventh-century Investiture Controversy to the shameful treatment of Archbishop József Mindszenty in Soviet-controlled Hungary—why would Francis do this?

It is no secret that the Vatican has long been eager to restore diplomatic ties with Beijing, which were severed in 1951, two years after the Communists took power. For six decades, China's Catholics have been divided between an underground church loyal to Rome and the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, which answers to the Chinese Communist Party. The Patriotic Association's seven government-appointed bishops are considered illegitimate by Rome, though their ordinations are valid. For this reason, Pope Benedict advised the Chinese faithful to seek bishops and priests who were in communion with Rome—but he also allowed that, where this posed a "grave inconvenience," Catholics could receive the sacraments from illegitimate bishops and priests. Such magnanimity has not been reciprocated by the Chinese government, which has continued to persecute the underground church with fines, harassment, and even imprisonment. Praising the courage and fidelity of China's martyrs, Benedict insisted that "the clandestine condition [of China's underground Catholics] is not a normal feature of the Church's life," and promised Rome would do whatever it could to help lift this burden.

The question now is how far Francis can go in his efforts toward rapprochement with the Chinese government without damaging the church's credibility or betraying all those who have stood by Rome, often at great personal cost. The Vatican has already asked two of the underground church's forty bishops to step aside in favor of bishops appointed by Beijing, a move that has provoked alarm and indignation among both Chinese Catholics and the pope's critics in the West. It is reported that Vatican negotiators have also offered the Chinese government the privilege of nominating all future bishops, as long as the pope retains the power of veto. This would be a unique arrangement. Whether it would be a prudent one depends on Beijing's good faith and the pope's willingness to exercise his veto vigorously.

There are, unfortunately, still plenty of reasons to doubt Beijing's good faith. Its new Regulations on Religious Affairs, which went into effect on February 1, increase the fines for involvement with an underground church, reassert the official atheism of the Chinese state, and call for the "Sinicization" of Christianity—which, given China's record of coercion, amounts to inculturation at the point of a gun. Chinese officials continue to tear down churches or have their crosses removed (the better to "Sinicize" them, presumably). In the end, the kind of Christianity-with-Chinese-characteristics Beijing has in mind may have as little to do with real Christianity as "socialism with Chinese characteristics" has had to do with socialism.

Still, this does not mean the Vatican should ignore an opportunity to restore unity to China's divided Catholic Church, even if this may involve some unusual compromises. If the main concern of Chinese officials is to keep up the appearance of independence from foreign influence, Rome may be able to satisfy them while also advancing its own priorities: the integrity of the sacraments and hierarchical communion. Francis, like his predecessor, believes that reconciliation—between members of the underground church and members of the Patriotic Association, if not between the Vatican and Beijing—is critical to the church's mission in China. The conflict between the two Catholic communities there is an open wound and a scandalous impediment to evangelization. Resolving it will require Rome's diplomats to be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves—both, not one or the other. It may also require some Jesuit improvisation from the pope himself. ■

Cathleen Kaveny

Succor Punch

HOW NOT TO BE OVERWHELMED BY REQUESTS FOR DONATIONS

As I confronted the barrage of charitable solicitations assaulting my mailbox this past December, a grumbling question repeatedly crossed my mind: Who do they think I am, Melinda Gates? The pleas overwhelmed both the Christmas cards and the bills. Save the children, save the puppies, save the whales. Support public television, combat racism, and eradicate cancer. The Syrian refugees desperately require help—but so do the hurricane victims in Puerto Rico. And while you're at it, your college marching band need new uniforms and your law school needs, well, nothing really—but give anyway. And last but not least, don't forget *Commonweal*. The testimonies of need and pleas for succor left me feeling simultaneously depressed, resentful, guilty, and paralyzed.

How should people who don't have Gates's fortune, but do have more than a widow's mite, think about allocating their charitable donations? Is it solely a matter of need? Should Christians direct all our charitable giving to the refugees and hurricane victims, while leaving the band and *Commonweal* out in the cold? What does it mean to give to charity, from a moral and religious perspective?

As New Year's Eve approached, I continued to ponder these questions. I came to the conclusion that the big problem is the tax code itself. We need to resist its conceptual framework, which presses us to equate "charitable giving" with writing a tax-deductible check to a not-for-profit corporation organized in conformity with section 501(c)(3) of the code.

First, this equation is misleading. The framework encourages us to prioritize economic efficiency. But in some cases, it may be morally preferable to give $1000 in after-tax dollars directly to a needy family in your parish rather than make a $1500 donation to a registered charity. For many people, much of the time, the most urgent and generous type of charitable giving does not show up on their list of itemized deductions.

Second, the tax code's framework distorts our understanding of the act of charitable giving. It is tempting for givers writing end-of-the-year checks to see themselves as nothing more than financial conduits moving money from one bank account (yours) to another (theirs). Viewed in this way, making a charitable contribution is impersonal and solitary—not all that different from paying bills.

But in the Christian tradition, acts of charity are meant to be the donor's expression of solidarity with the recipient, and, more broadly, with the human family. It is a personal sign of gratitude for the material and spiritual blessings the donor has been given, which have enabled her to bless others in turn. An act of charity is meant to be a virtuous act, shaping and being shaped by the character of the person who makes it.

If we see making a charitable contribution as the giver's uniquely personal act of solidarity, things start to fall into place. We can think of charitable giving as falling into three categories, which roughly correspond to the three theological virtues (faith, charity, and hope) and their related divisions of time (past, present, and future). Our donations can be balanced across these categories because our moral lives are balanced in the same way. This balancing act takes discernment.

We give faithfully to the institutions that had faith in our potential long ago, when we were younger and more vulnerable. Such gifts acknowledge our debts of filial piety. In contrast, we can give to groups that are suffering here and now, near and far, as an expression of loving solidarity with the wounded. *Misericordia* literally means having a "miserable heart," a heart that is moved to mercy because it suffers along with others. Finally, we give to groups and institutions that promise to build a more humane world in the future, whether by strengthening the culture, expanding prospects of mutual understanding, or advocating for peace and justice. Such gifts are a testimony of hope.

But how do we choose the particular charities within the three categories? In my view, a sense of solidarity, shaped by an almost aesthetic sense of fittingness, comes into play. It is fitting that a college graduate gives to her own alma mater, rather than to a higher-ranked aspirational peer school. If we can't choose which particular group of suffering people to help, we can pick a (financially responsible) charity that operates in line with our deepest convictions (e.g., Catholic Relief Services) or special vocations or concerns (e.g., Doctors Without Borders). And it is fitting to prioritize cultural and advocacy groups that correspond with our own commitments, interests, and talents. These charitable contributions are an extension of our divinely given vocations—they express hope and confidence in others laboring in the same vineyard.

So, the answer to my own questions reflects the Catholic predilection for balance and inclusion. It is morally permissible, indeed it is fitting, to give to your alma mater (even if it is rich) and to Doctors Without Borders—and, of course, to *Commonweal*, in order to express confidence in the future of Catholic intellectual life. ■

E. J. Dionne Jr.

Servants of the NRA

WHY DO SO MANY POLITICIANS REFUSE TO TALK ABOUT GUN CONTROL?

The surest sign a political regime is failing is its inability to do anything about a problem that is universally seen as urgent and has some obvious remedies. And it's a mark of political corruption when unaccountable cliques block solutions that enjoy broad support and force their selfish interests to prevail over the common good. On gun violence, the United States has become a corrupt failed state.

This is the only conclusion to draw from the endless enraging replays of the same political paralysis, no matter how many children are gunned down at our schools or how many innocent Americans are slaughtered at shopping centers and other public places. Whatever happens, we can't ban assault weapons, we can't strengthen background checks, we can't do anything.

In corrupt failed states, politics is about lying and misdirection. On guns, our debate is a pack of lies and evasions. In no other country is the phrase "thoughts and prayers" a sacrilege, a cover for cowardice. In no other country are the words "mental health" so empty. They are muttered by politicians who have no history of caring in the least about programs to help those with psychological or psychiatric difficulties. But they need to say something to rationalize their allegiance to a gun lobby that appears to be utterly indifferent to mass murder.

President Trump's rote address to the nation after the killing of seventeen people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, had all the passion of a CEO delivering a middling annual report. He told us: "We are committed to working with state and local leaders to help secure our schools and tackle the difficult issue of mental health."

Trump's speech, as *Vox*'s German Lopez observed, was "one giant lie by omission." Those seventeen people were killed by an AR-15, not by a knife or a sword or a bomb. But God forbid the president mention guns. Vox also noted that people with mental illness are more likely to be the victims, not the perpetrators, of violence. Yes, and if Trump cared so much about mental health, he wouldn't be proposing a $250 billion cut to Medicaid, which pays for more than 25 percent of the nation's mental health care.

Memo to the media: Stop saying in somber, serious tones that we must do more about mental health. This might well be true, but in the context of crimes such as those at Stoneman Douglas High, to offer such sentiments is to be complicit in propaganda by pretending that a cover story is actually on the level. We should not have to point out over and over that while mental illness exists everywhere, other countries do not have killing sprees comparable to ours.

Our political system is failing, first, because the Republican Party has become a paid agent of the gun manufacturers' lobby. The party of law and order cares about neither if doing so means causing the least disturbance to the National Rifle Association. This is where corruption comes in. One Republican politician after another who couldn't even utter the word "gun" following the Parkland horror turned out to have received millions from the NRA. And it's no wonder that Trump decided he cared so much about mental health. The NRA spent $30 million to defeat Hillary Clinton in 2016.

Aggravating our difficulty in regulating weapons is the vast overrepresentation of rural states in the U.S. Senate, which makes some Democrats wary of taking on the NRA. This is another classic problem of failed regimes: their structures are no longer capable of responding to current needs.

No one wants our political system to fail more than Vladimir Putin does and our powerlessness on guns hardly enhances our democracy's image to the world. It is worth revisiting reports last spring in *Time* magazine and the *Washington Post* about the relationships Russians close to their government are cultivating with the U.S. gun lobby as part of the outreach by pro-Putin forces to the far right. And Peter Stone and Greg Gordon of *McClatchy* reported in January that the FBI "is investigating whether a top Russian banker with ties to the Kremlin illegally funneled money to the National Rifle Association to help Donald Trump win the presidency."

Wherever this Russia story goes, we already know that the NRA and its political servants are immobilizing our government on one of the gravest problems confronting us. What would we say about any other country that watched its children gunned down again and again and did absolutely nothing? ■

President Donald Trump with Wayne LaPierre, CEO of the National Rifle Association

MEDIAPUNCH INC / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Julia G. Young

'We Were Different'

WHY NATIVISM PERSISTS AMONG U.S. CATHOLICS

A few years ago, I taught an undergraduate course on migration at the Catholic University of America. During one lecture, I compared nineteenth-century Italian migration and contemporary Mexican migration to the United States. A hand shot up, and a student—one of several with an Italian surname—objected. "They're not the same," he protested. "My great-grandmother came here legally, and learned English—Mexicans don't do that."

As a historian who studies Mexican immigration to the United States, I'm used to hearing statements like this. Concerns about new immigrants' legal status and failure to assimilate are widespread, and nativism has re-emerged in recent decades. Still, I wondered why this proud young Italian-American Catholic was so unwilling to compare his ancestors to the Mexican Catholic immigrants of today. Why did he not feel a sense of sympathy and solidarity for contemporary immigrants, who share so much with the great waves of Irish, Italians, Poles, and other immigrants of the late nineteenth century?

At the time, I didn't quite grasp how many U.S. Catholics feel the widespread American discontent over immigration. After all, the Catholic hierarchy is vocally pro-immigrant, and the U.S. Catholic population is entirely composed of immigrants and descendants of immigrants. Catholics have a proud tradition of social justice, and numerous Catholic organizations have done immensely valuable work to protect immigrants. Nevertheless, in our new Trumpian era of border walls and travel bans, it has become more apparent to me (and others, such as Paul Moses in a recent piece for *Commonweal*, "White Catholics & Nativism," September 1, 2017) that white Catholics have a nativism problem of their own.

Given the history of Catholic immigration to the United States, perhaps I shouldn't have been surprised. Catholic nativism toward other Catholic immigrants is a recurring sentiment that dates to at least the second half of the nineteenth century, when the influx of Catholics changed the religious landscape of the United States. From then until today, Irish, Italian, Polish, Mexican, and other Catholics have fought over power, identity, religious practice, and shared spaces.

This tense history is something that Catholics don't always acknowledge. Instead, it's far more common to hear Catholics describe their ancestors as victims of nativism—especially when those ancestors were Irish and Italian Catholics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Certainly, that's the narrative I heard growing up—and I have found that most of my Catholic students are well aware of the "Know Nothing" movement and other instances of historical antipathy toward Irish and Italian Catholics.) And while nativism was certainly directed at Catholics by non-Catholics, that's not the whole story.

Catholics were only a tiny minority in the United States until after the 1840s, when Irish immigrants began to arrive in the wake of the Famine. Relatively quickly, Irish Catholics began to compete with German Americans (who had arrived somewhat earlier) in the clergy and hierarchy, and soon the Irish dominated Catholic leadership on the East Coast (less so in the Midwest, where Germans still maintained majorities). In 1880s Boston, nearly 80 percent of priests were Irish or Irish-American; in New York, 70 percent. These clergymen ascended to the hierarchy, and by the turn of the century, it has been said, the U.S. Catholic Church was "one, holy, Apostolic, and Irish Church."

Nevertheless, this Irish-led church soon began to face challenges from new immigrants arriving from Italy, Poland, and other Southern and Eastern European countries. Each ethnic group brought their own tradition, language, and clergy. Conflict between (and within) Catholic ethnic groups was quite common. It is no wonder that most new Catholic immigrants preferred to worship with their compatriots—and Catholic bishops responded by creating separate "national" parishes for each group.

Yet the national parish model may have also hindered inter-ethnic solidarity. In and around New York, Chicago, Boston, and other Catholic cities and neighborhoods, the Irish and Italians in particular shared a mutual antipathy, and often outright hostility (see Paul Moses's *An Unlikely Union: The Love-Hate Story of New York's Irish and Italians*.) The Irish were nonplussed by Italian anticlericalism, as well as by their unfamiliar religious practices (such as local street festivals), which they perceived as mere superstition. The Italians, in turn, were less than impressed by the seemingly cold and austere faith of the Irish, and even more rankled by their dominance of the hierarchy. Street fights between Italians and Irish were quite common: at one Irish parish (St. Francis in Flatbush, Brooklyn), Italian adults were excluded from church services and Italian children were harassed at the parochial grade school.

The Poles and the Irish did not get along much better. According to Anthony M. Stevens-Arroyo, Cardinal John McCloskey (the second archbishop of New York) famously told Polish Catholics who requested a church that they didn't need a parish, but rather a pig shanty. At the turn of the twentieth century, some Polish Catholics were so aggrieved by such treatment—and by their lack of representation within

Johann Palomino and Jennielle Muñoz, students at Our Lady's School in San Diego, participate in a re-enactment of Our Lady of Guadalupe appearing to St. Juan Diego.

CNSPHOTO / DAVID MAUNG

the U.S. Catholic hierarchy—that they defected, founding the Polish National Catholic Church in Scranton, Pennsylvania in 1897. Subsequently, Lithuanians founded a Lithuanian National Church (they later joined the PNCC), and the PNCC attracted other immigrants, such as Slovaks, as well. (This story is told in detail in a fascinating 2003 master's thesis by Margaret Rencewicz, titled "The Polish National Catholic Church: the Founding of an American Schism.")

Of course, religion was not the only issue dividing these ethnic groups. The widely held belief in eugenics, which cast Italians and Eastern Europeans as inferior races, certainly didn't help matters. Nor did the fact that the new immigrants of the late nineteenth century competed with more established Irish-Americans for jobs (and were often willing to work for lower pay). Yet the divisions on the streets and in neighborhoods were reinforced by the "separate but equal" model of the national churches.

Eventually—and in part to cope with dissension between ethnic groups—Catholic bishops abolished the national parish, in an effort to promote "Americanization." This meant that immigrants arriving after the 1920s would no longer be granted their own parish churches, but rather that churches would be allocated by population and neighborhood.

In practice, however, new immigrants still found themselves excluded or marginalized from the parishes of groups that arrived earlier. This was certainly true for Mexicans, who began migrating to the United States in increasing numbers during the 1910s and 1920s. A 1929 report by the National Catholic Welfare Conference on Mexican immigration noted that discrimination against Mexicans was rampant within white Catholic communities in the Southwest, describing churches with signs stating that Mexicans were prohibited, or limiting Mexicans to the last pew in the church. "There are many towns," the report continued, "where [the Mexican] is not served an ice cream cone over the counter and where he is not admitted to moving picture houses which others attend. Many congregations do not welcome him and in places where there is no Spanish-speaking priest the Mexican stays away."

After 1930, immigration decreased sharply, as the Great Depression and new restrictive laws put a temporary brake on arrivals. But internal migration had been ongoing since World War I, when thousands of African Americans began leaving the South for Northern cities in what became known as the Great Migration. Some were Catholics, especially those coming from Louisiana and the Gulf region. As they arrived and settled in the urban North, they faced rejection, discrimination, and hatred from whites—including many

white Catholics, who resisted their integration into white parishes.

Many of these Catholics were the children of Irish and Polish immigrants, who had only recently begun to feel like Americans. Some scholars, such as Noel Ignatiev and Matthew Frye Jacobson, have speculated that their disdain for black Americans prompted these former rivals to overcome their ethnic differences and mutual hostilities and "become white." Certainly, the racial tensions wrought by white resistance to black migration after World War II spurred white Catholics to move to the suburbs; this suburbanization intensified after school desegregation and would continue well into the 1970s. As a consequence, the old urban national parishes, once thriving centers of Catholic life, emptied out. As white Catholics fled the cities, the rate of intermarriage increased, and the old ethnic tensions faded. (Paul Moses tells this story in his book; so does the 2015 movie *Brooklyn*).

European immigration slowed significantly between 1940 and 1970. Nevertheless, new waves of Latino Catholic immigrants arrived during that period, and, like other groups before them, they found that the native-born Catholic population was not always welcoming. Without the possibility of the national parish, these new populations found themselves shoehorned into existing parishes. In New York and Philadelphia, arriving Puerto Ricans often felt that they were treated as second-class citizens within their new churches; and Catholic Cubans coming to South Florida after 1960 also clashed with the Irish Catholic population there. Mexican *braceros* likewise struggled for recognition and representation in churches across Texas and the rest of the Southwest during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.

Nevertheless, with the strong support of prominent prelates (including Archbishop Robert E. Lucey in San Antonio, Archbishop Coleman Carroll in Miami, and Cardinal Francis Spellman in New York) these groups eventually received resources and attention from the hierarchy, if not representation within it. Carroll, for example, was supportive of Cuban migrants, welcomed them to South Florida, and tried to portray them positively to the non-Cuban Catholic community. Eventually Cubans, at least, were able to achieve success, prominence, and a Cuban Catholic shrine—Our Lady of Charity—of their own.

Today, we are living through another great wave of immigration. After 1965, when laws were reformed, the immigrant population began to grow and has not stopped since. Currently the foreign-born population in the United States is around 14 percent—a proportion not seen since the 1920s. Many of these new immigrants—from Latin America, Asia (especially Vietnam and the Philippines), and Africa—are Catholic. According to a 2017 survey by the Center for Migration Studies, the foreign born make up about 15.1 million of the 67.7 million Catholics in America. Nevertheless, tensions between native-born Catholics and immigrants—especially Latinos—persist. One respondent to the CMS survey characterized the work of educating the native-born community as "the most challenging part of our job and mission," and reported that "sadly enough some of our priests are not comfortable supporting our immigrant population."

According to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, about 14.1 million of these Catholic immigrants are from Latin America (another 16.4 million Latino Catholics are native-born). As the largest single immigrant group, Latinos are a particularly common target for discrimination within Catholic parishes, reports University of Notre Dame sociologist Timothy Matovina. These tensions often surface as different groups try to share parish spaces, and it is not uncommon for "established" parishioners to resist Latino efforts to schedule Spanish masses, or to express the opinion that "our ancestors built this church" or "we were here first." Many Catholics of European origin—forgetting, perhaps, their own ancestors' experiences—"presume that newcomers who do not adopt U.S. customs and speak English in public are ungrateful or even not qualified to remain in the United States." According to Matovina, one parishioner in Tulsa became so angry about hearing services in Spanish that he "offered to 'drive a bus' to evict undocumented immigrants from the country."

This last comment encapsulates the views of many native-born Catholics: that this new generation of Catholic immigrants, particularly Latinos, are fundamentally different from previous generations of Catholic immigrants because they are undocumented. And it is true that the number of undocumented immigrants—the majority of whom come from Latin America, particularly Mexico—has risen dramatically since the 1970s. Undoubtedly, undocumented immigration presents significant challenges for governments, law enforcement officials, and immigrants themselves, which is why the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has continuously promoted just and humane immigration reform through their Migration Policy Office.

Yet undocumented immigration is not actually a new problem. The great wave of 1840–1920 immigration, which brought so many Catholics to the United States, was largely "undocumented" as well; immigrants were not required to have visas until 1924, and the majority, according to the American Immigration Council, arrived without any paperwork at all. Although there were laws barring certain categories of immigrants from entering the country, many of these excluded groups found that it was quite easy to enter without inspection, and frequently did so. (Until the turn of the last century, there were almost no officials at the U.S.-Mexico border, and it was easy to walk across that frontier.) After a series of restrictive new immigration laws was enacted in the 1920s, many of these undocumented immigrants were granted legal status through amnesty. Thus, the differences between the old and new immigrants may be less stark than they appear.

Over the coming years, it will be imperative to resolve these tensions among the laity. After all, immigration is the future of the church: Hispanics and Latinos constitute about 50 percent of all Catholics under the age of twenty-nine. Yet, as Timothy Matovina has pointed out, Latino Catholics, like the Italians and Poles a century ago, face a lack of representation in the U.S. Catholic clergy and hierarchy. Furthermore, recent studies by the Pew Research Center indicate that despite the fact that the church is becoming more Latino, Latinos are leaving the church in alarming numbers.

Yet there are also bright spots. According to the CARA survey mentioned above, the most active Catholics (in terms of church attendance and participation) are also the most enthusiastic about the ethnic mix that has resulted from the latest wave of immigration. And while the process of welcoming new Catholic immigrants to established parishes can be painful (the 2009 documentary *Scenes From a Parish* captures some of that pain), Catholics across the country are not fighting over neighborhoods and territory in the same way they did at the turn of the last century.

In the course of researching this article, I asked Fr. Tom Gaunt, the head of CARA, to compare the two eras. He was relatively sanguine. "There are a lot of headaches and challenges, but no huge conflicts," he said. "There's no breakaway or schism" like that of the Polish National Catholic Church. Instead, Catholics are responding to the challenge and bridging ethnic divides. Many parishes in urban areas with large immigrant populations—such as St. Camillus Church in Silver Spring, Maryland, where Haitians, Latinos, white Catholics, and others worship together—celebrate multiculturalism and navigate the new church landscape with aplomb.

Indeed, it is possible that, over time, the new immigrants of today will follow the same patterns as the Irish, Poles, and Italians: intermarrying with other Catholics, assimilating and adapting to life in the United States, while continuing to incorporate their own religious practices into the rich fabric of American Catholic life.

It remains troubling, however, that Latinos and other recent Catholic immigrants continue to face discrimination and rejection from some Catholics, including those who—like that student in my class—are the descendants of earlier Catholic immigrants. There is still much work to be done, and Catholic immigration advocates from the hierarchy on down will have to grapple with the long and cyclical legacy of nativism within the American Catholic laity. ■

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Taking the Measure of #MeToo

Two Views

Gary Gutting & Sarah Ruden

Gary Gutting

Harvey Weinstein is a moral monster. Listen to Lucia Evans, a college student who wanted to be an actress and met with Weinstein to discuss her career: "He forced me to perform oral sex on him.... I said, over and over, 'I don't want to do this, stop, don't.'... I tried to get away, but maybe I didn't try hard enough.... [Afterwards] it was always my fault for not stopping him.... I had an eating problem for years. I was disgusted with myself. It's funny, all these unrelated things I did to hurt myself because of this one thing.... I ruined several really good relationships because of this. My schoolwork definitely suffered, and my roommates told me to go to a therapist because they thought I was going to kill myself."

The *New Yorker* article in which these words appear provides similar accounts from twelve other women. It's hard see how anyone with a spark of moral awareness could read them and fail to understand and share the #MeToo movement's intense outrage against Weinstein and so many other men like him.

But we may well miss the true significance of the movement if we don't reflect on the ethical basis of the outrage. A few more high-profile scapegoats, more executive positions and Academy awards for women, follow-up articles about Hollywood's moral transformation, and the outrage will fizzle out. We need to use this moment of intense concern about sexual immorality to understand just what is so wrong about the behavior we decry.

Our outrage may seem anomalous, particularly in the Hollywood context, because the entertainment industry—along with advertising, the self-help industry, and "enlightened" intellectuals—is a primary source of the widely accepted idea that sex should be liberated from the seriousness of moral strictures and recognized as just another way that modern people can enjoy themselves. A cynic might suggest that there's something odd about a woman complaining about being hit on when seeking a role as Bikini Girl #3 in the next teenage sexploitation movie.

I'm not that cynic, but I do think it's worth reflecting on the tension between moral outrage over sexual harassment and the ethics of liberated sexuality. The core of the problem is that this ethics endorses the idea that sex should typically be just another way of having fun. (On this, see my earlier *Commonweal* piece, "Sex Is Not 'Fun,'" September 23, 2016.) Of course, the liberation ethic allows that sex can also be an expression of deep human commitment. Casual sexual intimacy can be an early stage of an interaction that may (but need not and often will not) lead to love and genuine commitment. But the liberation ethic sees no problem with sex that begins and ends as just fun. It raises an objection only if the desired partner turns out not to be willing. The ethics of sexual liberation is based entirely on consent.

The problem is that mere lack of consent is typically no basis for moral outrage. We are irritated, but not outraged, by friends who insist on boring us with endless complaints. Nor do we go ballistic over employers who demand respectful agreement with their absurd pontifications and subject us to the harassment of unreasonable work rules. In such cases, we accept coercion as merely a venial offence. Why treat sexual intrusions differently? Many of us decidedly do not consent to those who force us to listen to their loud music or shove us aside to break into a line, but there are no social movements shaming and shunning people who turn up the volume or elbow their way in. There must be something beyond mere lack of consent that warrants our outrage at sexual harassment, something that explains why sexual offenses are much more serious than most other social intrusions. But for liberation ethics there is no moral boundary except a partner's lack of consent.

Traditional sexual morality, for all its drawbacks, does offer a plausible reason for moral outrage against sexual harassment. Sex can readily lead to pregnancy and so to a child who needs the care of parents—parents who love one another and share that love with their child. From this viewpoint, sex is inappropriate if it isn't based on the permanent loving commitment of marriage. Casual sex, sex-just-for-fun, is seriously immoral because it risks bringing into the world a child who requires

#MeToo Women's March in Hollywood on November 12, 2017

MEDIAPUNCH INC / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

an emotional and moral bond that the parents don't have. A fortiori, sexual harassment—a boorish grab for casual sex—is seriously immoral.

Effective birth control and feminism severely challenged the traditional view. The first reduced the risk of pregnancy, and the second made abortion and single motherhood acceptable options. The door to sex-just-for-fun was opened, and, despite some significant obstacles—failures of birth control, the physical and emotional traumas of abortion, the difficulties of supporting and raising a child—many seem to have found sex-just-for-fun an acceptable, even desirable, part of life. So unless we go back to a traditional morality that many see as oppressive and sexist, we may seem unable to justify our outrage at sexual harassment.

But there is no need to accept traditional sexual morality wholesale. All we really need is its respect for women in view of their role in bearing and raising children. We can separate this respect from a male hegemony confining women to their maternal function. We can acknowledge the right of women to follow life plans that exclude motherhood, while recognizing that many women will at some point want to have children. The fact will remain that the risks and demands of pregnancy primarily fall on women, who will also most often assume a primary role in childcare. As a result, women may well have an interest in risking pregnancy only when they are assured of a permanent loving commitment from the man who may father their children. Given this, men have a serious moral obligation to respect a woman's right to reject their advances. This makes sexual relations more serious than many other sorts of social interactions and justifies our exceptional outrage at sexual harassment.

We may still be uneasy with this justification because it seems to return to an anti-feminist patronizing of women as weaker vessels. But in fact we can develop the justification in terms of the classic distinction between two aspects of feminism. The struggle for women's liberation has always had to balance the concerns of *equality feminism* and those of *difference feminism*. The first focuses on equal treatment of women; the second on fundamental differences between men and women. The two viewpoints need not be inconsistent, but one or the other will be more relevant in various situations. When we seek to formulate the moral basis for the intolerability of sexual harassment, we must look to difference feminism, recognizing not just the ethical standing that women have as human beings but also the values of personal commitment that are distinctively at stake for them in sexual encounters. This is the deeper truth of the current demand that we "listen to the women." It's not that women are always right when they report sexual misbehavior. Rather, the values of committed love that support a strong condemnation of sexual harassment derive from the special status of women as potential mothers. In this way, our case derives from a firm commitment to (difference) feminism.

What this case for moral outrage does undermine is the liberated ethics of sex-just-for-fun. A sexual ethics that requires consent but not commitment cannot see boorish sexual behavior as serious enough to merit outrage. It can ridicule and scorn a Harvey Weinstein, but it has no basis for denouncing him as a moral monster.

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Sarah Ruden

Lately I've been trying to make deeper and more precise sense of the #MeToo movement within the context of human rights. Every kind of human-rights provision, from security in the home to press freedom, has to meet a high standard. For those of us who are Jews and Christians, it has to reflect the biblical truth that the human person is precious, and that our treatment of each other needs to be our best imitation of God's enduring and ineffable love for us.

Even in fully secularized legal systems, this ideal is enshrined in a logic that treats punishment as a last resort. We're always supposed to ask whether it's necessary. Is it a deterrent? Does it protect? No American court (I hope) would ever entertain a request for vengeance. Nor would any court abet efforts at "empowerment," as one class of persons makes a bid for control of an industry or institution on the grounds that they would run it better. (Affirmative action has merely aimed at inclusion of groups excluded before.)

One thing that worries me about the #MeToo movement is that, despite its welcome and long-overdue efforts to vindicate the taregets of sexual misconduct and protect women from being preyed on by their bosses and colleagues in the future, the cause has some features of a purge, short-circuiting due process and seeking not only redress but sometimes also revenge. Ordinary norms of justice are suspended or just forgotten in the flood of long-suppressed indignation.

A purge thrives on emotional appeals, with language that serves a one-way dynamism. Words like "assault," "misconduct," "abuser," "harassment," "predator," "victim," "survivor" cover a range of behaviors from rape and child molestation to harassment and quid-pro-quo sexual favors, all the way over to what would have looked to many people, a few months ago, like horseplay. "Whom do you believe?" "Victim shamers!" "If you condone it, you're as bad as they are." I'm a woman, but it's still scary. What happens to me if I admit how complicated I find the issue of sexual behavior in the workplace? I have #MeToo stories, but the lessons I've drawn from them aren't exactly the same as the lessons I'm now told I should have drawn.

I spent the years between 1994 and 2005 living in Cape Town, South Africa. There I was forced to face something that's almost never acknowledged in the United States, with our relatively happy developments in human rights, at least in the last several generations. What I had to face is that, with a few stunningly inspiring exceptions, the oppressed want more than equality and strict justice. When an oppressed group is finally "empowered" and has chances to mistreat others the way they themselves were mistreated, the default impulse is to get their own back with usurious interest. Religious institutions preach that the impulse to deliver comeuppance and take plunder, while universal (we're not a nice species by nature), should not be acted on, because we're meant for something better. But that principle of forbearance, which has been embodied even in secular law, must compete against another principle. Call it the revolutionary principle: some groups are morally better than others—they actually got that way through having been mistreated—so what they are entitled to is whatever they wish to have.

I look on, mesmerized, as the comeuppance is delivered and the plunder taken. News is booming during the national panic inspired by Trump; harassment denunciations can clear out renowned anchors who, a little while ago, seemed to be an eternal blockage to youthful ambition. Bill O'Reilly is gone, along with Matt Lauer and Charlie Rose. Print journalism has also been affected. All the way down at the obscure level of freelance reviews and essays, I feel a little slackness in the ordinarily tight competition for good assignments, a loosening as five or six tiers above me start to move upward.

Sometimes the plans for a general clearance are stated unabashedly, into microphones. The fresh-faced congressman Seth Moulton, in calling on Nancy Pelosi to resign for her alleged tolerance of harassment over the years, has openly cited the need for the oldsters to move out of the way for the sake of younger House leadership. But why not? The most senior member of the House, the civil-rights hero John Conyers, was the first pushed out of Congress, for sexual harassment claims settled irregularly years ago.

One problem with the #MeToo movement is the illusion that nothing valuable will have been lost when all those accused of sexual misconduct—and all their enablers—have been cleared out. We seem to feel a special satisfaction if to "Good riddance!" we can add, "He was always overrated anyway." The worst policy decision in post-apartheid South Africa, with its general program of rebuilding through reconciliation, was the purge of the admittedly iniquitous public-school system. The wronged and excluded did get the jobs that were freed up, but in vast stretches of the country now, no teacher knows what she is doing. It won't be that bad here, of course. We have immense reserves of professional expertise in this country. In journalism and entertainment, there is a surfeit of talent.

Still, we're fooling ourselves if we believe that the skill and experience of all those accused of sexual assault won't be missed; to varying extents, that skill and that expertise are societal goods, and they are now being placed out of society's reach, often without any of the official processes by which the public usually sanctions such decisions. But if we're looking at what benefits or hurts large groups, it's important to distinguish societal goods from corporate profits, a plain and powerful motivator of the #MeToo movement. If a business, especially a media company, does not immediately condemn and punish an alleged perpetrator, it can lose money in a frenzy of public outrage.

Ancient Greek and Roman law is basically commercial; the great edifice of Roman law is founded on the idea of property. Modern Western legal rights derive—sometimes pretty tenuously, circuitously, or awkwardly—from ancient rules of ownership and exchange. For example, after slavery is outlawed, when no other person can own your body, you as an individual own it, or sort of.

Some of the awkwardness, but also much enrichment, comes from Judaism and Christianity, which have sought to lift human beings up from the category of property, and to mediate even such fraught and complex issues as sex through consideration of people's inner lives and connectedness in the community. Thought and energy poured into this high-wire act, while pagan regimes concentrated on trade and conquest, threatened to annihilate Jews and Christians both, but then ceded to a new reality: the society that thought deeply about itself as a collection of full human beings turned out to be stronger than societies that didn't.

In the era when the admittedly harsh Old Testament law on sex was finding its final form, the Greek legal system maintained something even harsher: that women's sexual activity was basically property. Even "free" citizen wives and daughters had such a weak standing as persons that it did not necessarily matter, when they had illicit sex, whether they were raped, seduced, or were the aggressors themselves. What was always critical was whether their male relatives were defrauded or robbed of exclusive rights to the female bodies.

This is the burden of the Greek forensic speech that's most informative about this area of the law, "On the Murder of Eratosthenes." The defendant has admittedly killed his wife's sexual partner. What happens now—to the defendant? He claims to be entitled to the killing, because the man he killed intruded on his rights. The argument makes nothing of the wife's responsibility in the mess; whether she was tricked, forced, or willing is not at issue, and there can be no dispute about the consequences for her. She has already been expunged from society, probably confined in her parents' house, a lifelong throwaway. Her agency is not important enough to classify, because in Athenian eyes sex with a man who was not her husband has, quite objectively, changed her from a useful to a useless object, like a broken jar.

But the Jewish law was, characteristically, interested in women's motivations and self-determination. They could be victims or they could be agents. Their value didn't consist wholly in their female bodies and instincts; they were *people*. In the story of David's kingship, Tamara's helpless suffering in the aftermath of an unpunished, publicly humiliating rape was a highly consequential issue in itself. As to the written law, if women tried to resist a rape they were supposed to be held blameless, so that their future would not be forfeit to someone else's crime.

The Apostle Paul is often condemned for harshness concerning sex, but in fact he was deeply committed to leaving room around each person's sexual nature, allowing for self-direction that suited one's knowledge of one's own capacities while respecting the integrity of others. Celibacy was invented as a right, not an imposition. The rule of marital faithfulness was affirmed for both men and women as a provision for peace and order in the community—not as a property right.

Modern U.S. culture is a feckless inheritor of these ideals. It doesn't (as a rule) forcibly exploit women for labor, sex, and breeding, but the media aid an array of commercial-type abuses. Here's one minor example from my own experience. The year I first faced interviews for academic jobs, standard skirt heights had just gone up to mid-thigh, and female PhD candidates at Harvard were directed to a Boston boutique, where we were to drop $800 each for a tight wool and silk "business suit." Heels were also required, despite the risk that women who had never worn them before might sprawl onto the floor of the interview room.

> If women are crime victims, then we need to testify—not from an electronic distance, but in a trusted forum where the accused can confront us in public.

But that was a festival of respect compared with the female dress code for "visible" jobs now. Why should an ambitious girl staring at a TV screen not think, "Yikes! I have to tone my upper arms, maybe save for implants," instead of, "Yikes! I have to study up on the history of the Middle East." What's for sale, and at what price, is simply on display. And what qualifies a woman to be an anchor is obviously not what qualifies a man. This is infamously true at Fox News, but it is also true nearly everywhere else. The commerce in bodies goes back and forth endlessly, fostering a feral, sterile defensiveness and aggression.

A useful thought exercise, to make the discussion less emotional and yet link it to long-accepted human rights, might be to set sex aside from the stories pouring in. If something else were at issue, say, tenant protections or general bodily integrity or the ownership of some irreplaceable object, would the acts be felonies or misdemeanors? Criminal or civil matters, or not actionable at all?

This is naturally a wobbly argumentative structure; what makes the problem so urgent and yet so difficult is the particularly intimate nature of sex, and at the same time its special power to violate and damage. But maybe just the effort to get beyond the stilted, passionate language now prevailing will have some benefit.

Roy Moore allegedly shoved one girl out of his car and left her lying bruised on the pavement, because she resisted him; subtract anything erotic in the encounter, and it would still be assault. Harvey Weinstein apparently committed conspiracy and obstruction of justice when he invoked a powerful network to keep his victims silent and without redress. His cornering of women in the first place appears conspiratorial, a well-tended pipeline of young actresses to be left alone with a menacing sexual thug. He did deals to get at bodies he particularly wanted and keep them under his control, almost like a human trafficker.

What is classic sexual harassment but a form of extortion? Make me happy or lose your job, or get a dangerous or dead-end assignment, or forget about the promotion you've earned. If a job and all its normal rewards and opportunities is something you're entitled to, you shouldn't have to buy it with something else you're entitled to—your physical autonomy—any more than the restaurant owner should have to hand over part of his takings to the mob to keep his premises intact.

All this suggests something that may startle anyone wondering what reforms could be sweeping enough to make women feel safe and comfortable in the workplace. We already have a robust array of felony charges to bring against people who violate the sanctity of the person, and that is how we ought to understand many of the sexual offenses that have come to light. Rigorously applying standards we're already used to might take care of many of the problems. For the police to caution a boss might work in many cases.

The power of bosses is indeed distorting and daunting, particularly in a society with a widening economic divide and a flimsy and sagging safety net. But something else needs saying here. The situation is made worse not just by real intimidation, real fear, and rational self-preservation. If you give someone something to which he's not entitled, to secure something to which *you're* not entitled, and which might fairly go to someone else, that's called bribery, and the giver and the receiver are both (though not necessarily equally) guilty. But some of the #MeToo denunciations are in essence complaints by disappointed bribe-givers. The *New York Times* of December 7 reports on one boss-dooming scandal:

> One of the women who complained to the *Paris Review* lawyers, a writer whose work Mr. Stein published in the review, told the *Times* he had initiated a sexual relationship with her a few years ago, and had sex with her in the magazine's office, while he was her editor. While she said that the relationship with the editor was consensual, she said that it had ended badly, and afterward, when the magazine rejected three submissions she made, she thought the outcome was tied to the souring of their romance.

If there's a purge dynamic in the #MeToo movement, that dynamic will inevitably weaken when the "conversation" threatens to becomes an infinite regress of unenforceable entitlements. I have submitted poems to the *Paris Review* but never had one accepted. Was that because I didn't have sex with the editor? Am I entitled to justice, and if so, how exactly do I pursue it? And if I can pursue it, what about the girl who might have missed the part of Cordelia in *King Lear* forty years ago in the Black Swamp Players in Ohio, because I was the one who flirted with the director and let him give me a lift from the theater to my family's house on his motorcycle once?

If women are crime victims, then we need to testify—not from an electronic distance, but in a trusted forum where the accused can confront us in public. The plea-bargain imperative that prevails now is no good: it urges horse-trading and equivocation in important cases, and encourages trivial complaints because it can "resolve" them so easily. Sealed civil settlements are also out of control, and very destructive; in harassment cases settled with non-disclosure agreements, one woman typically rents to a man the chance to torment others.

And in criminal matters, traditional statutes of limitation exist for good reasons besides preventing old cases from swamping the courts. Evidence naturally weakens and warps over time; the credibility of due process is at stake. Finally, women will face a terrible backlash if they insist on a standard of "Women don't lie!" and try to place themselves above the law and not on a par with men.

Women need the courtroom to vindicate a new area of rights. We are, after all, major beneficiaries of the purely transactional society's demise; we're no longer objects over which people stab each other, or for whose wrongful loss of value they merely have to fork over. Our value *can't* be diminished, because, like all human value, it's spiritual rather than just material. But neither can this value be vindicated except through the kind of courage that states, "I will do what is necessary, within the law, to see that I am the last woman you terrorize." It's going to cost us—in time and effort, in embarrassment, in fear, sometimes in a lasting loss of well-being. But if it doesn't merit sacrifice, we can't insist that it's important.

All this doesn't mean we should shrug off the misconduct that falls short of crimes. In fact, the same basic standard—react, cry out, defend yourself, assert your dignity and the dignity of other women at the same time—is useful in dealing informally but effectively with whatever isn't worth making a legal case of. My Quaker friend Sadie, even in the culture of forty years ago, wasn't intimidated, didn't blame herself, didn't calculate based on her materially weaker position and relative lack of authority, but simply said out loud during a dinner party, "What is your hand doing on my knee?" We have to stick up for ourselves forthrightly, whatever the consequences. ■

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After Genocide

Searching for Reconciliation in the Balkans

Thomas Albert Howard

"Only out of the past can you make the future," says a character in Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*. And yet some pasts are dreadfully dark and tangled, and how one wrings a future from them is anyone's guess.

This thought gnawed at me during a recent trip to Bosnia-Herzegovina and other Balkan states. I had gone in search of interviewees for a research project on interreligious dialogue. I wanted to talk with people removed from the tired multiculturalism of the West, people who had attempted dialogue in truly challenging circumstances; I wanted to make sense, theologically, of their experience amid the darkness of their recent past.

Interviewees, I found. Theological sense remains elusive.

Geography does not explain everything in history, only a lot of things. Students of Europe know that the region of the Balkans once had the misfortune to find itself at the crossroads of three world powers: the Ottoman Empire; the Austro-Hungarian Empire; and Russia's Tsardom, whose power was projected through its client nation, Serbia. Although the religious dimension in these three geopolitical powers is often elided, the fact is that all three derived legitimacy through spiritually sanctioned narratives about their imperial identity and historical mission. Austria-Hungary remembered itself as the legatee of the Holy Roman Empire, which traced its roots to Charlemagne, protector of Western Christendom. Moscow saw itself as the "third Rome" after the fall of Constantinople in 1453—and as such, the guardian of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. And the Ottoman Empire, of course, was the last great Islamic caliphate, the scourge of Europe in the days of Suleiman the Magnificent (1494–1566) and the self-proclaimed protector of the worldwide Muslim community.

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In other words, it is not just imperial interests in the abstract that have clashed in the Balkans, but rival narratives about the proper constitution of religious truth and its implications for political order. Over the centuries, one or another power frequently managed to impose a Hobbesian order in the region, or achieve a balance of power with the others which allowed for peaceful coexistence. The not-infrequent periods of exceptions to this rule condemned the region to cycles of revenge and violence involving the three main regional faiths, ethnically manifested in Serbs, Croats, Turks, Bulgarians, Greeks, Albanians, and more. Not without reason do most Western languages possess some variant of the verb "balkanize."

The Nobel Prize–winning writer Ivo Andrić vividly captures these violent cycles in his 1945 novel, *The Bridge on the Drina*. A favorite Balkan method of suppressing dissent, employed by Turks and then others, was public impalement. Andrić offers what is surely the most graphic depiction in world literature of this horrific cruelty, in which the executioner pushed a sharpened wooden pole up the anus of the victim until it emerged in the shoulder area. Sadly, impalement is an apt symbol of the region's past, bespeaking the violence that all too often prevailed between times of fragile peace among rival ethnic groups. (The literary character we know as Count Dracula, it might be remembered, is derived from the medieval Balkan lord, Vlad the Impaler.)

Nationalism in the nineteenth century presaged the end of the three Empires, all of which perished due to the furies of World War I, which of course began with an assassination in Sarajevo. What had been dubbed "the Eastern Question" had long baffled Western statesmen, and the war's end gave them a chance to meddle in the Balkans directly. When the dust had settled, a multiethnic concoction known as "Yugoslavia" appeared, existing first as a constitutional monarchy under the Serbian royal house and then, after World War II, as a federal socialist republic. A political curiosity during the Cold War, standing aloof from Moscow while opposing Washington, the "nonaligned" Yugoslav state survived largely due to the ability of strongman Marshal Tito to suppress conflict under his cult of personality (still on display today at the mausoleum museum

Woman praying over coffins in the village of Potočari in Bosnia and Herzegovina. More than a hundred victims of the Srebrenica massacre were buried in Potočari during ceremonies marking its twenty-first anniversary. During the war in Bosnia from 1992 to 1995, eight thousand Muslim men and boys were executed by Bosnian Serb forces over five days and their bodies were dumped in pits, then dug up and scattered in smaller pits.

dedicated to him in Belgrade). When Sarajevo hosted the winter Olympics in 1984, the world beheld a peaceful country, destined to last; one commentator in fact noted the "powerful irony" of World War I having started in such a benign city.

The Yugoslav wars of the 1990s shattered this delusion. Begun before 9/11 consigned the Balkans to peripheral interest in Western consciousness, these wars dominated the news of the day, bringing such names as Franjo Tudjman, Alija Izetbegović, Slobodan Milošević, Radovan Karadžić, and Ratko Mladić to the fore. A graduate student in history at the time, I struggled to understand the complexity of it all—and perhaps at some level dismissed it as the faraway feuds of those who hadn't yet gotten wind that history, as Francis Fukuyama proclaimed, had already ended.

But history never ends; and one by one, amid bloodshed, battles, and "ethnic cleansing"—the conflicts' addition to our vocabulary—the six socialist republics of Yugoslavia went their own way, leaving behind the present-day countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina (often shortened to just Bosnia), Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Serbia, as well as two autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo—the latter eventually becoming its own state after wresting itself from Serbia's grasp, with help from NATO muscle. In total, the conflicts of the 1990s produced an estimated 140,000 dead and some 4 million refugees.

The wounds and memories from this period, I learned, have not healed, but rather continue to fester anew. And nowhere is this truer than in Bosnia, where I spent the lion's share of my time. The conflict that engulfed Bosnia from 1992 to 1995 proved especially devastating, due to the intricacy of an ethnic-religious makeup that had Orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croats, and Muslim Bosnians (or Bosniaks) living side by side. When Croats and Bosniaks sought independence in 1992, Serbs dissented. Goaded by the Serbian strongman Milošević, the Bosnia-Serb faction, led by the ultranationalist Karadžić, attempted instead to carve out a purely Serbian part of Bosnia to link up with a "Greater Serbia." Among many less-known atrocities, the effort produced the 1,425-day Siege of Sarajevo, the longest siege of a capital in the history of modern warfare, and the Srebrenica genocide of more than eight thousand Muslim Bosnians, mainly men and boys. The Bosnian War came to a halt with the Dayton Agreement on December 14, 1995—a peace only grudgingly accepted then and widely held as "unjust" today, as I was repeatedly told.

Driving to Srebrenica from Belgrade on a rainy, overcast day, I arrived at the Bosnian border and passed through security—the Serbian border guard who examined my passport asked me jokingly if I wasn't really with the CIA. The rain let up once I arrived in Srebrenica to visit the Genocide

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Memorial, which opened in 2003. Apart from a handful of Muslims praying, I was alone as I walked around the memorial, a sea of white grave markers, all bearing the same date: 1995. Even more disquieting is the area around Srebrenica. Signs of past ethnic cleansing remain everywhere in the form of destroyed homes, overrun with weeds, that once belonged to Muslim families. When Srebrenica fell, Ratko Mladić announced that the city belonged to the Serb people, and that "the time has finally come for revenge against Turks [Bosnian Muslims] who live in this area." This call served as prelude to a systematic massacre that took place as a Dutch UN battalion infamously stood idly by.

Srebrenica was not an isolated event, but merely the one best known in the West. "Go to the Prijedor region; it was even worse there," I was told by Bozana Katava, a Croat member of the Interreligious Council of Bosnia-Herzegovina. I took her advice, driving from Sarajevo through Banja Luka, capital of the Republika Srpska, a semi-autonomous Serbian political entity created by the Dayton Agreement. Serbian nationalism is visible there in Serbian flags and the ubiquitous Cyrillic (Croats and Bosniaks use the Latin alphabet). You haven't lived until you've come to a four-way roundabout with all signs in Cyrillic.

In Srebrenica, the violence of ethnic cleansing was carried out mainly by outsiders; in Prijedor, neighbor slew neighbor. In a haze of morbid stupefaction, I drove around godforsaken towns—Tomašica, Omarska, Trnopolje, Keraterm—where killings had taken place. As in Srebrenica, one observes the ruined former homes of Bosnian Muslims and Croats, interspersed among intact Serbian homes. Beautiful Serb children play happily in the streets. What do their parents tell them happened to the neighbors?

Serb forces operated several concentration camps in the region, and a number of mass graves have been discovered, the largest near Tomašica. Hidden for nearly twenty years behind Serb silence, the site witnessed exhumations beginning in 2013; hundreds of missing people have been identified via sophisticated DNA-matching techniques. This has provided consolation to families bereft of a grave to visit or an account of a loved one's fate. But here, as elsewhere, a macabre truth has come to light. In gruesome efforts to hide evidence, Serb forces often hacked bodies into pieces and dumped the parts in different graves. Exhumations have caused a cruel dilemma for families: how much of a loved one needs to be recovered before a proper burial can take place? Across Bosnia, hundreds of mass graves have been discovered, and thousands of bodies identified; still, of the roughly thirty thousand missing after the war, around twelve thousand remain missing, according to the International Commission for Missing Persons.

If only one could blame it all on the Serbs. But the reality is not so simple. While they did commit more than 80 percent of wartime atrocities, according to Sarajevo's Research and Documentation Center, Croats and Bosniaks committed their own misdeeds, including ethnic cleansing, not only against Serbs but against one another. The most sensational episode of the latter involved the city of Mostar. In November 1993, Croat forces tried to wrest it from Muslim hands, destroying the city's famous old bridge, an Ottoman-era architectural masterpiece. Today, the city, like many others, remains bitterly divided. All sides, moreover, used sexual violence as a weapon. Estimates vary, but the European Union has calculated that approximately twenty thousand women and girls were raped during the war. Bosnian Serbs even set up several so-called "rape camps," bringing soldiers in by the busload. Gang rape and public rapes in front of villagers and neighbors were not uncommon. Fearful rumors of such actions assisted the ethnic-cleansing process, prodding whole families to evacuate areas even before enemies arrived.

In addition to lost lives and rape victims, places of worship, prominent symbols of ethno-religious identity, were widely targeted in the 1990s. Over fifteen hundred mosques, Qur'an schools, and dervish lodges were destroyed or damaged during the war. In retaliation, around 125 Orthodox churches and monasteries were laid waste, with comparable numbers of Croat Catholic churches. With the assistance of outside funding, many have been rebuilt. But many still show scars of the damage—and some remain subject to acts of vandalism today.

Given the violence of the 1990s and the longer history of recriminations, is there hope for Bosnia's future? I posed this question to interviewees, eliciting a range of responses. Despair is not an option for a Catholic, I was told by Monsignor Mato Zovkic, retired vicar general of the Archdiocese of Sarajevo, whom I met at his apartment in Sarajevo. "Hope is a theological virtue," he asserted. And yet he recognized that prospects for the future do not appear very promising. Zovkic taught at the Sarajevo Theological Seminary for decades, serving also as the archbishop's point person for ecumenical and interreligious activities. In his mind, blame for recent woes goes back to the founding of the Yugoslav state after World War I and to efforts at that time to suppress the question of ethnic identities. After Tito's passing, Zovkic told me, the furies of ethnic resentment returned as if strengthened by a long, invigorating sleep.

He had little positive to say about the Dayton Agreement, calling it an "unjust peace" for the way its border configurations ratified ethnic cleansing. He particularly lamented the war's pernicious influence on Islam in Bosnia, long known for a peaceful, live-and-let-live mentality due in part to Sufi influence. Recent conflicts have heightened outside financial involvement in the country, particularly from the Gulf States, and with the new money has come Salafist influence. Today, young Muslims in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Albania make up the highest per capita number of jihadist recruits from any area in the world.

Zovkic praised speeches made by Pope John Paul II during visits to Bosnia in 1997 and 2003—visits Zovkic helped

organize—for striking the right theological tone with respect to the war and its aftermath. Identifying Bosnia's problem as "minds embittered by past violence," the Polish pope lamented in 1997 "an inheritance of devastated families, widows and orphans, the crippled and afflicted." More than words, he instructed his audience, "gestures of charity" would "contribute to sincere dialogue with all your fellow citizens and...[help all] take the path of moral and civil reconstruction."

The Islamic Faculty of Theology at the University of Sarajevo is a ten-minute walk from Zovkic's retirement home, and owes its existence to a concession made to religious education by the Tito regime in 1977. Ascending its steep staircase, I found students in prayer, their shoes in neat rows outside the mosque, located within the faculty's light-filled central courtyard. Here I shared coffee with Ahmet Alibašić, a leading Muslim scholar, activist, and participant in interreligious activities. Speaking to me in rapid, imperfect English, he blamed the conflicts of the 1990s on the political classes of the break-away countries and on the influence of outsiders. Alibašić explained that the more distant past had nurtured coexistence; during the late Ottoman Empire, and after Austria-Hungary acquired Bosnia-Herzegovina at the Congress of Berlin (1878), "there was much intermingling of the religions, and the street markets were always mixed." The same was true under Tito, he continued, recounting youthful memories of buying apples from a friendly Serbian family.

But nowadays "fear has big eyes," he told me, sipping his coffee thoughtfully. "In times of crisis people are given to believing the worst possible things about those unlike themselves, especially if they have been enemies in the past." Nationalist politicians preyed on this weakness after Tito's death, Alibašić explained, and in the early 1990s "Yugoslavia simply fell apart." A harbinger of things to come took place on June 28, 1989, when Slobodan Milošević, speaking at a day-long event to mark the six-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo—a battle Serbian forces lost to the Ottoman Empire, paving the way for centuries-long Turkish advance into the Balkans—warned of possible "armed battles" in the future to promote Serbia's national development.

While many fears were in play in the early 1990s, Alibašić said, the most harm was done by a reemergence of Serbian memories of ill-treatment at the hands of the Croatian ultra-nationalist Ustaše regime during World War II. In 1941, Croatia annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina to form the Independent State of Croatia, a Nazi puppet. Roughly three hundred thousand citizens of Stalin-allied Serbia—along with Jews, gypsies, and Croat political dissidents—were executed during the war, many at the Jasenovac concentration camp, dubbed the "Auschwitz of the Balkans." Serbian politicians like Milošević and Karadžić brought these memories roaring back to life, demagogically convincing Bosnian Serbs that "bloodthirsty Croats" would soon be at their throats again.

I asked Alibašić how history was taught in Bosnia. He shook his head. "It's not," he said, "especially in the recent era. What people know about this past comes from their family or members or their own ethnic group, and it is often full of fear and hatemongering." But even older periods of history divide people. Not surprisingly, Bosnian Muslims tend to have a favorable view of the Ottoman Empire, while Christian ethnicities do not; the fraught history of Janissaries—Christian boys taken forcibly from their families and turned into fanatically loyal protectors of the Sultan—took place hundreds of years ago, but it remains a perennially sore subject.

Despite everything, Alibašić holds a sanguine view of the Islamic Community in Bosnia. Due to the peaceful influence of Sufi brotherhoods (*tariqas*), and bolstered by self-reliance since being severed from Istanbul in 1878, Islam in Bosnia has developed an irenic disposition and a nuanced, thoughtful engagement with modernity that other Muslims, he convinced me, could learn from. Echoing a point made by Zovkic, he lamented the recent influence of outside forces. During the conflicts of the early 1990s, Afghani Mujahedeen came to aid their co-religionists in Bosnia, aggressively taking the fight to both Serbs and Croats. What Bosnian Muslims saw as a local conflict born from the wreckage of Yugoslavia, foreign fighters depicted as the onset of a coming epic war between Islam and the West. This message took root, Alibašić said, and a disproportionally high number of Bosnians have fought with ISIS in Syria. He would not go as far as the former Al-Qaeda member Aimen Dean, who has called Bosnia "the cradle of modern jihadism"; still, he said, the influence of radicalized Muslims in Bosnia has been pernicious. Like others with whom I spoke, he frets about Bosnia's future. But he believes in the common-sense capacity of most Muslims ultimately to resist Salafist and Wahhabist influence. "Ordinary believers are very often staunch opponents of salafis," he argued recently at a conference at Cambridge University, "and that might be the really insurmountable obstacle in front of salafism in Bosnia."

It was Alibašić who put me in touch with Bozana Katava, the Croat member of the Interreligious Council of Bosnia-Herzegovina, who ended up sending me to Prijedor. Founded in 1997 with help from the World Conference of Religions for Peace, the council boasts an impressive line-up of founding members, Orthodox, Catholic, Muslim, and Jewish. According to its mission statement, the council "acts as a domestic, non-governmental organization... through which the good will of traditional churches and religious communities is expressed to contribute jointly to the building of civil society." I met Katava at the council's modest headquarters in downtown Sarajevo, across the street from the Catholic cathedral. A pleasant, self-effacing woman in her late thirties, she holds both Bosnian and Croatian citizenship. After she told me a bit about the council's history and makeup, I asked exactly what the group did, and whether she felt it made an impact. Her first glance seemed

distressed; but she quickly composed herself and got down to business, describing with conviction what the council manages to accomplish despite challenging circumstances.

And its work is impressive. Katava and her colleagues monitor attacks on religious sites throughout Bosnia, publishing an annual report and maintaining a website where those attacks can be registered. They network with those sympathetic to their mission, and promote educational and outreach programs, especially to younger generations. Younger theologians and religious leaders of all faiths are crucial for their work, she says; the council hosts conferences to bring them together in cities across Bosnia, often ones that have been flashpoints of violence in the past. Another initiative, setting up open-door days at religious sites, encourages members of different faiths to visit each other's places of worship. What moved me the most, however, were visits that the council sponsors to sites where religious violence or destruction has taken place. In the aftermath of an attack, for example, a Catholic priest might visit a vandalized mosque and pray there, in the presence of local Muslims, for peace, understanding, and reconciliation.

My curiosity piqued by the council's focus on the young, I asked Katava about the older generations, who had been adults during the conflicts of the 1990s. That flicker of flustered dismay returned for a moment. But then she patiently explained that, with limited time and resources, one simply had to focus on what is felt to be most effective; the opinions of older generations often appeared to be fixed—unlikely to be shaped for the better, more likely obstacles to be overcome. She also lamented that several older religious leaders did not endorse her group's work, including, notably, the Catholic bishop of Mostar.

Our conversation concluded with a discussion of history, how it is taught (and might be taught) in schools, and the role that understanding it accurately might play in the reconciliation process. We agreed that Germany since 1945 had done an admirable job of documenting past atrocities and dealing with its past. Finally, I asked Katava what she wished Westerners knew about the circumstances that she and her colleagues faced. She didn't have to think long.

"History is the biggest problem in this country," she said.

Preparing to depart, I found myself attempting to find some light in the darkness. And despite the steep challenges that Katava and kindred spirits face, there *is* some light. Since its inception in 1993, the UN-created International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), seated in the Hague, has sought to bring one hundred sixty-one criminals to justice, sentencing eighty-three. The Tribunal completed its work recently with the conviction of Ratko Mladić, the infamous "butcher of Bosnia." What is more, under the mantra of "transitional justice," NGOs have flocked to the region, or have arisen internally, in an effort to nourish institutions of civil society.

The war and trials have also generated a large, perceptive literature. To cite but one example, the Croatian-American theologian Miroslav Volf has written eloquently about the role of memory in peacemaking in *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World*. Memories are paradoxically both necessary for peace and obstacles to it, Volf argues, contending that aggrieved parties must finally let go of some memories if forgiveness and reconciliation are ever to take place.

This is surely so; but even as I nod in agreement, I cannot get the ruined, abandoned homes in Srebrenica and Prijedor out of my mind. These pictures mix with those of the exhumations at Tomasica and images of faceless persons, the missing, still in graves hidden behind the silence of the guilty. It is not lost on anyone that the number of those actually brought to justice is laughably small in light of the enormity of what took place. Most perpetrators still enjoy warm sunshine and thick Bosnian coffee.

As for that theological sense I set out to find, the best I can muster, I suppose, attempts feebly to fathom both the necessity and the severe limits of justice in this world; it affirms the appropriateness of those psalms in which the psalmist remonstrates with God: "Awake! Why are you sleeping, O Lord? Rouse yourself.... Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?" (Psalm 44).

One must honor, too, the abiding disconsolation of the living set out in Jeremiah 31:15: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more." ■

DARKNESS

Some journeys never promise a return:
You set out late, barefoot, at night,
Through oblique hours
Themselves in flight;

And there are journeys without ways at all:
You pass through wastes of withered heath,
Through arguments
Like a comb's teeth;

Then there are journeys that you cannot take:
You chew raw flesh on both your thumbs,
You tilt your glass
And darkness comes.

—Kevin Hart

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A Life, Not a Grammar

The Limits of Theology

Paul J. Griffiths

Introductions assume the veil of ignorance. When, at a party, I bring an old friend over to you so that I can introduce you, it's because I think you haven't met before and would like you to. If, in a bookstore, I leaf through an introduction to Catholicism (or dressage, or lichens), it's typically because I don't know much about these things, and would like to. Introductions give you something or someone new to think about, talk about, and spend time with. When they work well, they're also a *vade mecum*, a guide you can keep with you to consult as needed, and so deepen and strengthen your new acquaintance.

Usually introductions vouch for what they introduce. The one who makes the introduction ordinarily loves, or at least likes, what she's introducing: she's taken the trouble to get to know it, and she'd like you to do the same. Perhaps she thinks that what she's introducing is good for you to know: it seems to her that it's medicine everyone needs, and so she's an evangelist for it. But sometimes the one who makes an introduction does not like what she's introducing. Ordinary cocktail-party courtesy might require me to introduce my enemy to you, even if I think he might be bad for you to know. Perhaps I've spent my life studying something I dislike (totalitarianism, violence, chicory), and I write an introduction to it. Such an introduction may be a warning as well as an offer: here's what you need to know about this so that you can avoid being damaged by it.

You might think there are introductions that neither vouch nor warn but only lift the veil to show what's there. That would be a mistake. When I introduce you to someone, the introduction inevitably does more than show her to you; it shows her to you as my friend—or acquaintance, or enemy, or colleague, or spouse—and in that way shapes her for your acquaintance. So too, more obviously, in the case of writing an introductory text, whether to calculus or Catholicism. Choices are made that shape the phenomenon. Gibbon's depiction of the Arian controversy is in almost every way different from Newman's, even though each might reasonably be understood as an introduction to that wrinkle in Christianity's history.

Thomas Joseph White's *The Light of Christ: An Introduction to Catholicism* is the work of a lover. It vouches for and advocates what it introduces, and is eager for you to embrace it. White is sure that you need to love what he shows you, and the spirit of a lover breathes through his introduction, even if it's the spirit of a Dominican lover whose loves are, originally and finally, intellectual. What he shows you is a pattern of thought—a way of understanding the cosmos as a whole and in all its particulars. He shows you what the church teaches, and shows it as the truth. He'd like you, the reader, to apprehend it and make it your own.

The Light of Christ
An Introduction to Catholicism
Thomas Joseph White, OP
Catholic University of America Press, $19.95, 328 pp.

How does he do it? By following the example of St. Thomas Aquinas, which is, I suppose, a natural and proper thing for a Dominican to do. Thomas's *Summa theologiae* is an introduction to Catholic Christian discourse about God and the world, intended, Thomas writes, for the formation of beginners (*incipientes*, those making a start: he had in mind Dominican novices) in that way of thinking so that they might then be able to communicate it to others, especially in preaching. The *Summa* begins with a treatment of God, and creation as the going-forth of things from God. Then it depicts the movement of human creatures back to God by way of their acts—this is the bulk of the *Summa*, and it's approximately what we would call moral theology. The work then shows Jesus as our way back to God, and the sacramental economy of the church as the particular means instituted by Jesus for that purpose. And it concludes, or would have concluded had Thomas completed it, with an analysis of the last things, in which the heavens and the earth are rolled up like a scroll and all things assume their final and fixed relation to God.

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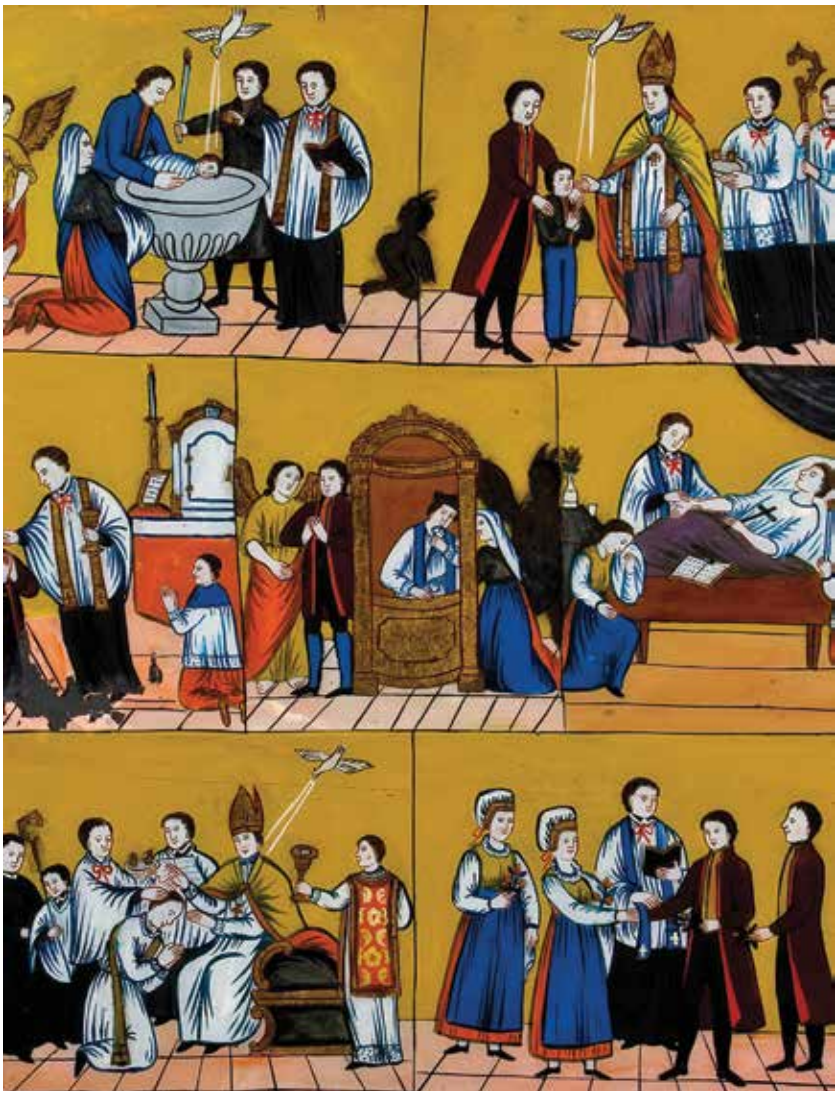

The Seven Sacraments, *nineteenth-century painted glass, Slovene Ethnographic Museum*

The *Summa*'s schema is one of *exitus-reditus*: it shows how all things come from God by way of creation out of nothing, and then return to God by way of salvation or damnation. It also shows, in outline, what happens between the beginning and the end, and what kinds of things there are in the world and how they relate one to another. The *Summa* works remorselessly at the level of the concept. Its central devices are the definition and the distinction, and what it establishes by way of these is the grammar of the faith. It introduces the reader to the lexicon and syntax of church teaching, together with that of some speculative questions on which the church has not yet come to any doctrinal conclusions.

White does the same thing in *Light of Christ*, though in a very different style. After some preliminaries on faith, revelation, and reason, he sets out the central claims of the Christian faith on the following subjects in the following order: God; creation and the human person; incarnation and atonement; the church; the church's social doctrine; and the last things. The schema is essentially the same as Thomas's, and the goal is the same, too. Anyone who reads White's book attentively will learn a grammar, and will take at least the first steps in being able to use it—to think and speak and write as Christians do. White's book is neither as long nor as technical as Thomas's, but they're alike in all these respects. They're alike, too, in lucidity: White writes with consistent and careful transparency, and without either the folksy simplifications of popular theology, or (mostly) the rebarbative technicalities of in-house Thomism. This isn't easy to do, as anyone who's tried it will know. If you want a reliable guide to the scope and shape of Christian claims, you'll find it difficult to do better than this.

But there is a problem of internal coherence in White's book, and it's one that the *Summa* doesn't suffer from. What White introduces isn't exactly what he says he's introducing. He says he's introducing Catholicism, which, as he puts it in a nicely turned couple of sentences at the end of the book, is a form of life: "The grace of Christ crucified is the source of the Church's life, her devotion to the truth and her freedom to love. Therein lies the essence of Catholicism: at the heart of the Church is the life of Christ." On this understanding, the church has, or is, a life, and that life is Christ. To be introduced to the church is to be introduced to, and asked to share in, a form of life—a mode of being in the world. This seems reasonable and accurate. Catholicism is a life to be lived in response to a prevenient gift. The essence of that life (White doesn't say so, but I think he'd agree) is liturgical. It's a complex and beautiful series of offerings-back to God of what God has given in Jesus. This life, the life of Christ into which Catholics enter when they come to participate in the life of the church, has as its goal the liturgization of human life in all its aspects—social, political, artistic, familial, sexual, sartorial, gastronomic, and so on. Catholicism is a form of life that embraces and transfigures all others, absorbing them into itself by inscribing them into its margins. It is the way in which we humans most fully participate in the life of Christ, who himself embraces and transfigures all things.

If that's what Catholicism is (and it is), how does one introduce it to those who don't know it? Not by doing what White does in this book. A form of life isn't the kind of thing that can be introduced by elucidating its grammar. Thomas, I think, knew this. The *Summa*, introductory though it is, had a more specific purpose than White's book, a purpose

for which grammatical training is essential. Thomas wanted to provide Dominicans with a form of understanding appropriate to their vocation of teaching and preaching. You need grammar for that. The novices for whom Thomas writes are already living the church's life, and what they need is to know how to talk about it. White's audience, by contrast, needs to have the veil lifted from the church's distinctive form of life.

If I want to show my friend to you so that you can see what a good friend she is and want to get to know her as only a friend can, I won't be able to do that by explaining her to you. I can, of course, do that. I can elucidate her good qualities, explain what she does in the world, and so on. If I do any or all of that, I'll be doing for friendship what White does for the church; I'll be giving you a grammar of friendship, explicating what it is to be a friend and how it is that those who understand friendship talk about it. But that's not how to get you to become my friend's friend. For that, I need to show you her face, get you to spend some time with her, and hope that in doing these things you'll want to deepen your acquaintance.

Training in grammar is not aimed at drawing people into a form of life; neither, generally, has it the power to draw them. The difference between explaining the principles that give shape to a form of life and living that form of life is easy enough to see if you keep in mind that skilled practitioners typically don't need to understand—much less be able to explain—what they do in order to do it well. On the contrary, being a good explainer often hinders being a skilled practitioner. The eye-hand coordination of a good baseball player doesn't require the capacity to give an account of fast-twitch muscle reflex. Similarly, participating in the life of Christ, which is at the heart of the church, doesn't require the ability to give an account of the theological principles that order such a life.

White's mistake here is characteristic of Thomists—though not, I think, of Thomas. It is to overestimate the significance of cognitive-intellectual skills in human life, both here below and in heaven. This is evident in White's first chapter, where he acknowledges, of course, that humans aren't merely creatures who understand, but also creatures who desire, and that our proper development requires the shaping of both understanding and desire. But the two are hierarchically ordered for him: "The intellect is what is most noble in the human being," he writes, and, "the highest, most vivifying thing we can do is contemplate the truth" (here he's summarizing but also endorsing Aristotle). Genuine love, White claims, requires knowledge (understanding) of what's loved. And we humans are, essentially, those who want to know. Heavenly life is contemplative, and what we contemplate is the truth. And so on.

But this sort of thing conflates what should be kept separate. On the one hand there's know-how: knowing what to do next; how to live well; when to use this word and when to use that; how taut the bowline needs to be just now, with the wind as it is; what to do when faced with the flesh of Christ. On the other there's knowing-*that*: the rarefied and technical capacity to give an account of what it is that one is doing, or might do, or should do. If "intellect" in the claim "the intellect is what's most noble in the human being" means what's deployed in know-how, then the claim is true. But if it means what's deployed in knowing-*that*, then it's false. Even if, as I expect, White would not agree with me, to note the difference between know-how and knowing-that would have been an appropriate corrective to his tendency to over-intellectualize. The church honors the martyrs over the theologians, as is right. That's because they know what to do, whether or not they know what account to give of what they do. Theologians, on the other hand, might be very good at offering such an account, while yet being incapable of worship, much less martyrdom.

The church honors the martyrs over the theologians, as is right. That's because they know what to do, whether or not they know what account to give of what they do. Theologians might be very good at offering such an account, while yet being incapable of worship, much less martyrdom.

Theologizing, explaining the faith's grammar, is an enterprise for the few here below, and will be of no use at all in the end. White is good at it, and does it well in this book. But he mistakes its significance, and so what he introduces isn't Catholicism, but rather the grammar of well-formed talk about it. He appears to show some (uneasy?) awareness of this lack by including a short epilogue on prayer at the end of his book. This is as close as he gets to unveiling what life as a Catholic is like; and even here, his focus is grammatical-conceptual rather than descriptive-analytical.

How to do better? Hagiography (the writing of holiness) is the first answer. The life of Christ at the church's heart is most fully evident in the shape of those lives lived in greatest intimacy with Christ. And that shape can best be shown by literary genres very different from the one White chooses for his introduction. When I introduce Catholic Christianity to undergraduates, I generally use biographies, autobiographies, poetry, and fiction as my main sources. Slow and serious time spent with Gerard Manley Hopkins's "Wreck of the Deutschland," or Athanasius's *Life of Antony*, or Bonaventure's *Life of Francis*, or Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood*, or Georges Bernanos's *Monsieur Ouine*, unveils the Catholic faith more fully and more lovingly than any amount of grammatical explication can.

A second answer is attention to the liturgy, which is to say to what Catholics do when they're doing what's most characteristic of the Catholic form of life. A close description of, for instance, the rite of baptism, using both the text of the rite and analysis of how that text may be performed, shows how it is that someone is incorporated into Christ, made a member of that body. What's said and done by priest, godparents, parents, baptizand, and congregation introduces, with a thickness and texture unavailable otherwise, how Christians are made and what, therefore, they are. The rite is beautiful; even an analysis of it stands a better chance of drawing someone to the faith than doctrinal catechesis does.

There are, it is true, some who are moved by grammar, though perhaps fewer than White thinks. But however many there are, White's book is for them, and it's a first-rate example of its kind. It's also, like its model, the *Summa*, a very good manual for those who need grammatical training. If that's you, you should read it.

Samuel Johnson, with acute self-deprecation, called lexicographers harmless drudges. They do work that needs to be done, but it isn't work that most language-users need to know anything about; lexicographers and grammarians who overestimate and misunderstand the importance of the work they do easily come to think of themselves as legislators and guardians of language, or even as those whose work must be understood before words can be responsibly uttered. That's an absurd view, and there's something of it, *mutatis mutandis*, in White's book and in the work of other Thomists. Modesty is more becoming. An introduction such as the one under review here is the work of an under-laborer in the service of the church, and it would be a better book if it had presented itself as such. The most puzzling (to me) feature of the book is its uncritical overestimate of the importance of theology in the church's life, and, concomitantly, of the importance of the intellect—of knowing-that—in human life. I, like White, am a professional theologian; I, like him, am a Catholic. But I don't recognize in his understanding of these matters what I do or who I am. ■

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RETURN TO ROSEBUD

Ring Thunder Road

Four eagles carve the carcass of a cow.
Hunting is such hard work that scavenging
is a sweet option when you're ravaging
this short grass prairie, virgin to the plough.

Healthy cattle are grazing everywhere
oblivious to their comrade near this road,
its cause of death? Likely an overload
of snow, the North forcing its polar air.

For me hunting is just impassioned sport
but eagles, a matter of death or life.
Talons are scimitars, the beak a knife.
They wheel above us where the gods hold court,

able to spy a cock quailing in grass
where hunted, hunter, rooster and eagle pass.

Chinook

When a Chinook wind blows
down from the Black Hills' knees,
it warms twenty degrees
and melts the prairie snows.

Badlands bask in the sun,
and blue jays' hearts are lifted
where Cedar Butte lay drifted.
I go with dog and gun,
winded but wintry warm,
walking the draws and creeks
a pheasant hunter seeks
on my friend Huber's farm.

Fargo lies deep in snow,
freezing or far below.

White River Crossing

"Rain on the just and the unjust."
—Matthew 5:45

On the south-facing slopes
so infernally dry
the yuccas spear the sky,
and all the righteous hopes
of ranchers are in vain
for a grass-growing rain.

To the north-facing slopes
cling juniper and spruce.
Huge as a six-month moose
a twelve-point mule deer lopes
through the riparian wood,
and God sees it is good,

two worlds four miles apart
where I just left my heart.

—Timothy Murphy

Timothy Murphy's books include Mortal Stakes *and* Faint Thunder and Hunter's Log, *both from the Dakota Institute Press.*

Luke Timothy Johnson

No Compromises

The New Testament
A Translation
David Bentley Hart
Yale University Press, $35, 616 pp.

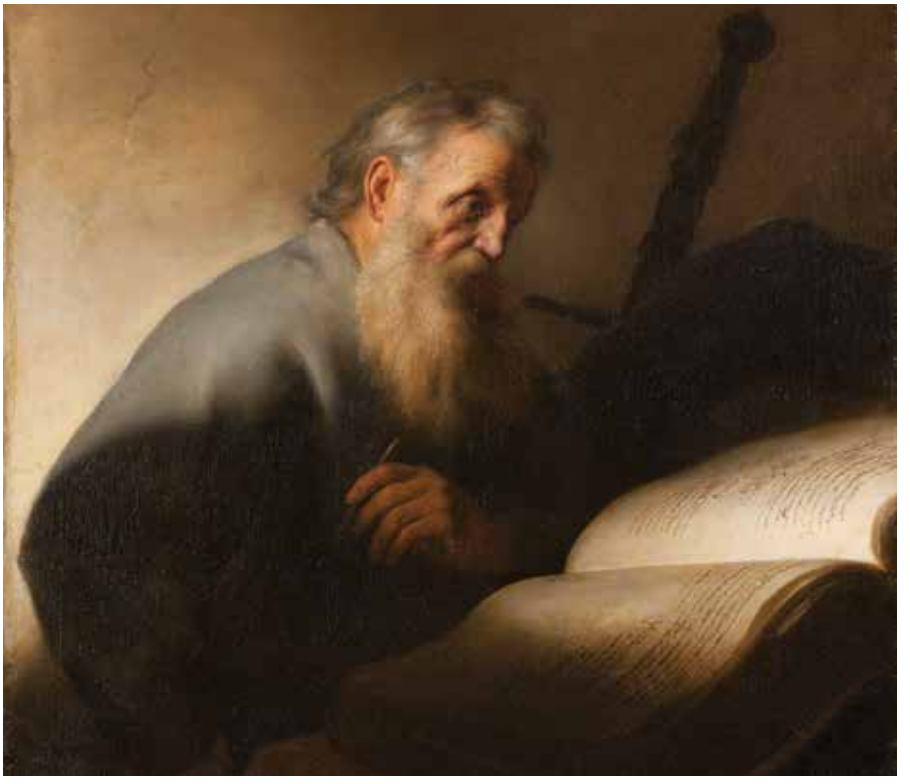
Only a very few translators of the Bible have produced masterpieces. Jerome's Latin Vulgate is one; William Tyndale's English translation, which contributed much of what is memorable in the King James version, is another. The individual efforts of Ronald Knox, Edgar Goodspeed, and James Moffatt all have their merits, but do not nearly reach the level of Jerome and Tyndale. Most biblical translations, in fact, beginning with the ancient Jewish translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek (the Septuagint), have been communal rather than individual efforts: the King James version and its successors, the Revised Standard Version and the New Revised Standard Version were all produced by committees of translators and editors. If you don't have genius, at least have consensus.

David Bentley Hart shows himself to be, in this translation of the New Testament, far from a consensus-seeking compromiser. He delights in challenging convention and proposing novel terms. In his publisher's description, Hart is "an Eastern Orthodox scholar of religion, and a philosopher, writer, and cultural commentator," who is a fellow at the Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Studies. Hart has spent years translating passages of the New Testament for students in as literal a fashion as possible, in order to cut through the linguistic and theological obscurities perpetrated by committee-generated translations. He undertook the task—clearly with relish—of this translation only after being assured by his editor that he would have the freedom to render the Greek in as faithful a way as he could manage.

In an introduction, Hart discusses his goals and certain translation choices he has made. In the introduction he also revisits an essay he wrote for *Commonweal* that has little to do with translation, and everything to do with the radical character of the New Testament and the radical character of the discipleship it demands. There is also an equally lengthy "Concluding Scientific Postscript," which provides the reasoning behind his occasionally idiosyncratic translations of specific words and phrases.

Before turning to his decisions about diction, allow me a few comments on the character and quality of Hart's translation overall. He sticks to his goal of rendering the Greek in what the back-copy of the book calls "a pitilessly literal translation." He reveals no ambition for literary elegance, and displays none. Just the opposite: he allows shifts in tense to stand as they are; he refuses to smooth out irregularities in grammar or syntax; his translation of participles—that most marvelously fluid of Greek constructions—resembles those of schoolroom exercises. Indeed, the reader is reminded most of the sort of word-by-word, superliteral treatments of the Greek texts regularly performed by teachers of the New Testament in classrooms, to give their students a more direct "sense of the original meaning" than is available in the standard translations.

The approach works best when Hart



Apostle Paul *by Jan Lievens*

is translating discourse rather than narrative. The translation of the Letter of James, for example, a composition that lacks the sort of theological baggage that bothers him, is clear and competent. The Book of Revelation, whose Greek is so bad that one suspects that the deliberate literary clumsiness is meant to convey the sense of divine disclosure, responds equally well to his hyper-literal reading. I also found his treatment of Paul's letters—with the reservations I will note later—to make good sense, with his translation rarely calling attention to itself. Hart grasps, for example, that the difficult constructions involving variants of *pistis Christou* should be taken as subjective genitives ("the faith or faithfulness of Christ") rather than objective genitives ("faith in Christ"). This contribution by itself deserves applause.

The Gospels, in contrast, are more problematic, precisely because Hart's desire to allow the text to be rough and uneven actually tends to draw attention to the translation rather than to the Evangelists' texts. I suppose the terms "fresh" and "startling" could sometimes be applied, not to suggest the uncovering of a meaning that previous translations hid, but only to recognize a certain clunkiness in the prose. In short, while the translation seeks to be faithful to the Greek, and is generally successful at that, it sometimes fails because of word choices that are odd and sometimes arbitrary.

Hart claims that his word-for-word translation makes for consistency, enabling the reader to have confidence that in every occurrence the same Greek word lies beneath his English rendering. But such is not the case. A couple of examples. The Greek noun *nous* means "mind" or "mind-set"; Hart so translates it in 1 Corinthians 2:16, but in Romans 12:2, he translates it as "intellect," and in Philippians 2:5 (following the lead of the despised committee translators) he supplies "mind" where it is absent in the Greek. A similar inconsistency haunts the translation of *dikaios* (righteous/just) and its cognates. A consistent literal translation of Romans 1:17 would be, "God's righteousness (*dikaiosyne*)

is revealed, from faith to faith, as has been written, 'And the righteous shall live by his faithfulness,'" but in the first instance, Hart has "God's justice," and in the second "the upright" (see also his translation of Romans 3:21-26). Similarly, in Jesus' parable of the Publican and Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14), the reader of this translation will miss completely Luke's play on *dikaios* language, because Hart translates the opening instance as "upright" and the final ironic instance as "vindicated."

Hart is conversant with text criticism, and sometimes provides extensive notes concerning his choice among variants, as in the case of John 8:1-11, the story of Jesus confounding the scribes and Pharisees over the woman caught in adultery. All the more puzzling, then, is his failure to comment at all on his omission of "Son of God" in Mark 1:1, a title that is well attested in the manuscripts and plays an important thematic role in that gospel.

And sometimes, Hart simply misses the meaning of the Greek itself. Mark 15:10 says that Pilate knew that the leaders handed Jesus over "because of envy" (*phthonos*), which is quite a different vice than the "malice" selected by Hart. In Luke 24:5, if Hart were to capture the literal meaning, he would have had the men at the tomb ask the women why they were seeking "the living one" (*ton zonta*) among the dead, which is a declaration of faith, rather than "why do you seek the living among the dead?" as though they were in the wrong neighborhood. Again, a truly close rendering of the Greek in Galatians 2:16 would not follow the committee translations in having Paul assert "that a human being is vindicated *not* by observance of law *but* by the faithfulness of the Anointed One Jesus," but rather, "that a human being is *not* vindicated by observance of the law except by (*ean me*) the faithfulness of the Anointed One Jesus." Again, Romans 8:12 does not say, "so, then, brothers, we are indebted to the flesh," but the opposite, "so then, brothers, we are not indebted to the flesh." I suspect that line is due to a failure in copyediting.

The truly distinguishing feature of this translation, though, lies in the choices Hart has made for certain key—and usually "theological"—terms, and he provides generous explanations of the most significant of these decisions in the introduction and postscript. The most important of these is the translation of *Christos* as "the Anointed (One)" rather than "Christ" or "Messiah." It is a thoroughly defensible rendering, and Hart is consistent and adept in making it work both as a title and quasi-proper name. He runs into trouble only in Acts 11:26, which notes that in Antioch believers were called "Christians" for the first time—readers of this translation would expect something like "anointeds." Hart's translation of *ekklesia* as "assembly" rather than "church" is also solid and helpful, as is "supervisor" instead of "bishop," although his choice of "ministers" for *diakonoi* still has an ecclesiastical ring; he probably would have done better with "helpers."

Other choices are more dubious. He is near obsessive about translating *aion* always and everywhere as "Age" or "the Age"—seeking to avoid "forever" and "eternal," which ends up being distracting, and worse, unclear. Has he gained anything by translating Romans 6:23 as "for sins' wages are death, but God's bestowal of grace is the life of the Age in the Anointed, Jesus our Lord"? He likewise gains little by translating *hypokrites* as "charlatan" rather than "hypocrite." Nothing but shock value is achieved by translating *porneia* ("sexual immorality") as "whorishness" or "whoring"; little but distraction gained by (not) translating *kosmos* as "kosmos" rather than "world." Translating "Gospel/good news" (*euangelion*) as "good tidings" is weak, without either ancient or contemporary resonance. And the choice of "blissful" rather than "blessed" or "happy" for the Greek *makarios* is unfortunate, as in the first Matthean beatitude, "How blissful the destitute, abject in spirit, for theirs in the kingdom of the heavens" (Matt 5:3). The contemporary associations of "bliss," alas, tend to be with gurus and stoners.

Finally, Hart finds himself snared by political or theological correctness—the very vice he sought to avoid—by consistently translating *ioudaios* as "Judaean" rather than "Jew." He states that this translation is more historically accurate, referring to inhabitants of Judaea, and is free from the anti-Semitic uses that have been made of the term "Jew." It is certainly the case that in some instances, the term is primarily geographical, as in the Gospel of John. And it is furthermore the case that, if the opposition to Jesus and the first believers were simply the people who lived in a specific geographical region, then it truly would be situated "long ago and far away." Unfortunately, for Jewish (not Judaean) writers like Philo of Alexandria and Josephus, *ioudaios* had more than a geographical connotation; it named a people with distinctive allegiances and practices, wherever they were from and wherever they lived. And this ethnic/religious sense is the one dominant in the New Testament, especially in Paul. When Paul reproaches Peter in Antioch, "If you who are *ioudaios* live as a gentile and not as a *ioudaios*, how is it you require gentiles to become *ioudaios*?" (Galatians 2:14), he is not speaking of places of origin but of religious commitments and practices. Indeed, by using the neologism *ioudaizein* ("to act as a *ioudaios*"), Paul makes clear that it is a choice of life, not a location. In this translation decision, Hart has allowed a sensitivity to present-day theological and political concerns to obscure the meaning of the text.

Hart is neither a Jerome nor a Tyndale. But I don't think he really aspired to be either of those worthies. His translation sometimes provokes to thought, sometimes simply irritates. But it truly is individual, and thoughtful, and anything but conventional. Hart's translation has the important virtue of stimulating others who struggle with the New Testament to consider more carefully their own translations, in classrooms or in print. ■

Luke Timothy Johnson, *a frequent contributor, is the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins emeritus at the Candler School of Theology, Emory University.*

Valerie Sayers

The Outrage Still Sounds

Smile

Roddy Doyle
Viking, $25, 224 pp.

Revelations of maltreatment, sexual assault, and neglect of children under the care of Catholic clergy have changed the political landscape in Ireland, a country where the church's reach extends into public schooling, hospitals, social services, and family life. Roddy Doyle's latest novel, *Smile*, channels Irish outrage at the abuse and its cover-up, but withholds the story's full moral fury until its final pages. Doyle, after all, is a literary master of the deceptively light touch. In *Smile*, his narrator's ironic introspection and his characters' deft banter reassure the reader even as Doyle gradually but relentlessly intensifies a mood of foreboding.

Smile's middle-aged narrator, Victor Forde, is a rueful, self-doubting writer despite the fifteen minutes of fame he briefly enjoyed as a young cultural commentator. Once the husband of a famous media darling, the love of his life, Victor tells us his marriage is now over. He has moved from the center of trendy Dublin to the decidedly less fashionable neighborhood where he was raised. Lonely, his career in shambles, he establishes his presence in a local pub, where he hopes to enjoy the nightly ritual of pints and the company of regulars.

Soon enough, a man he can't quite place introduces himself as a childhood schoolmate. Victor takes an immediate disliking to Eddie Fitzpatrick, who is large, coarse, and clumsy, but also feels some guilty pity. Gradually his conversations with Eddie remind him of a childhood he has mostly filed away in the deepest reaches of his subconscious. A reader learns early in the story that Victor, years before, revealed on a radio broadcast that a Christian Brother at his secondary school had fondled him. Now Fitzpatrick's questions cause him to delve deeper into his memories of the Brothers' torments.

So far, so Roddy Doyle. Doyle charmed his way onto the literary scene thirty years ago with *The Commitments*, a rollicking, profane, dialogue-driven account of a Dublin soul band. *The Snapper* and *The Van*, the following volumes in his Barrytown Trilogy, expanded his range with less obviously comedic material: unwed motherhood, layoffs, a family's economic dead ends. Doyle's narrative heart belongs to outsider Dublin, the scrappers and strugglers who embody the Irish argument with capitalism itself. As his novels have darkened and deepened, his explorations of working-class Dubliners' lives have peered behind the closed doors of propriety to take on the painful subjects of the dissolution of marriage (the Booker Prize-winning *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*) and spousal abuse (*The Woman Who Walked into Doors*). The snappy dialogue that defines Doyle's style for so many readers is matched by his taut exposition, but he has also been drawn to more experimental forms; his historical trilogy *The Last Roundup*, chronicling an IRA man on the run, tries out improvisational riffing and consciousness-streaming while sweeping through twentieth-century history.

At first, *Smile* appears to be more of a piece with Doyle's earliest novels, especially in its dynamic memories of childhood and adolescence. Children play a crucial role for Doyle, who began his career as a teacher and who is especially good at conveying the vulnerability of schoolchildren. As Victor enters secondary school, his father is dying, and though the Christian Brothers dis-

Roddy Doyle

cipline the boys with shockingly casual violence, they express their sympathy as well as their unwanted attention: "Victor Forde," Brother Murphy tells him, "I have never been able to resist your smile." Comic memories of schoolroom scenes yield to a gothic sense of dread as Eddie Fitzgerald aggressively dares Victor to remember the past more precisely.

In flashbacks, we learn that the young adult Victor Forde is enraged (like Roddy Doyle, a reader suspects) about the entire range of power the church exercises in Ireland, especially over sexual ethics. The novel anticipates the current Irish debate on abortion when Victor, starting out as a journalist, reports on a politician who travels to London, as many Irish women have traveled, for the procedure the British call a "termination." Later, after his mother objects to his telling the story, Victor asks: "Do you think it's murder?" She answers: "No, I don't. But I won't be jumping up and down telling people that." It is that insistence on silence that maddens Victor as the novel builds to confront vile sexual abuse. Without indulging in graphic recreations, Doyle suggests in a brother's single line—"You're old enough to stop me"—the psychological burden Victor Forde has borne in silence all these years. And as the story draws to its close, Doyle doubles down on the shattering effects of sexual trauma. If you accept the premise that we can't expect a novel's characters to be sociologically representative, then you can accept Victor's splintered psyche at the novel's end as a portrayal of one individual rather than a broad representation of piteous victimhood.

Trickier is a plot revelation that upends all the reader has understood up to this point, including the form of this novel. Is that revelation a gimmick? Or is it an apt narrative analogue for the way sexual abuse can destroy a victim's memory and understanding of moral agency? Though Doyle has cleverly planted clues about Victor's self-deceptions throughout these pages, the ending scene closes the novel so abruptly that Eddie Fitzgerald's identity, and indeed all of Victor's past, remain murky.

The one sure conclusion a reader comes to is this: an entire system of authority, discipline, and silence has crushed Victor Forde's sense of self. Though the rushed ending leaves me unconvinced that this is Doyle's strongest novel yet, as many reviewers claim, Victor's plight has roiled me. It's my hunch that most Catholics who haven't been personally touched by abuse could probably use that kind of literary roiling, no matter how much this narrative challenges the church and religious faith itself. As it channels the voices of outrage still sounding in Ireland and around the world, *Smile* bears witness to damage almost beyond imagination—but it does dare to imagine, with a strange form of narrative empathy, and demands its readers imagine too. ■

Valerie Sayers, *the William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor at Notre Dame, is the author of six novels including* The Powers.

Meghan Sullivan

Crisis Averted?

Midlife
A Philosophical Guide
Kieran Setiya
Princeton University Press, $22.95, 200 pp.

In the 2004 Alexander Payne film *Sideways*, two forty-something men take a roadtrip through the Napa Valley, getting sauced and wallowing in disappointment. Miles (Paul Giamatti), in one of his particularly self-loathing moments, shares his view of midlife with Jack (Thomas Hayden Church): "Half of my life is over and I have nothing to show for it. Nothing...I'm a smudge of excrement on a tissue surging out to sea with a million tons of raw sewage." Jack, trying to be supportive, responds: "See? Right there. Just what you said...that is beautiful. 'A smudge of excrement, surging out to sea.'"

Is this what midlife is destined to feel like? I recently turned thirty-five, and I will confess I find Miles and Jack outrageous. *Sideways* outrages me. They are blind to the value all around them: Jack has his fiancée, Miles his transcendent Burgundies. They are unsympathetic: their problems exacerbated by their poor decisions and stubbornness. Still...perhaps this is just the reaction of someone

PHOTO: HEATHER KRESGE

Kieran Setiya

too young, too naïve, and too moralistic to properly understand the gravity of the midlife crisis.

In *Midlife: A Philosophical Guide*, MIT philosopher Kieran Setiya urges us to take the midlife crisis seriously as a special kind of crisis of value. Setiya is sensitive to how indulgent midlife crises can seem from the outside. He offers both a diagnosis of the problem and argues for a therapy for those caught in its nihilist grip. Along the way, he describes his own existential struggles in witty and deeply humane asides.

Setiya's ambitions are philosophical rather than clinical. What is it about how we think of value and time that makes the midpoint of life so hard? Here (in brief) is his answer: At midlife, you are in a position to look back on major life decisions you have made or life paths you have fallen into. For instance, Setiya ended up a philosopher, but as an adolescent he could have been a poet or a doctor. You may try to compare your alternatives at midlife, to reassure yourself you've chosen well. But these different lives are not *really* comparable, so you have little justification at midlife for believing you've ended up on the best path. And you have fewer choices ahead of you now. So one source of distress in midlife is realizing that some of the options for your life projects have permanently expired and there is no way to tell if you've ended up on the best path.

Another source of distress is regret for some of the choices you've made in the first half of life that have committed you to your current path—choices you now realize were wrong. For instance, your midlife might be shadowed by a failed marriage or an unfulfilling career.

Finally, at midlife you are reminded of your finitude. The inevitability of death raises questions about whether your life is pointless, since every project you pour yourself into will ultimately end. Middles bring ends into view.

A philosophical diagnosis calls out for a philosophical treatment. And to his credit, Setiya offers a lot of specific and rich guidance. First, you should realize that the single-minded pursuit of your own happiness is likely to be self-defeating. Second, you should distinguish between telic value (the kind of value you get from advancing toward a goal or accomplishment) and atelic value (the kind of value you get from simply being immersed in an activity). Setiya argues that atelic value is a safer bet as a pursuit in midlife, when you are most likely to grow bored by past accomplishments but feel too trapped to set out toward radically new ones. You must remind yourself at midlife that "you are not (only) what you plan to get done." Third, you should focus on the present value that your past choices (even ones you now regret) have wrought. For instance, that failed marriage might be a precondition for having children that you deeply love. A failed career might have been a necessary condition for living in a city that feels like home. At the end of the book, Setiya also pitches mindfulness meditation as a way of learning to appreciate atelic value.

Midlife is an erudite and charming addition to the genre of "philosophical self-help." (And if there were an award for Best 2017 Philosophy Book Cover, Setiya's cartoon of a half-empty water glass would surely win. Not that there is much competition.) Still, as an admittedly judgy borderline early-lifer, I found the book left some of my most pressing questions about midlife unanswered.

First, nobody disputes that midlife crises are diagnosable. What I want to know is: Are they rational? Is there some special way that value in life changes around your forties and early fifties? Is Miles just a buffoon? On the view of the crisis Setiya offers, it would be rational if (1) there are indeed fewer options one can pursue in midlife and (2) it is rational to regret choices you've made and now cannot undo.

As to (1)—the foreclosed options—we should first note there is no law against studying medicine after the age of forty. Setiya might need to do it in the Virgin Islands, but it is still possible. Someone can absolutely start a literary career at midlife, as Raymond Chandler, George Eliot, and others have. It might feel like these options are foreclosed, but this only shows a lack of imagination on the part of the crisis sufferer. What Setiya cannot do is make it so he's lived three incompatible lives (one studying medicine at twenty, one studying poetry at twenty, and one studying philosophy at twenty). But he has always known he'd only get one life, with one sequence of pursuits—this is not something you suddenly discover in midlife. If the midlife crisis is simply suddenly preferring the impossible, then it seems it is irrational.

What about (2)—the regret aspect of midlife? Some philosophers think it is only rational or irrational to have preferences about what you can control. Since you can't control the past, you can't have any rational or irrational preferences about your past marriages or jobs. Here I disagree with these philosophers. Being rational is just a matter of appreciating your reasons, and part of being a decent and well-functioning person means ac-

knowledging that sometimes you chose against your best reasons. Midlife regret can be rational—but that doesn't make midlife special. Rational regret can and should occur at any age when we realize we've chosen poorly. Perhaps what's distinctive about midlife is that we have a better grasp of the reasons we ignored. And Setiya's therapy (appreciating any good long-term side effects of our poor decisions) is more available later in life. But both of these are true at the end of our lives as well.

Could the special rational challenge of midlife be time itself? At midlife, half of the allotted time for achieving things with your life is over. Setiya assumes that being in the past automatically makes an accomplishment less valuable to you now: "Accomplishments matter to me, but each one is bittersweet: longed for, pursued, and ultimately, disappointingly, complete. That's over with. What now?" But this isn't obvious; some events might add durable value to your life. Consider a thought experiment proposed by philosopher Thomas Hurka in his book *Perfectionism* (Oxford, 1996). Imagine you have temporary amnesia. You wake in the hospital, and are told you are in one of two situations. Either you made an amazing scientific discovery several years ago. Or you are set to make an okay but far less impressive discovery a few years from now. Which situation do you hope to be in? Hurka says (and I agree) that we'd want the greater past discovery—we want the grandest accomplishments possible but don't particularly care if they are past or future. More technically: while we care less about hedonic values like pain and pleasure once they're in our past, we don't tend to similarly discount our achievements.

Setiya's model assumes that at midlife, the telic value of your past activities leaks out of your life. You can plug the leak by cultivating mindfulness. Why believe this is the dominant option? A retiree who throws herself maniacally into writing poetry, or traveling the world, or teaching second grade, can be in a position to experience just as much value as someone who cultivates atelic mindfulness. And while we cannot alter the first halves of our lives, we have extraordinary freedom at midlife to craft a valuable future.

So Setiya's book didn't make me any more sympathetic to the sufferers of the midlife crisis. But philosophy is not merely in the business of rationalizing. In the *Phaedo*, Plato argues that philosophy is important insofar as it can teach us the art of dying. While Setiya offers us little guidance about whether despair in midlife is rational, he does instruct us in how to have a more artful and intellectually sophisticated crisis. And he offers some sound philosophical advice for cultivating value at any age. ■

Meghan Sullivan *is professor of Philosophy at the University of Notre Dame. Her most recent book,* Time Biases: A Theory of Rational Planning and Personal Persistence, *is out with Oxford University Press in June.*

Issues of Blood

Christian Wiman

My wife and I learned something strange recently about our already strange dog, Mack, the mid-size black and white mutt we've had for almost a decade. With his barrel chest and stubby legs, his hunter's nose and soulful eyes, he looks like a black lab crammed into the body of a beagle. He was on doggy death row when we got him from a shelter in Alabama, and he was so odd and nervous that you could never tell what was going to turn his terrors on. More than once we returned home to find him paralyzed (for how long?) on a small rug or even a piece of newspaper as if he were stranded on an island amid dangers we couldn't see. Mack has been having some troubling health issues lately, and in the course of the vet's investigations there was an incidental finding: Mack has a bullet in him.

I can't overstate how disturbing this news was to my wife and me. It's not just the obvious disgust: to think of some miserable man—because of course it had to be a man—taking aim at this utterly docile and probably mentally impaired dog and blasting away. And then to think of Mack crawling off to die somewhere and then, somehow, not dying—for Mack is not only docile but, as our vet has told us, preternaturally tough. Dogs hide pain, they do not want you to be aware of it, but Mack will try to hide even his reaction to extreme procedures at the vet's office, as if he'd learned that it does not pay, no matter what, to let a human being know what you feel.

But it wasn't just the act itself that so disturbed us. No, what was really gut wrenching, what left us both stunned and tearful in our kitchen the day we talked with the vet on the phone, was thinking about Mack carrying around this memento of that violent moment for all these years. All the life that we had lived with Mack: the births of our daughters, my dire illnesses and miraculous recoveries, new cities and new careers. And to think of that sweet odd dog all the while dragging around that unspeakable—in both senses of the word—pain.

The Sunday after learning about Mack's bullet, I heard a sermon focused on the woman in Luke who suffers from an "issue of blood." The text says that she has suffered for twelve years and has spent all her money on doctors. Just imagine the contempt she would have endured at the hands of those men—and again, they would have been men—her whole life defined by this one pain, which would have entailed shame and loneliness as well as physical suffering, since menstruating women were considered "unclean" and thus untouchable. So when she hears that there's this man, this Jesus, going around healing people, she thinks to herself, why not. Or no, that actually doesn't match the urgency in the passage at all. She doesn't think to herself "why not" but instead feels a compulsion in her heart that she does not understand, but she understands that it requires an action. The scripture tells us that Jesus feels "virtue" or "power" go out of him, and maybe what this unnamed woman first felt when she heard the name of Jesus was pain going out of her—and she went to find the man who had the name that could make this miracle come to pass.

I've probably heard fifty sermons about this woman. The lesson is almost always about one's trust in God or lack thereof, the faith that can move mountains, bootstrap stuff. And indeed that was the gist of the sermon I heard a couple of weeks ago. I've always been intrigued by the story, but I've also felt a little remote from this woman with her "issue of blood," at least until I looked down last month and saw a whole different aspect to this dog with whom I have shared a life for the past ten years. John Keats once said that no tenet of philosophy is ever really accepted in us until it is proved on our pulses. Scripture is no different. I don't care how many passion plays you've wept at. Until someone you truly love slips out of this world forever, the pain and promise of Christ remain abstract. That's all right, so long as you let Christ's reality—which is to say, simply, reality—work against that abstraction in your heart.

Here's an example. The very week I learned about Mack's bullet, I was teaching the notebooks and letters of Etty Hillesum. "Etty"—as she always called herself—is twenty-six years old in 1941 when, in German-occupied Amsterdam, she begins to keep a diary. The vice is tightening. Jews have to wear yellow stars and their rights are being steadily eroded. There are fewer and fewer opportunities for them to make a living, more and more places where they are not even allowed to walk, and people are beginning to disappear. Etty writes all this down along with her own sometimes serious and sometimes frivolous concerns, and then an odd thing begins to happen. She starts addressing God directly. This is odd because, though Jewish, Etty was raised in a thoroughly secular, intellectual house devoid of all religious "sentiment," as her father called it, and hitherto she has had no religious impulse or awareness at all. But God is becoming painfully and joyfully apparent to Etty Hillesum, as is the role to which he is calling her. "There must be someone to live through it all," she says, "to bear witness to the fact that God lived, even in these times." She determines that she will be "the thinking heart of the barracks."

And that is precisely what she becomes. Westerbork was

a transit camp originally designed to house fifteen hundred Jews who had fled Germany before Germany invaded Holland. By the time Etty went there—voluntarily, at first, as she could not bear being separated from her imprisoned family—there were some forty thousand Jews crammed into barracks so miserable that disease, despair, and suicide were endemic. Every Monday a train pulled into the station and loaded up the next list of people who had been chosen for Auschwitz. It was an anteroom of Hell, and they all knew it. And yet Etty wrote that her months "behind razor wire," as she put it, when she spent her days attending to the suffering of others and to the unkillable beauty of the natural world, had turned out to be the happiest time of her life, and that she had in fact "learned to love Westerbork." That would be miracle enough, but that's not all. The truly striking thing about the late entries of these diaries, which end with a postcard thrown from the window of the train bearing her away to death ("We left the camp singing"), is that Etty refuses to hate.

Etty Hillesum ca. 1939

Etty Hillesum was not a Christian (though she was deeply familiar with, and moved by, the gospels) but she does seem to me to embody Christ's message in an exemplary way. And what is that message? That there is not a person reading these words, there is not a friend or family member from whom you feel utterly estranged, there is not even a solipsistic and apparently unsalvageable man sitting in the White House who does not have, festering somewhere, a bullet in them. Sitting down to write these thoughts was the first time I have ever considered all the other people around Jesus when he healed that woman with the issue of blood. They, too, had their issues of blood. It's a wonder Jesus didn't shatter from the sheer pressure of all those *unspeakable* pains around him. But then, eventually, I guess he did.

Rowan Williams, echoing Keats, says that there are lives that speak to us as no precept ever can. They reveal to us a wondrous country of which they are natives, and they make us say: whatever peace that person has, I want and need. And it just so happens that the illuminated life that Williams is describing in that passage was lived by…Etty Hillesum. Few of us will ever be called to witness to world pain—to *weltschmerz*—as Etty was called, but I feel sure that there is some one pain to which every one of us is called to witness and perhaps ease. It might be as simple as some phone call to a family member you haven't spoken to in too long, it might be some thorn in the heart of a friend to whom you have not paid sufficient attention, it might be some wholly ordinary encounter you have in the next few hours of this wholly ordinary day—when suddenly you feel some power going out of you. Because make no mistake, Christ is in us. Ours are the only hands he has. ■

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