A Review of Religion, Politics & Culture

Commonweal

OCTOBER 6, 2017

BECOMING DR. KING

Gary Dorrien on the Black Social Gospel Tradition

$3.95 US/$4.50 CAN

www.commonwealmagazine.org

Founded in 1924
Commonweal

Editor
Paul Baumann

Executive Editor
Dominic Preziosi

Senior Editor
Matthew Boudway

Associate Editor
Matthew Sitman

Production
Tiina Aleman

Assistant Digital Editor
Maria Bowler

Editorial Assistant
Regina Munch

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

Editor at Large
Mollie Wilson O'Reilly

Copy Editor
Susanne Washburn

Development Assistant
Gabriella Wilke

Business Manager
James Hannan

Development
Christa A. Kerber

Community & Events Manager
Meaghan Ritchey

Poetry
Rosemary Deen

Film
Rand Richards Cooper

Stage & Television
Celia Wren

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

Subscription Information
845-267 3068
subscriptions@commonwealmagazine.org

Advertising Manager
Regan Pickett
commonwealads@gmail.com
540-935-2172

Publisher
Thomas Baker

Commonweal [ISSN 0010-3330], a review of public affairs, religion, literature, and the arts, is published biweekly, except in April, July, August, and November, when it is published monthly, by Commonweal Foundation, 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 405, New York, NY 10115. Telephone: (212) 662-4200. E-mail: editors@commonwealmagazine.org. Fax: (212) 662-4183. POSTMASTER: send address changes to *Commonweal*, P.O. Box 348, Congers, NY 10920-0348.

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

Cover design: Cecilia Guerrero Rezes
Cover Image: National Archives

LETTERS

More just war

THE NUCLEAR THIRD RAIL

It was good to see articles dealing with the just-war theory in *Commonweal*. I agree wholly with Peter Steinfels's argument that just-war theory must be retained ("The War against Just War," June 16) and that Gerald Schlabach's call for getting rid of it is based on assumptions unsupported by history ("Just War?" June 16).

Schlabach's article is replete with what the late Canadian Jesuit philosopher Bernard Lonergan would term "impoverished abstracts," constructs that make everything perfectly clear by being shorn of all significant detail, not that Steinfels avoids them altogether.

Nuclear deterrence is the third rail that that neither proponents of the just-war theory nor those who insist on "Gospel nonviolence" want to confront. (To my knowledge "nonviolence" is a word that, unlike "love," appears nowhere in the New Testament.) The peace institutes flourishing throughout the land have "moved beyond" just-war theory, a very convenient progression since, if they ever dared to call an American war unjust, they would put themselves on a collision course with the Pentagon and the White House. As for those who hold to just-war theory, the vast majority of them, the editors of *Commonweal* included, don't know quite what to say about it. (They have plenty of company, of course, Pope Francis being one of their number.)

As it happens, I had something to say about it in my 1987 *Commonweal* article "Sidestepping the Challenge of Peace." I—who had some experience with the military mind since I had served as a paratrooper in Korea—contended that nuclear deterrence, given that intentionality was central to basic Catholic moral theology, was intrinsically evil because it depended on the firm intention of launch officers (daily communicants included) to set in motion on command, no questions asked, a process that would inevitably kill uncounted millions and leave us with a ravaged world in which, as Nikita Khrushchev put it, "the living will envy the dead."

The pastoral on nuclear weapons, sad to say, was gutted by John Paul II and Joseph Ratzinger, who heeded the cries of anguish from the "NATO bishops," who were more concerned about a Soviet armor assault through the Fulda Gap than they were about what Jesus might think about starting a nuclear war. So it was that the final version of the pastoral failed to condemn nuclear deterrence and dropped the provision implicitly condemning the use of nuclear weapons in response to an attack with conventional weapons.

The editors of *Commonweal* apparently agreed with the pope and the cardinal. The lead editorial in the next issue disagreed with me, insisting that there were "precious values" that had to be protected and called for the search for a "moral deterrent."

That was a generation ago. Whether the current editors are carrying on that quest, I have no idea.

MICHAEL GALLAGHER
Shaker Heights, Ohio

LEGITIMATE DEFENSE

I wish to thank you for publishing, and Peter Steinfels for authoring, the brilliant, eloquent, and needed "The War Against Just War" in *Commonweal*.

I am heartened to learn Steinfels's position in response to what sometimes seems to be Catholic absolutism in peacemaking that will not foster dialogue with those convinced that just-war norms remain crucial restraints on national use of force in legitimate defensive warfare.

Just-war norms, if followed, would have prevented the first and second invasions of Iraq under George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush respectively, and some of us demonstrated against those wars on those grounds.

continued on page four

Commonweal

OCTOBER 6, 2017 • VOLUME 144 • NUMBER 16

Theology Issue

Steinfels's early study and engagement with French thinkers and his long-time, nuanced, balanced interpretation of a Catholic position on just war has led to this wonderful essay.

The cogency of his reasoning is indicated by the fact that he did not need to appeal to the sorry instance of Neville Chamberlain.

THOMAS HUGHSON, SJ
Milwaukee, Wisc.

ENOUGH WITH THE "JUST"

I find myself agreeing with aspects of both articles on so-called just war. Great dialogue! I agree with Schlabach that there has been enough talk of "just" war. In my sixty-three years as a witness to fairly constant war-making over my lifetime, that language does not fit any of my experience. Language does matter, as Steinfels notes. Call it "necessary war" if you must, but enough of the "just."

I also agree with the likely irrelevancy of just-war pronouncements by Catholic hierarchy to what governments actually do with their military power as an exercise of national power. The gospels just don't have much positive to say about the just use of political power, the coercive power of the Roman state having executed our God. It's pretty tough to make a theological case for something as momentous and absolute as war on those sparse grounds. Still, that state-sponsored execution is a central part of our salvation story, grounded of course in faith and hope in the Resurrection. And, as Steinfels points out, there is the problem of evil in the world and how to respond to it. There is room for debate about how we respond to the problem of evil, and also to the evil of war.

The struggle to name, resist, and confront evil in all its forms is a part of the human, Christian, and Catholic story, a story in which we believe evil never has the last word. What is so encouraging to me about Schlabach's article is his energetic call to make non-violent peacemaking a more and more central part of the Catholic Christian story, not just leaving it to the Mennonites and Quakers among us. Debating just-war issues only, given the apparent irrelevancy of the debate to anything that actually happens, is not enough. We've got to act. There is much we can and should learn from the peace churches as well as from already committed Catholic peacemakers, about the prayer and spirituality of peacemaking as well as the day-to-day practice of how to live it, make it relevant, and make it work. Let's do it!

TOM CROTTY
Sinking Spring, Pa.

BEYOND "JUST CAUSE"

Thank you for the articles by Gerald Schlabach and Peter Steinfels in the June 16 edition of *Commonweal*.

As Schlabach states, "a just cause alone does not a just war make." Often people of good will, including many Catholics, look only at the criterion of just cause to determine whether or not a war is justified. Church leadership does not effectively promulgate an understanding of the two parts of just-war theory: *jus ad bellum* (when to fight) and *jus in bello* (how to fight). Each of these categories is further subdivided into several principles, all of which must be carefully considered and satisfied in order for a war to be just. Schlabach states that just-war theory "overlooks and even undermines" alternative approaches. Yet last resort is an essential principle of *jus ad bellum*. How often do decision makers examine every possible alternative to settling a dispute before declaring war? The conscientious application of this principle of just-war theory would promote the non-violent peacemaking solutions that Schlabach recommends. He cites Pope Benedict XVI's appeal to the principle of discrimination. This *jus in bello* principle states unequivocally that care must be taken so that non-combatants, their homes, and the infrastructure necessary for their lives are not destroyed. Too many Catholics dismiss the killing of civilians as "collateral damage." Here again, careful study and application of this principle could shift the focus from conquest by any means to protecting human lives and rights with the least amount of destruction.

A prime example of misuse of just-war theory is the Second World War. From the perspective of many, if not most Americans, this war was justified. It has often been called "The Good War." Hitler and the Nazis were running roughshod over Europe, killing millions. The Axis powers seemed poised to take over the world, as the shocking tragedy of Pearl Harbor verified. Congress then declared war. However, only three of the principles of *jus ad bellum* were met. The dominant rationale was just cause (attack by an aggressor). Right intention (stopping further aggression) and declaration by the legally constituted authority of a nation (U.S. Congress) were also satisfied. As far as I know, there was little or no discussion of two other *ad bellum* criteria, proportionality and last resort. In the case of the United States, the power to declare war is held by Congress. This declaration was the last time the principle of legally constituted authority according to the Constitution of the United States was met.

Once a war has begun, the second part, *jus in bello*, comes into consideration. It is no longer just the decision

continued on page 37

Bad Faith?

The recent confirmation hearings for Amy Coney Barrett, a University of Notre Dame law professor nominated by President Trump to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, could cause all thoughtful citizens to despair. Both the questioning of Barrett, and the subsequent outcry by conservatives about the statements made by Democratic senators, demonstrate just how confused debates over religion's role in American political life have become.

The controversy began when Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee asked Barrett pointed questions about how her faith might influence her decisions as a judge. Dianne Feinstein sparked claims of anti-Catholic bias by saying, "When you read your speeches, the conclusion one draws is that the dogma lives loudly within you, and that's of concern when you come to big issues that large numbers of people have fought for years in this country." Senator Richard Durbin then expressed his concern over Barrett's use of the term "orthodox Catholic," noting how it's often used polemically to dismiss Catholics like himself who hold liberal views on social issues.

It wasn't long before the senators were accused of applying a "religious test" to Barrett's nomination, and critics began invoking the dark history of prejudice against Catholics in the United States. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops lamented that the hearings were a throwback to the days when "anti-Catholic bigotry [distorted] our laws and civil order." The president of Notre Dame, the Rev. John I. Jenkins, called Feinstein's questions "chilling." Others deemed the hearings nothing less than an attack on Barrett's faith. Sensationalist headlines abounded.

These charges don't hold up to scrutiny. Inquiring about a nominee's religious convictions, especially a nominee as outspoken about her faith as Barrett, is hardly the kind of formal religious test forbidden by the Constitution. Critics of Feinstein and Durbin ignore the simple fact that exploring the relationship between a judge's religion and the discharge of her duties is perfectly legitimate. The Catholic faith is not an individualized, private affair without any bearing on public life. It does not separate morality from politics or the law. Asking a judicial nominee to explain the statements she has made about the relationship between her faith and her understanding of the law is fair game, especially when lifetime tenure is at stake. It is exceedingly peculiar for religious conservatives, who have long argued that faith has a necessary and positive role to play in our politics, to be so squeamish about such questions.

Barrett's work in particular cries out for such questioning. In 2006, she told graduates of Notre Dame's law school that their careers were a "means to an end," which was "building the kingdom of God." While a law student, Barrett published a paper with John Garvey, now the president of the Catholic University of America, arguing that Catholic judges might have to recuse themselves in cases involving the death penalty. She's also given talks to participants in a program run by the Alliance Defending Freedom, a conservative legal advocacy group. None of this disqualifies Barrett, but it is not bigotry to ask questions about such matters.

For their part, Democrats continue to be tone deaf and often ignorant when it comes to religion. Feinstein's formulation was particularly odd. It seemed almost designed to stir outrage, while illuminating precisely nothing. It's possible to question the way a nominee's faith relates to her judicial philosophy, even with dogged skepticism, while being respectful and nuanced. Democrats need to make clear that what's under examination is not a person's faith, but how personal convictions influence how a judge handles her responsibility to be impartial and fair. In Barrett's case, Democrats and liberal advocacy groups seemed to go out of their way to misread the article she wrote with Garvey on the death penalty, not realizing that it suggested that she would *not* impose Catholic teaching from the bench, at least when it comes to that issue.

As religious affiliation becomes more aligned with partisan affiliation, it is more important than ever that we be able to deliberate constructively about faith and politics. Republicans should not demand that religious faith be accommodated with no questions asked. Democrats should not treat religious faith like a dangerous eccentricity. In a nation as politically polarized as ours, religion must foster engagement, not condemnation. ■

September 19, 2017

Margaret O'Brien Steinfels

Between Two Empires

THE CURIOUS CASE OF BERNARD LEWIS

It wasn't exactly summer reading, but it was remaindered, only $5.98! *Notes on a Century: Reflections of a Middle East Historian* would finally clarify the role of its author in the Middle East and U.S. policy. I snapped it up.

The book's author, Bernard Lewis (now 101 years old), has seen and said a lot. A renowned scholar and historian, he is an expert on Islam, the Ottoman Empire, and Turkey. He has been a counselor to presidents and policymakers, a frequenter of officialdom in Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Israel. Lewis has long been in my *Caveat Lector* file—read with robust skepticism. He was, I long thought, part of the neoconservative intellectual machinations that entangled the United States in the Middle East, especially the disastrous 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Part memoir, part apologia, *Notes on a Century* reveals Lewis as a raconteur and devoted teacher, first at University College, London, and then at Princeton. Born in 1916 and raised in London, he landed in an MI6 intelligence unit during World War II, thanks to his aptitude for languages. After the war, that aptitude plus his experience and knowledge of Turkish history launched him on a career as scholar, adviser, and authority on Islam. (No further mention of MI6.) He sees himself as an honest friend of Middle East harmony, a disinterested expert in a divided world.

Were my suspicions unfair? Was Lewis misfiled under *Caveat Lector*? When experts and scholars begin advising governments, do they distinguish their expertise from their politics? Lewis seemed not to, at least in *Notes*.

I turned to other of his many books (not remaindered): *What Went Wrong?* and *The Crisis of Islam*, dating from just before and after 9/11, and *From Babel to Dragomans*, a collection of essays spanning many decades. Over time, Lewis had obviously changed his mind, contradicted himself, and drawn weighty conclusions from large generalizations.

Consider the fighting phrase, "the clash of civilizations." Lewis coined it in a 1990 speech describing the struggle between Islam and the West, stressing the dysfunctions of Islam. "In the Middle East, as elsewhere in the world, it is always much easier to blame others for what goes wrong than to accept responsibility oneself. So much has gone wrong—and who else is there to blame? The British and French empires have long since departed..." He later disclaimed the phrase, but not the thought. In 1996 when Samuel Huntington adopted it for a book title, it raised the decibel level of the debate over Islam.

By then, the first Bush administration had already waged the First Gulf War in response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. As war plans jelled in 1990, Lewis passed on to Dick Cheney, then secretary of defense, the prediction of his friend, Turkish President Tugut Ozal: the war "will be quick, cheap, and easy." Indeed it was quick: after seven days, the Iraqi army fled Kuwait. It may have been too quick for Lewis, who argues that the coalition should have gone on to overthrow Saddam. Cheney, it seems, agreed.

But Lewis says he opposed the 2003 invasion that did overthrow Saddam. He reports (or perhaps brags) that after 9/11 he was invited by Cheney to talk about the Middle East and Islam with a "receptive audience…not to offer policy suggestions but to provide background," and that he had a private "wide-ranging conversation" with Condoleezza Rice. A *Wall Street Journal* (September 27, 2002) essay, "A Time for Toppling," could be a version of Lewis's "backgrounder": "A regime change may well be dangerous, but sometimes the dangers of inaction are greater than those of action." Did the dangers of action in this case prove greater? He doesn't say.

What to make of Lewis? Over the twentieth century, he was a witness to the growing chaos of the Middle East, some of it created by his own British government. As the mantle of empire slipped from British shoulders, did his eyes turn to the next likely overseer? As he took up residence at Princeton in 1974, did he imagine passing on the shabby mantle of empire to the United States? Farfetched perhaps, but fourteen years after the 2003 invasion, the United States remains in Iraq. Perhaps the renowned scholar and expert, having overlooked the failures of the first empire, did not foresee the failures of a second. *Caveat Lector*! ■

Bernard Lewis

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE

Olufunmilayo Olopade, MD, FACP, OON

Walter L. Palmer Distinguished Service Professor of Medicine and Human Genetics
Associate Dean, Global Health Director,
Center for Clinical Cancer Genetics

THE FORTY-SEVENTH RECIPIENT OF THE

MENDEL MEDAL

The Mendel Medal is awarded to outstanding scientists who have done much by their painstaking work to advance the cause of science, and, by their lives and their standing before the world as scientists, have demonstrated that between true science and true religion there is no intrinsic conflict.

Dr. Olopade will deliver the 2017 Mendel Medal lecture

"GENOMIC LANDSCAPE OF BREAST CANCER IN DIVERSE POPULATIONS"

FRIDAY, November 17, 2017 • 2 p.m.

Villanova University • Villanova Room, Connelly Center

Villanova University: Founded by the Augustinians in 1842

villanova.edu/mendelmedal

PAST MENDEL MEDAL RECIPIENTS

Dr. Francis S. Collins
Director, National Center for Human Genome Research

Dr. George V. Coyne, SJ
Director Emeritus, Vatican Observatory

Dr. Michael E. DeBakey
Chancellor Emeritus, Baylor College of Medicine

Dr. Petrus J.W. Debye
Nobel Laureate in Chemistry

Rev. P. Teilhard de Chardin, SJ
Paleontologist, National Geological Survey of China

Dr. Peter C. Doherty
Nobel Laureate in Medicine, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

Dr. Paul Farmer
Medical Anthropologist, Harvard Medical School

Dr. Anthony S. Fauci
Director, National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases, National Institute of Health

Dr. Sylvester J. Gates
Physics, University of Maryland

Dr. Ralph Hirschmann
Bioorganic Chemistry, University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Brian K. Kobilka
Nobel Laureate in Chemistry,
Stanford University School of Medicine

Dr. W. Ian Lipkin
Director, Center for Infection and Immunity,
Columbia University

Dr. Victor A. McKusick
Founder, Human Genome Organization,
The Johns Hopkins University

Dr. Kenneth R. Miller
Professor of Biology, Brown University

Dr. Ruth Patrick
Limnology, Academy of Natural Sciences

Dr. Peter Raven
Director, Missouri Botanical Garden

Dr. Holmes Rolston, III
Philosophy, Colorado State University

Dr. Janet Rowley
Human Genetics, University of Chicago

Dr. Philip A. Sharp
Nobel Laureate in Medicine, MIT

Dr. Maxine F. Singer
President, Carnegie Institution of Washington

Dr. Charles H. Townes
Nobel Laureate in Physics,
University of California, Berkely

Dr. Robert G. Webster
Virology, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

Dr. Ahmed H. Zewail
Nobel Laureate for developments in femtoscience,
Chemistry, Cal Tech

Cathleen Kaveny

Seventh-Circuit Shakedown

MYRA SELBY DESERVED HER DAY IN THE SENATE

When law professor Amy Coney Barrett was nominated to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit by Donald Trump, her friends and colleagues at the University of Notre Dame rallied to her cause. (See this issue's editorial, "Bad Faith?")

One piece of support was particularly crucial. Jennifer Mason McAward, a Notre Dame law professor and the director of the University's Center for Civil and Human Rights, penned an impassioned open letter urging Indiana Senator Joseph Donnelly to allow Barrett's case to go forward. Barrett already had the necessary support from Senator Todd Young, a Republican. But the full Senate does not hold hearings on a candidate for the federal judiciary without the permission of both senators from the candidate's state. Soon after McAward's op-ed appeared, Donnelly sent in his "blue slip" authorizing the hearings to go forward.

Donnelly and McAward (a self-described political moderate who clerked for Justice Sandra Day O'Connor) did not allow political partisanship to trump the proper workings of government. Ultimately, they both judged that Barrett deserved a hearing.

But here's the thing: Barrett was not the first candidate from Indiana for the vacant spot on the Seventh Circuit. In January 2016, President Barack Obama nominated Myra Selby for a seat. While very different from Barrett's, Selby's qualifications are at least as impressive. Whereas Barrett received her legal education at Notre Dame, Selby graduated from the University of Michigan Law School—regularly ranked in the top ten in the nation. Barrett served as a law clerk to Justice Scalia on the U.S. Supreme Court. But Selby herself was a justice on the Indiana Supreme Court—in fact, she was the first woman and the first African American to hold that position. During her five years on the court, she wrote more than a hundred majority opinions. Before and after her time on the bench, she belonged to (and chaired) the court's Commission on Race and Gender Fairness.

While Barrett has spent most of her career in legal academia, Selby has been thoroughly immersed in the world of practice and policy. She was the first African-American partner of the highly respected Indianapolis law firm of Ice Miller, where she practiced both before and after her stints in government service. For two years, she served as the director of health policy for the state of Indiana. Significantly involved in her community and her church, she emphasizes service to children and to the economically disadvantaged. She serves on the volunteer panel for the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic. She is also a member of the board of trustees of Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis.

Despite her qualifications, Selby, unlike Barrett, never made it to Washington for a Senate hearing. While Senator Donnelly sent in his blue slip, Dan Coats, the Republican senator at the time, flatly refused to do so. "The citizens of Indiana will be best served by a nomination process that is taken completely out of politics," Coats said in February 2016. "We still have time to establish an equitable process for the remainder of this Congress. Myra Selby's nomination should be considered by an Indiana Federal Nominating Commission."

Myra Selby

With good reason, no such commission was ever constituted. It violates the U.S. Constitution by usurping the role of the president and the Senate in the judicial nomination process. Furthermore, Coats's implication that Selby was not qualified for the federal bench was insulting. By purporting to be above politics, Coats engaged in political machinations of the most egregious sort.

Selby's nomination languished for the remainder of the year. It expired on January 3, 2017—the conclusion of the 114th Congress. What happened to Merrick Garland, Obama's appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court, happened to Selby—as well as many other judicial nominees whose appointments were deliberately stalled by Republicans in Obama's last year of office.

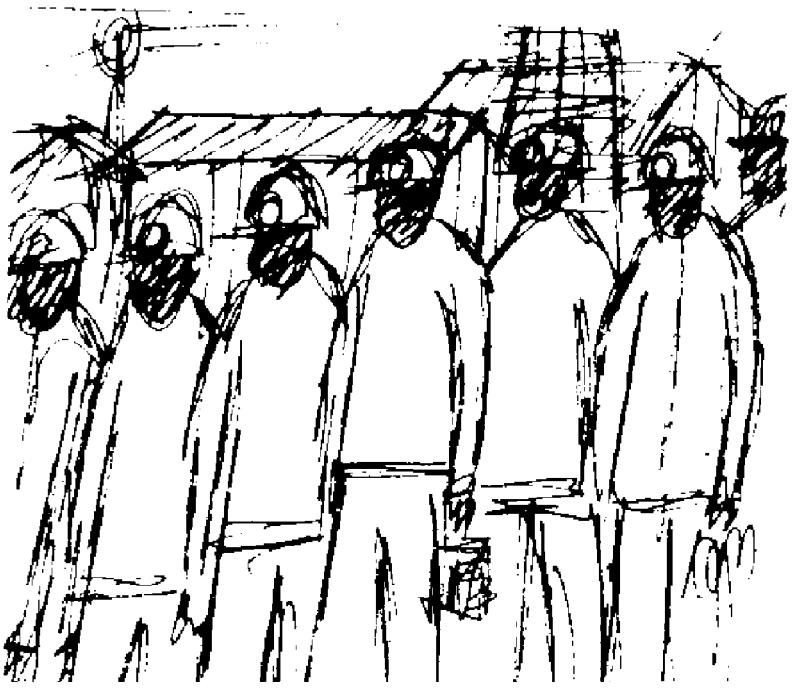
Did Myra Selby not deserve to have her day in the Senate as much as Amy Coney Barrett? Yet not one of the many Notre Dame Law School faculty members who are members of the Federalist Society or active in Republican politics put the same type of pressure on Coats that McAward exerted on Donnelly.

In one sense, the disparate treatment is understandable. Barrett is one of their own—a member of the Notre Dame family. Selby, for all her merits, is not. Still, in reflecting on the situation, I cannot help but think of the Jewish proverb: If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am not for others, what am I? And if not now, when? ■

Clayton Sinyai

Reunion!

CAN THE CHURCH & LABOR JOIN FORCES AGAIN?



Last January, as labor union activists struggled against the odds to stop Kentucky from becoming a "right-to-work" state, Bishop John Stowe of Lexington addressed a letter of opposition to every state legislator. In Iowa, public employees were targeted, and the state's Catholic Conference counseled legislators to preserve their union bargaining rights. And in the Lone Star State, Texas bishops and union leaders lined up to defend immigrants, testifying against the now-notorious SB4 or "show your papers" law targeting "sanctuary cities."

The 2016 elections transformed our politics overnight. Church leaders preoccupied with religious freedom issues during the Obama administration woke on November 9 to find new federal, state, and local officeholders who were eager to accommodate the church on religious liberty—but sharply at odds with Catholic doctrine on labor, immigration, and social justice. Increasingly bishops, priests, and lay activists found themselves alongside labor unions, fighting to defend "the least of these." But after years of drifting apart, can church and labor work together again? And will it make any difference if they do?

President Donald Trump began his term with a flurry of executive actions targeting immigrants and refugees: a travel ban denying entry to refugees fleeing violence in the Mideast, plans for a vast crackdown on undocumented workers and their families, denial of federal grants to "sanctuary cities" whose police did not cooperate with Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and a headlong rush to start work on a massive wall along the Mexican border. These actions drew vigorous protests from both the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the AFL-CIO.

These protests went well beyond press statements critical of White House policies. Newark's Cardinal Joseph Tobin earned national headlines by accompanying Catalino Guerrero, an undocumented Mexican immigrant, to the Peter Rodino Federal Building to challenge his deportation order. The AFL-CIO issued "know your rights" publications to advise workers confronted by immigration enforcement agents. Unions like the Hotel Workers (UNITE HERE) put immigration-related demands on the bargaining table, calling on employers to demand a warrant before permitting ICE agents on their property.

The political shockwaves weren't confined to the federal level; similar events unfolded in many states. Iowa's Republicans captured the Senate, securing complete control of state government, and abruptly targeted the union rights of government workers. Taking their cue from Governor Scott Walker's 2011 actions in Wisconsin, Iowa legislators debated a measure stripping bargaining powers from unions representing public employees. As teachers protested and lobbied, Iowa's bishops pointedly reminded legislators that "workers retain their right of association whether they work for a private employer or for the government." Bishop Richard Pates of Des Moines personally buttonholed Governor Terry Brandstad and several state legislators to make his concerns known. But the bid failed, and Iowa public workers face the same calamity that has decimated unions in the Badger state.

In Kentucky, it was private-sector workers who found their union rights under siege. As in Iowa, Kentucky Republicans had at long last captured unified control of the state's levers of power, and moved quickly to propose "right-to-work" legislation that would gravely weaken the state's labor unions. (Right-to-work laws permit individual workers to opt out of paying union dues, even when the majority of their peers have voted for union representation. Since such "free riders" continue to enjoy the wages and benefits of the union contract, many workers drop their union membership.) Bishop Stowe responded with a remarkable letter to the Kentucky

ANTONUCCI

legislators, expounding Catholic teaching on labor unions and concluding that

> The falsely named "right-to-work" legislation proposed does not in fact create new rights to work, but rather strives to limit the effectiveness and power of the unions. When all workers benefit from the negotiations of the labor unions, through better wages and conditions, it is only just that the workers should participate by paying dues to the union which represents them in the workplace. The weakening of unions by so-called "right to work" laws...cannot be seen as contributing to the common good.

In the event, Kentucky legislators had no more interest in prophetic voices than their Iowa counterparts, and the state is now "right to work."

The bitter fight over the Texas "show-your-papers" law earned more national attention than all these other setbacks combined. In several Texas cities, city governments and police departments had set a policy of steering clear of immigration matters in order to win the trust and cooperation of immigrant communities; they wanted undocumented immigrants to report violent crimes and testify against criminals rather than keep silent for fear of deportation. Governor Greg Abbott and his supporters in the legislature advanced a bill to end this practice, requiring city and county governments to assist ICE and granting police sweeping powers to question suspects about their immigration status.

The Texas AFL-CIO and the Texas Catholic Conference strongly supported immigrant groups fighting the punitive legislation. "We reject the premise that persons who are merely suspected of being undocumented immigrants should be rounded up by state and local police agents," testified Austin Bishop Joe Vasquez. "The overwhelming majority of immigrants, whether documented or undocumented, are not criminals. They simply need a job or need to flee from desperate situations. God has brought them before us—perhaps not in the way that you or I would have preferred for them to be brought before us—but they are before us now and we need to care for them." But in the end, neither immigrant nor labor nor faith groups could defeat the bill. Governor Abbott signed SB4 into law in May.

Catholic social doctrine has defended workers' right to organize in labor unions since Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum novarum*—issued just a few years after America's young labor unions banded together in 1886 to form the American Federation of Labor (the "AFL" in today's AFL-CIO). Both groups have advocated strongly for a living wage and safe and healthy working conditions ever since. The church in America has been a passionate defender of the newest Americans since the Irish mass migration of the mid-nineteenth century. American trade unionists once favored limiting immigration, believing that it depressed wages, but began changing course in the 1980s. Union activists became convinced that both prudence and justice pointed toward organizing immigrant workers rather than barring the door, and have worked hard to build support in union ranks for comprehensive immigration reform with a path to citizenship for the undocumented.

But pouring this old wine into today's bottles is no easy task. In the 1950s and 1960s, shared experiences and innumerable personal relationships tied church and labor together, creating mutual trust and making teamwork common sense. They had a common history supporting the economic reforms of the New Deal, including the Wagner Act (the law that gave workers the right to organize in unions without retaliation from their employers) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (the law that created the federal minimum wage). Moreover, the people who attended a union meeting on Thursday evening were in the pews Sunday morning. A local union president might have a brother who was a parish priest; bishops and national labor leaders sat on civic boards together. Both sides understood each other: their needs, their challenges, and their aspirations.

Today the situation is very different. Neither church nor union commands the social influence it did in the mid-twentieth century. There are a lot of empty seats at today's union meetings—and at Sunday Mass. There's a good chance the pastor no longer knows any shop stewards, and the union president no longer serves on the parish council. That means the pastor probably doesn't understand "right to work," and doesn't realize that unions are lobbying for his immigrant parishioners in their visits to the state capitol. The local union president, in turn, is likely unfamiliar with Catholic social doctrine, and probably doesn't know that his state's Catholic Conference has been campaigning for a bill to increase the minimum wage.

Our polarized political environment aggravates this problem. Potent social issues such as abortion and gay marriage—not on the agenda in the 1950s—have entered our politics and driven a wedge between the two groups. Most of today's labor leaders and activists (if not all union members) see themselves as part of a progressive movement in the Democratic Party, a movement that believes contraception, abortion, and gay marriage are civil-rights issues. Catholic leaders and activists (if not everyone in the pews) see these issues as moral ones, with progressives on the other side of a great ethical divide. Worse, after the Affordable Care Act contraceptive mandate and a platform promise to repeal the Hyde Amendment (which ensures that taxpayer dollars are not spent on abortion), many Catholics are convinced that the Democrats are waging a purposeful assault on their religious liberty by compelling them to pay for practices violating the tenets of their faith.

These differences should not prevent labor and church from working together to promote the values they already hold in common: social solidarity, economic justice, workers' rights, and protection of the immigrant and the stranger. But as a practical matter, collaboration is built on relationships, and relationships are built on mutual respect. In today's hypercharged political debates, we tend to stay in our own

partisan corners, talk with people we already agree with, and see opponents not as mistaken but as malevolent. I can cooperate with a well-meaning person who has different political positions, but it's hard to work productively with someone I've labeled a callous baby-killer or an irrational homophobe.

Can church-labor cooperation still happen today? It has in Maryland, where a coalition of faith, labor, and community organizations called Working Matters has been campaigning since 2012 for a paid sick-leave law. While most professionals and white-collar workers enjoy a paid sick-leave benefit, most low-wage service workers don't, say advocates—leaving custodial workers unable to take a day off to care for a sick child, and food-service workers reporting to kitchens while ill. Although the Democrats control the state legislature, the campaign has been a grueling one, with many legislators hesitant to endorse a new government mandate on business. In 2016 the bill finally passed the Maryland House, but remained bottled up in the Senate.

SEIU (Service Employees International Union) State Council Director Terry Cavanagh, who's an active parishioner at St. Ignatius in Baltimore, has worked closely with Maryland Catholic Conference Executive Director Mary Ellen Russell during the campaign, developing a close rapport. Both point to the strategic benefits of a partnership on the issue: labor organizations can round up progressive votes, but the church can help worker-justice advocates get beyond the usual suspects. "From past work on life and education issues, we knew some of the conservative Democrats who were on the fence on paid sick leave," said Russell. "It was easier for us to reach them on this issue because of our existing relationships." In 2017 the bill won strong majorities in both houses. Though Governor Larry Hogan vetoed the bill, supporters had enough votes for an override—and plan to bring the bill back when the legislature reconvenes.

The events in Maryland reveal the church's unique opportunity to witness for social justice in today's political environment. With commitments ranging from the right to life to the preferential option for the poor, Catholic Conference staff work with legislators across the ideological spectrum. In a time of especially bitter political division, the Catholic Church is one of the few remaining actors routinely crossing party lines. If worker-justice advocates want a dialogue with red America, Catholic social action is one of the few vehicles left. That should be reason enough to work toward a renewed labor-church alliance. ■

Clayton Sinyai *is the executive director of the Catholic Labor Network, an organization that brings together Catholic trade-union leaders with clergy and lay Catholic activists committed to Catholic social teaching on labor and work.*

Joshua Kinlaw

Contentious Christians

FORGING THE PATH TO CONCORD

Christians have always been a fractious bunch. Within twenty-five years of Jesus' death, St. Paul was warning Christians at Corinth against taking one another to court. The apostle's Corinthian experience would likely make him unsurprised at today's South Carolinians: Episcopalians there are suing one another over some $500 million in church properties. Within the church the result has been tension between an ecumenical ideal, on the one hand, and doctrinal "purity" and denominationalism on the other. Here I would like to explore the idea central to unity among believers: concord. It is a concept as ancient as it is elusive, yet it has much to offer twenty-first-century believers.

Beneath countless reasons for division lies a familiar, fundamental pattern. Some of us prioritize theological precision more than others. Among those who do, anything resembling a serious dilution of doctrine triggers an effort to stave off heterodoxy—which in turn morphs into an excuse for division. Others of us, meanwhile, see little point in doctrinal exactitude when there are so many social needs to meet and political wrongs to right. The result of these conflicting priorities is discord—a discord easily amplified by the use of weaponized adjectives. Thus "orthodox" believers separate themselves from "progressive," or "gospel-centered" from ecumenical, in a perennial effort to distinguish "good" from "bad." Pope Francis recently offered an eloquent summary in his Pentecost homily: Christian unity is the space between "diversity without unity," on the one hand, and "unity without diversity," on the other.

That space is awfully hard to find, but ultimately even the "purest" group must maintain some sort of internal agreement in order to survive—and this means tolerating disagreement. Indeed, the key to survival has always been concord, fostered by the act of "agreeing to disagree." This may sound like a cliché of modernity, but in fact its pedigree is ancient. Religious believers would do well to remind themselves of this heritage.

The story can be said to start around 400 BCE in the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War, a time when Athens emphasized *homonoia*, or "like-mindedness," as a spur to recovering from a generation's worth of civil war. Concord became a key concept of Greco-Roman civilization and a feature of classical philosophy from Plato to Cicero, with Aristotle's student, Alexander the Great, championing a global *homonoia* throughout his vast empire. By around 350 BCE, the concept had made its way into the pantheon of classical deities—both Greeks and Romans offering sacrifices to the goddesses *Homonoia* and *Concordia*—and had become an important part of the "brand" of any successful Roman emperor. As Edward Gibbon noted, concordia was the idea that allowed the Roman Empire to run. The emperor Marcus Aurelius, said Gibbon, helped establish a tolerant empire that allowed for a "mutual indulgence" and "*even* religious concord" (the emphasis is Gibbon's.)

Though the United States is not ruled by an Aurelius, we can profit from considering how religious outcasts managed to thrive under a ruler diametrically opposed to their core beliefs. Early Christians, particularly the generation after Paul, were adamant in their insistence on unity as the basis of survival. They were persecuted and witnessed strife in the Christian communities firsthand. Fascinatingly, scholarship suggests some martyrdoms had more to do with Christian infighting than Roman persecution: in arresting Peter and Paul, for example, Roman authorities may well have been acting on complaints from *Christians*. Concord was therefore a matter of life and death—and, by the end of the first century, an ideal in both types of *ekklesia*, the political "assembly" as well as the "church."

We need not study church history formally to notice an inverse correlation between Christian praise of concord and actual Christian *practice* of the virtue. Paul's letters to some of the first Christian communities, for example, came in response to reports of discord; centuries later, the great councils and creeds were the products of epic cultural, theological, and philosophical strife. The pagan neighbors of Jesus followers recognized this reverse correlation, as is evidenced by the Greek polymath Plutarch in the late first-century, writing to comment on the renovated Temple of Concord in Rome. Occupying one of the most prestigious sites in the eternal city, the temple was "tagged" shortly after its rededication by a cynical Roman with fresh memories of the recent political unrest and blood spilled on same ground where the temple now stood. "A work of mad discord produces a temple of Concord," read the graffito. The irony did not escape St. Augustine's notice, who in *The City of God* recommended a new name for the temple: not *Concordia*, but *Discordia*.

What applications might we make from concord's ancient pedigree? First, I would add North American Anglicans and Episcopalians to any catalogue of fraternal factions. Leave it to the self-described "middle way" to try and disprove the adage that "there are no great moderates in history." An international group of Anglican divines has even written a book on the topic, fittingly and humorously titled *Good Disagreement*. The volume features essays by leading lights,

from the prolific N. T. Wright to the conservative Rev. Tory Baucum, whose unlikely friendship with his liberal Episcopal bishop in Virginia drew national media attention. The very fact that successful intrareligious dialogue was chronicled in the *New York Times* tells us how rare a feat such concord is.

The unifying thread of *Good Disagreement* is concord rhetoric—and it so happens that the current archbishop of Canterbury is a master practitioner. "Reconciliation doesn't always mean agreement," is how Justin Welby previewed the most recent global meeting of Anglican leaders, in January 2016. When nearly forty primates came to England, the only consensus was that there would be no consensus. Nor was there: one of the first primates to leave the Canterbury meeting before its official closing did so in the interest of what he calls "pure" Anglicanism; and a few days later, the bishop of the disciplined American Episcopal church shamed the majority for further alienating gay and lesbian parishioners, citing Paul's letter to the Galatians.

Statue of the goddess Concordia

Yet some semblance of unity broke out. The progressive Americans were scolded—in the politest language possible—for their unilateral revision of their liturgy to accommodate same-sex marriage rites, leaving the more conservative representatives of the global South to return home encouraged. Welby's idea of reconciling without perfect agreement was essential to these efforts. The idea draws on deep wellsprings. When the archbishop calls for a "harmony of heart, even if there is divergence in view," he avails himself of a tradition of "concord rhetoric" that an earlier bishop of Liverpool would have approved—J. C. Ryle, who in 1879 warned his Victorian parishioners against "doctrinal teetotalism" and prescribed healthy debate among Christians.

These two examples point to an even earlier episode in the history of concord, one that continues to reverberate in American Christianity. The example of John and Charles Wesley is perfect for two reasons. First, they were brothers, and the fraternal bond is a classic illustration of concord, a relationship more frequently idealized in the ancient world than even the conjugal relationship. The Wesleys knew this, and were able to distinguish between essentials and nonessentials in order to maintain their fraternal bond. Like their parents, they could not see eye-to-eye on English politics (in a letter, John broaches the sensitive topic of English politics and King Charles I, inviting his brother to "Come and see what I say," and offering the reassurance that "If the worst comes, we can agree to disagree"). What is more, the brothers' theology led to one of the more consequential divisions within Protestantism. Demurring from the Reformed emphasis on predestination and limited atonement, the Wesleys helped to draw a boundary today popularly construed as "Calvinism versus Arminianism." For John and Charles, this tension was not only about doctrinal *-isms*. Rather it was felt in the context of their personal friendship with George Whitefield, the greatest evangelist of their age, who by the time of his death in 1770 had been in theological disagreement with the Wesleys for thirty years.

While this disagreement is fairly well known among Protestants, less well known is the fact that Whitefield's eulogy was delivered by none other than John Wesley. And less known *still* is that Wesley was among the first to use the phrase "agree to disagree," and did so in this eulogy. Wesley's phrasing stands as the prototype of concord rhetoric in the English language, and as an example for those of us all too aware that Christian politics can be Machiavellian. As Wesley's London audience knew well, theological differences between the two revivalists were well established by the time of Whitefield's death. Yet the priority, Wesley said, was to "keep close to the grand scriptural doctrines which [Whitefield] everywhere delivered. There are many doctrines of a less essential nature, with regard to which even the sincere children of God...may 'agree to disagree.'"

John Wesley helped bring another ecumenically minded phrase into common currency: "In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things charity." It is a sentiment with which pretty much everyone agrees; Pope John XXIII said as much in his first encyclical, *Ad petri cathedram,* in 1959. The problem with this papal pronouncement—and with Wesley's original idea—is that concord depends on a consensual distinction of the "essential" from the non- (the *necessarii* from *dubia*). And this in turn depends on an agreed-on authority that can name *adiaphora*, matters not essential to faith. And therein lies the rub.

The Wesleys' answer to this problem was relatively straightforward. Whatever their Methodist progeny might say, and despite political disagreements on matters both within and outside the church, they were committed to staying *within* the church, a commitment that separates their Anglican tradition from many of its Protestant relatives: the former thinks of itself as a "communion," rather than another "denomination." But we can only wonder what the Wesley brothers would think of their Church of

England's relation to a global Anglican Communion, which today is a "communion" in only the loosest sense. Fed up with what is seen as heterodoxy, particularly on the matters of same-sex marriage and homosexual priests, certain Anglican dioceses are linking themselves to Canterbury only by disassociating themselves from North American or British neighbors and taking circuitous routes through the global south—usually Africa.

The most recent communiqué from a group of these "Bible-based," "orthodox" Anglicans will encourage many in that it disavows a one-size-fits-all approach to solutions for internecine disputes, accepting that there is no "single solution," and that the path forward may well allow for parishioners to remain "within the current structures." And yet the longer historical tendency of Christian factionalism can be discouraging. Dioceses multiplying in search of something "purer," and denominations shrinking yet surviving: it is enough to make Protestants swim the Tiber, or perhaps head to the hills with a new Benedict. But at the end of that journey one realizes those impulses may well be misguided. As the most casual observer of the Christian religious landscape knows, no single group has a monopoly on like-mindedness.

This truth must relate to *homonoia*'s close association with another ancient ideal, *metanoia*, meaning "change of mind," or "repentance." The word occurs more than twenty times in the New Testament, and even so, the action it signifies remains easier said than done. And so there is work to be done, as always. Within a believing community, both sides of any given dispute are going to have to "change" their several independent minds before they are capable of thinking together, with one. ■

Joshua Kinlaw *is assistant professor of History and Humanities at The King's College in New York City.*

ELEPHANT AT THE MALL GRAND OPENING

The snout is delicate, snuffling, pursuing the peanut and
extending further. Considering.
Two bouts of hot exhalation,
saluting, curling around the twin-nuggets
of the peanut shell and bringing the small woody legume to a mouth
like a secret smile and then the exchange is done.

No more, nothing else to give.
But nonetheless the prehensile
poke-holes breathe, trespass on my shirt front and shoulder,
and gently, shockingly softly, cross my face.
The elm-tree wrinkles around his eyes are equalled by
seams throughout his girth.
The eyes are so small, the feet so flat and ponderously right exactly there,

and shifting unalterably in the following new position,
so weightily emphatic that
the manure just dropped on the sidewalk
is instantly trodden to flat, golden soil.
Even his shadow takes a long heart-beat
to shift and flow, passing with his keeper's

metal prod as the weather passes, climate
altering as the world settles on.
And yet he turns back, half a planet taking a long moment
in apparent curiosity at a stranger's bounty, wondering if
another gift might be in the offing,

so fully present, so immediately searching
with his ears shrugging upward like awnings and his skin
flowing with the argument of
muscles over his bones, that nothing can happen, now,
nothing but this great animal's wonder.

—Michael Cadnum

Michael Cadnum's Earthquake Murder, *a new book of short stories, will be published in 2018, and a collection of animal poems, many of which have appeared in* Commonweal, *is in progress.*

King & His Mentors

Rediscovering the Black Social Gospel

Gary Dorrien

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks famously sparked the civil rights movement by refusing to yield her bus seat to a white passenger in Montgomery, Alabama. Two days later, after the first day of a boycott to challenge bus segregation, its organizers discussed whether they should end the boycott. They put off a decision and headed to a protest rally at Holt Street Baptist Church, where lightning struck. Martin Luther King Jr., a young pastor lacking almost any background in social activism, electrified the Holt Street gathering with a sensational address. King had no time to prepare his speech, but like Parks, he had prepared for this moment without knowing it. She was a department-store seamstress who acted spontaneously on December 1, though she was also the secretary of the local NAACP and knew that a plan existed to challenge bus segregation. He was uniquely suited to inspire and hold together America's greatest liberation movement. Had King not lived in Montgomery, someone else would have had to emerge to lead the civil rights movement. But had King lived anywhere else, lightning would not have struck in Montgomery.

He did not come from nowhere. Long before King burst on the national scene, there was a tradition of black social-gospel leaders who tried to abolish Jim Crow and the mania of racial lynching, refuted the racist culture that demeaned their human dignity, and formed a succession of protest organizations. They showed that progressive theology could be combined with social-justice politics in black-church contexts. They refused to give up on the black churches, even as a chorus of black and white intellectuals contended that black churches were hopelessly self-centered, provincial, insular, anti-intellectual, and conservative. The black social gospel is strangely overlooked, but it provided the theology of social justice that the civil rights movement preached and sang, and without it King would not have known what to say when lightning struck in Montgomery.

Martin Luther King Jr. giving his "I Have a Dream" speech during the March on Washington, August 28, 1963

King's role models were black social-gospel leaders who came of age in the 1920s, and their role models were founders of the black social gospel. Both groups were enthralled in the 1920s by the spectacle of unarmed people of color rebelling against British colonialism in India. They noted the parallels and debated the differences between Indian and black American oppression. In the early going, they didn't know that Mohandas Gandhi was deeply influenced by Booker T. Washington, or that Gandhi took white supremacy for granted during his earlier campaign for equal rights in South Africa, counting South Africa's wealthy Indian Muslims and

Gary Dorrien *teaches at Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University. His many books include* Kantian Reason and Hegelian Spirit, *which won the Association of American Publishers' PROSE Award in 2013, and* The New Abolition: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Black Social Gospel, *which won the Grawemeyer Award in 2017. This article summarizes themes in his book* Breaking White Supremacy: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Social Gospel, *soon to be published by Yale University Press.*

poor indentured Indian Hindus as white. To black social gospel leaders, the Gandhian revolt was thrilling without qualification, whatever one made of the strategic factors. Reverdy Ransom, in *AME Church Review*, Adam Clayton Powell Sr., at the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City, future Morehouse College President Benjamin Mays, in the *Pittsburgh Courier*, and future Howard University President Mordecai Johnson, on the lecture circuit every week, talked about Gandhi constantly. For many, the "Gandhi issue" reduced to one question: Where is our Gandhi?

Every call for a Gandhi-like savior evoked cheers, caveats, and rejoinders. India was different from the United States, and Gandhi was different from any conceivable black American equivalent. India had traditions of holy figures who fasted and sacrificed for a cause. Too much focus on moral heroes was disabling. Gandhi spoke for India's entire working class, a far cry from the African-American situation. Gandhi rebelled against colonialism and untouchability, not the Indian caste system, but Jim Crow segregation was like the caste system. Black Americans had more to lose by opting for civil disobedience, because black Americans were a small minority in the United States and they had real economic gains to lose.

W.E.B. Du Bois was America's leading proponent of global solidarity for non-white peoples. He did more than anyone to inform African Americans about Gandhi's campaigns and importance, and he did it with colorful, quotable zingers. Yet Du Bois was also a leading exponent of every objection just summarized. Du Bois said nothing came close to India in exposing the rotten tyrannical core of European imperialism. He lionized Gandhi repeatedly as the apostle of an almost miraculous anticolonial revolution. He treasured Gandhi as the world's leading enemy of white supremacy. But Gandhi-like civil disobedience, Du Bois judged, would not work for black Americans, who needed to stick with agitation and publicity.

Black social gospel ministers of the 1930s and '40s were schooled in this debate over the meaning of the Gandhian revolution and the applicability of the Gandhi example. Some agreed with Du Bois about the limits of Gandhi's approach in the United States. Some were the opposite, spurning black internationalism while pining for a Gandhi-like rebel. Most agreed with Du Bois that Gandhi was singularly exemplary regardless of how one came out on strategic considerations, and nearly all agreed with Du Bois that the protest tradition in black politics represented by the National Association of Colored People, of which Du Bois was a founder, needed to prevail. Mordecai Johnson folded a pro-Gandhi section into his stump speeches in 1930 and delivered it tirelessly for the next thirty years. Benjamin Mays and spiritual theologian Howard Thurman had personal encounters with Gandhi in India that shaped their activism and teaching. All were major influences on King before and after Montgomery.

Johnson, the first black president of Howard, was a graduate of Morehouse College, the University of Chicago, Rochester Seminary, and Harvard Divinity School. A legendary speaker on the social-gospel lecture circuit, he espoused liberal theology, democratic socialism, anticolonial internationalism, civil rights progressivism, anti-anti-Communism, and Gandhian nonviolence. One of Johnson's trademark lectures on Gandhi made a riveting impression on King. But Johnson was consumed by Howard University and embattled there. Many Howard professors looked down on ministers, claiming that Johnson ran the university in tyrannical preacher fashion. Some choked on his politics too, as did many alums and outsiders. Johnson prevailed over his critics, guiding Howard until his retirement in 1960. His sparkling lecture career and persistent battling for racial justice established the gold standard for Mays, Thurman, and King. But Johnson's long embattlement at Howard disqualified him from the role that fell to King.

Like Johnson, Mays was a schoolmaster disciplinarian and quintessential social-gospel progressive. He grew up viciously oppressed in South Carolina, clawed his way to an education, and earned a PhD at the University of Chicago Divinity School. Then he served as dean of the School of Religion at Howard, forming a social-gospel trio with Johnson and Thurman that lifted the university. Then Mays took command of Morehouse College, where he mentored King. Mays implored black churches to adopt his combination of social-gospel theology and racial-justice politics, and he pushed the American and international ecumenical movements to deal with racism. At bottom, Mays was a moralist and, as he said, "a race man." Theologically, by his lights, he stuck to what mattered, preaching about the kingdom of God, the social ethical teaching of Jesus, the sin of individuals and society, the way of the cross, and the providential grace of God, very much like Johnson. Mays emphatically rejected conservative claims that the social gospel substituted progressive politics for Christian doctrine. To him, doctrines that got in the way of preaching about social evils, social justice, and God's favor for the poor and oppressed were useless and distracting.

Thurman had the usual Southern-black childhood experience of never imagining that a friendly relationship with a white person was possible. The Klan controlled politics in his hometown, Daytona Beach, and the entire state of Florida had only three public high schools for black children. His life changed when he heard Johnson give a stirring speech at a YMCA Conference. Listening to Johnson, Thurman found a model of who he wanted to be. He took Johnson's path to Morehouse and Rochester Seminary, joined the faculty at Howard after Johnson became president, and became a star performer on the lecture circuit.

The trio of Johnson, Mays, and Thurman, upon establishing black internationalism and Gandhian nonviolence at Howard, compelled Howard professors to reconsider their low opinion of theologians, religion, and the School of Religion. All three came up through YMCA ecumenism. For

them, the path to Gandhian internationalism ran through Protestant missionary societies, especially the YMCA and its youth activist offspring, the Student Christian Movement. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Thurman was supposed to be the answer to the Gandhi question. He heard it constantly on the lecture circuit.

But Thurman did not have the temperament to be a political leader, or even the willingness to speak for racial justice in the manner of Johnson and Mays. Political advocacy felt crude to him, and he tired of the classroom too. Increasingly he gave himself to his inward mystical spirituality. He disappointed his friends and spouse by accepting a ministerial call to an interracial congregation in San Francisco, applying to himself the advice he gave to others, his best-known saying: "Do not ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and do it. For what the world needs is people who are fully alive." Thurman had his greatest influence on the black freedom movement in the early 1940s, on the lecture circuit, where he fended off the Gandhi question. Then he became a sage and author, exerting a different kind of influence. And his influence grew after he was gone.

For a long time the symbol of church-based racial justice militancy was Adam Clayton Powell Jr. His father was a famous social gospel pastor at the Abyssinian Church in Harlem, and in 1930 he joined his father at Abyssinian. Powell became a prominent community leader, crusading for jobs and affordable housing. In 1938 he succeeded his father as pastor at Abyssinian, preaching social-gospel progressivism. In 1944 he became New York State's first black representative in Congress and the first from any Northern state besides Illinois since Reconstruction.

Powell ended business as usual in the House of Representatives. Stubbornly, proudly, defiantly, by himself, sometimes gleefully, he forced the House to deal with racial segregation, week after week. He blasted segregation and challenged segregationists to defend their policies. He condemned racist language on the House floor, defied segregationists in his party, and goaded liberals to take a stand against racial caste. He added "Powell Amendments" to bills proposing federal expenditures, denying federal funds to segregated jurisdictions. The Powell defunding strategy was engrafted in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Powell steered much of the Great Society legislation through his congressional committee.

For most of his career, Powell was the only nationally prominent black politician, period. He had a vivid theological imagination, a liberal theology steeped in romanticism, and a devoted following at the Abyssinian Church. But Powell clashed with King and other civil rights leaders, offending King in 1960 with a malicious threat that severed King's alliance with pacifist and movement-organizer Bayard Rustin for three years. When Rustin, King, and labor leader A. Philip Randolph pulled off the historic March on Washington in 1963, they kept Powell off the speakers' platform, and Powell's congressional career ended badly in 1971. He was charismatic and arrogant, righteous and corrupt, and religious and cynical. He mystified allies and enemies alike with his contradictions. Among black social-gospel leaders, only King accomplished more than Powell, but Powell damaged his own legacy.

The person who tried hardest to play the Gandhi role was James Farmer. When Montgomery erupted in 1955, Farmer had been trying for fourteen years to spark a civil rights revolution with exactly the Gandhian tactics that King subsequently employed, working with the same movement professionals who joined King. Farmer studied in the late 1930s under Thurman and Mays at Howard, where his father taught theology. In 1941, while working as an organizer for the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), Farmer tried to convert FOR to Gandhi-style agitation against racial segregation. The following year he co-founded CORE—the Congress of Racial Equality—a scrappy, scattered, interracial offshoot of FOR. Both organizations were small leftwing groups with little chance of scaling up. In addition, Farmer worked with trade unions that did the minimum, or less, for racial justice.

Farmer tried and failed to win for his organizations some of the spotlight that fell on Randolph, America's only prominent black labor leader. He and Randolph never quite worked together, although each had something the other needed, and Farmer cut himself off from churches not belonging

to his leftist orbit. Farmer, Randolph, Du Bois, and many others were shocked when America's Gandhi turned out to be a young Baptist minister lacking any activist experience. Years later Farmer recalled, "We knew what we were doing, but no one else did." CORE, to him, seemed like a flea gnawing on the ear of an elephant. Not only did CORE's numerous sit-ins and pickets fail to bring the beast to its knees. It was hard to pretend that the beast even noticed.

Pauli Murray, a lawyer who became the first black woman ordained as an Episcopal priest, was involved in those early demonstrations during the same period that she was the only female member of her class at Howard Law School. In my second volume on the black social gospel tradition, *Breaking White Supremacy*, I had a difficult time placing her in this story. Diane Nash, Ella Baker, and Fannie Lou Hamer were easy to place, because they were movement organizers. They were marginalized for being female, but very much on the scene. Murray, on the other hand, overlapped the entire story of the black social gospel in the civil rights movement, but never gained entry. For a while I sprinkled her into every chapter, showing what excluded her this time or that time. But that diminished her importance, so I held her entire story until the end, making her life a commentary on a tradition that silenced women.

The civil rights movement was a phase, from 1955 to 1968, of the black freedom movement, and it made King, not the other way around. There is no King without the black social gospel forerunners who inspired him and the civil rights activists who lifted him up. But King is the shining star of the civil rights movement. His brilliance electrified the Montgomery boycott on its first night and sustained that campaign against enraged opposition. Then he linked the two different movements that constituted the civil rights movement, personally fusing the fledgling, theatrical, church-based movement in the South to the venerable, professional, mostly secular movement in the North. Rustin and FOR stalwart Glenn Smiley rushed to Montgomery to offer Gandhian expertise, King met socialist organizers Randolph, Ella Baker, and Stanley Levison through Rustin, and in 1957 Rustin persuaded King to found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). King stocked SCLC with high-voltage preachers who deferred to him: Fred Shuttlesworth, Ralph Abernathy, and Joseph Lowery. Later he added Wyatt Walker, James Bevel, Hosea Williams, and C. T. Vivian, eventually placing Andrew Young in charge of corralling an unruly crew.

King rightly figured that the movement needed a church-based organization dedicated to spreading protest wildfire. The NAACP was too formal, membership-based, and consumed with marching through the courts to light a fire. For a while, SCLC did not do much better; it took the student sit-in explosion of 1960 and the founding of the confrontational Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to push King's organization into actual Gandhian disruption, not merely talking about it. Gradually King realized that his group needed to raise hell in the most hostile cities it could find, so he got more intentional about choosing combative personalities for it. SCLC became a fire-alarm outfit relying on street theater and heroic agitation, spurning the preference of Baker and SNCC for long-term, grassroots, community organizing. The preacher spellbinders of SCLC thus seemed older than they were, compared to SNCC. But both organizations stoked protest wildfire in ways that King's leadership inspired. His ability to galvanize and personify the civil rights movement symbolizes why the black social gospel matters and what made him singularly important.

Throughout his career King was committed to democratic socialism, personalist theological liberalism, and Gandhian nonviolence. He fashioned these perspectives into the most compelling public theology of the twentieth century.

His Southern clerical-family upbringing and his graduate education at Northern theological schools prepared him to play this role. Any reading that minimizes King's upbringing *or* graduate education misconstrues him, which is what happens when scholars fail to credit the black social gospel tradition he embraced. King was nurtured in the piety and idioms of an urban, middle-class, black Baptist family and congregation. He absorbed the evangelical piety and social concerns preached by his father. He got a more intellectual version of both things when he studied at Morehouse College, where Mays influenced him, and then at Crozer Seminary in Pennsylvania, where the prominent Baptist preacher and writer J. Pius Barbour was his pastor. At Crozer and Boston University, King adopted a socialist version of social gospel theology and a personalist version of post-Kantian idealistic philosophy, and he acquired a conflicted attraction to Gandhian nonviolence. Throughout his movement career King was committed to democratic socialism, personalist theological liberalism, and Gandhian nonviolence. He fashioned these perspectives into the most compelling public theology of the twentieth century, mobilizing religious and political communities that had almost no history of working together.

King's understanding of democratic socialism and his commitment to it came straight out of the social gospel. As a student at Crozer Seminary and Boston University School of Theology he absorbed Walter Rauschenbusch's seminal Christian socialist books *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907) and *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917),

which argued that capitalism is hostile to democracy and inimical to Christian ethics. Rauschenbusch championed radical economic democracy—cooperatives, mixed forms of worker and community ownership, syndical-based unions, socialized banks, and nationalized monopolies and major industrial enterprises—contending that political democracy cannot survive without economic democracy. These arguments defined Christian socialism for decades after Rauschenbusch's death in 1918, shaping the Christian socialists who influenced King. It mattered greatly to King that Johnson, Mays, Thurman, Farmer, and Barbour were followers of Rauschenbusch on political economy. Moreover, Reinhold Niebuhr wrote his most important works during his socialist phase, and King's dean at Boston University, Walter Muelder, was a Rauschenbusch socialist. King lamented to insiders throughout his career that he could not talk about democratic socialism in public, a constraint that frustrated him immensely in his last years.

His commitment to personal idealism was nurtured by black-church preaching that he was "somebody" in God's image and deepened by his studies at Crozer and Boston University. King chose Boston University because it taught personal idealism and half of America's black doctoral students in religion went there. On Gandhian nonviolence, King was vague and uncertain until Montgomery erupted and Rustin rushed to Montgomery. King had a socialist-personalist-Gandhian model in Muelder, but more important, when King entered the ministry he had models of everything he cared about in Johnson, Mays, Thurman, and Barbour. If they could blend black-church religion, modern intellectualism, and social-justice politics, so could he; in fact, he was called to do so. King stuck to these commitments throughout his career, in changing configurations. He liked that he had a philosophical foundation, a variant of post-Kantian idealism, although he acquired critics who thought it quaint that he wanted one. He insisted repeatedly that he was committed to Gandhian nonviolence as a spiritual-ethical way of life, not merely a movement strategy, although he accepted Niebuhr's critiques of both.

When King told the story of his intellectual development, he emphasized the white theologians and philosophers he read in seminary, which obscured the role of his cultural and religious formation. It took a great deal of scholarly deconstruction to correct the misleading account that King provided in playing to white audiences. Then scholars reacted to revelations about King's sexual behavior and faulty citation practices by claiming that his graduate education was not much of an education and he never cared about it anyway. Some of our best King scholars, notably David Garrow, Keith Miller, and David Levering Lewis, demeaned King's intellectual seriousness and his teachers by claiming that King only pretended to learn what his professors pretended to teach him. Others piled on by claiming, wrongly, that the liberal theology taught at Crozer and Boston was thin religious humanism not worth studying.

Personal idealism was a theory of the transcendent reality of personal spirit and the organic unity of nature in spirit. King's teachers put a personalizing Christian stamp on strains of philosophical idealism deriving from Immanuel Kant, G.W.F. Hegel, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Rudolf Hermann Lotze. King wrote a dense dissertation that defended the existence of a personal God and a moral order, identifying personality with self-consciousness and self-direction. He criticized impersonal theologies that conceded too much to materialism and positivism, explaining that moral truth, not merely a theological position, was at stake. I have much at stake in showing why King prized the personal idealism he studied and why it mattered to him for the rest of his life. Thus my book *Breaking White Supremacy* goes long on this subject.

King's mainstay in a turbulent world was the fusion of black-church faith and personal idealist theology that he brought with him to Montgomery—a belief in the divine ground and infinite value of human personality. He said so repeatedly, riffing for his entire career on the barrel of sermons he preached during his one year of parish ministry. If the worth of personality is the ultimate value in life, racism is distinctly evil. Evil is precisely that which degrades and destroys personality. King was an exemplar of his twofold theme that freedom has no reality apart from power and that power is integral to hope and liberation. Freedom is participation in power. To King, the goal of the civil-rights movement was to transform the lack of power of black Americans into creative, vital, interpersonal, organized power—the ability to achieve a purpose. All could be free, but only if all were empowered to participate. King epitomized the black social gospel at its best and most radical, which made him the first in the line of what came to be called, shortly after his death, liberation theology.

I have framed my two volumes on the black social gospel to explicate the tradition of social-justice theology that led to King, and to emphasize King's radicalism. I am therefore making a continuity argument about a wrongly overlooked tradition, but always in a way that emphasizes its multiple ideological and theological currents, some of which were quite conservative. King's father, for example, identified with the social gospel in a broad sense of the category, and was a prominent pastor in Atlanta. But for all that Daddy King influenced his son, neither Daddy King nor any of his Atlanta civic leader buddies would have kept the bus strike going in Montgomery, or struck hard in Birmingham, or raised hell in Chicago, or opposed the Vietnam War, or spurned President Lyndon Johnson, or marched with garbage workers in Memphis, or called a Poor People's Campaign of marchers to Washington, D.C. The King movement must be continually re-narrated, refashioning what happened and why it fell far short of Martin's Dream of a decent society, much less the Beloved Community. ■

Too Much Forgetting

Letter from Poland

William Collins Donahue

Returning to Krakow at the end of the day, having navigated unaccountably tangled traffic, we disembarked from the airless bus and stepped into a beautiful, cool city evening. One of the few European capitals to have been spared bombing during World War II, Krakow would have been an inviting prospect in any case, but we were especially grateful to be there after our excursion to Auschwitz. It had been a day of virtual silence as we moved methodically from building to building of the infamous Stammlager, or main camp, then after lunch traipsed through the Birkenau sub-camp, built to accommodate the killing of millions of mainly Eastern European Jews.

With poplars glistening in the morning sun, and the branches of monumental birch trees wafting in the breeze, Auschwitz was, as one my students remarked, actually quite beautiful—or would have been, if only we could block out the genocide conducted there. We were a group of undergraduates and faculty from the University of Notre Dame, part of the new "International Economics Abroad" initiative, here to attend a seminar at the Krakow State University of Economics. The focus was the economics of migration and refugees, a topic central to Polish history and national myth.

The morning after our visit to Auschwitz, we proceeded with the seminar. Presenting his research on Polish "remigres"—Poles who return after having lived abroad—Professor Jan Brzozowski began his lecture by emphasizing the mono-ethnic nature of Polish society. Referencing our group's excursion the previous day, he suggested that we would understand why the country is mono-ethnic: its Jews, once almost 13 percent of the population, had been obliterated by the war, and the "occupied Poland" of the Cold War was not permitted to admit immigrants.

The night before, I had asked Kasia, our city guide, about the Krakow Jewish ghetto, and she had balked. What ghetto? she asked. She explained that the Jews had lived happily in Krakow in a "district" all their own, separate by their own choosing; the only exception, she maintained, was the period of Nazi occupation. There was that phrase again. Indeed, "occupied Poland" became a refrain we would hear almost as frequently as "partitioned Poland" (a reference to the eighteenth-century division of the nation among Prussia, Russia, and the Austro-Hungarian empire), which was really just another way of saying the same thing. According to this narrative, Poland and Poles had no part in the disappearance of the Jews. So would we see any Jews in our visit to the Jewish District? I asked. "No. Now, no more Jews," Kasia responded. "The Jews are gone."

The neglected suffering of the Poles under occupation turned out to be a theme that linked a number of our events in Krakow. Marta, our very competent guide at Auschwitz (and a graduate student of history and Jewish Studies at the University of Krakow), spoke knowledgably of the murder of Jews, particularly as conducted at Auschwitz. But she punctuated her presentation with frequent pleas, strange to our American ears: "Please remember that Poles were also prisoners at Auschwitz." Why these regular reminders? Maybe she was just rectifying what she guessed was a too simple narrative in the minds of her young American tour group.

And that narrative probably is too simple. That morning, on the bus ride to Auschwitz, I had attempted to provide a brief overview of the genocide, in order to give our students some context for what they were about to see. I laid out the three phases, following Raul Hilberg, of discrimination, concentration, and extermination. Going beyond Germans and Jews, I inquired into the Poles. My brief bullet points reviewed the post-WWI reconstitution of the Polish state and its demise at the outset of WWII, as German tanks rolled over the border on September 1, 1939. Poles were themselves considered *Untermenschen* (subhuman) by the Nazis, barely better than Jews, and may well have been next on their genocidal agenda. Poles were incarcerated in large numbers and sent to Germany as slave labor in armaments and other industries. In 1944, the Polish resistance mounted a major uprising against the Germans in Warsaw; they fought bravely for more than two months, but Soviet

William Collins Donahue *is a fellow of the Nanovic Institute for European Studies, Cavanaugh Professor of the Humanities, and chair of the Department of Russian and German at the University of Notre Dame.*

WILLIAM COLLINS DONAHUE

forces, gathered on the outskirts of the city, simply let them be mowed down—some 200,000—by German tanks and guns. And did our students know about the 1940 Katyń massacre—the mass murder of Polish elites, some twenty-two-thousand officers and members of the intelligentsia?

That is where I took a wrong turn myself. Misidentifying the perpetrators of this crime, I inadvertently retold the old Soviet lie—imposed on Poland throughout the Cold War—that it was the Nazis who murdered the Polish elite, rather than the NKVD, the Soviet Secret Police, who in fact carefully planned and implemented the mass murder during the Soviet Union's alliance with Nazi Germany at the beginning of the war. It was not my finest hour. But there was little risk of seriously misleading my students: for whenever I asked about the Jews, it was Katyń that came up.

The error I made helps me better understand Marta's predicament. Auschwitz now draws well over one million visitors each year, many of whom may come in order to confirm a story they feel they already understand pretty well. But few visit the Katyń forest memorial. There, the mass graves hastily dug by the Soviets after the 1940 massacre soon began disgorging their putrefying contents, contaminating the groundwater, killing off fish in nearby lakes, and compelling the Nazis, as they advanced eastward to attack the Soviet Union in 1941, to exhume and burn the bodies. Needless to say, it was not the SS elites, but prisoners (often Jews) who were forced to carry out this gruesome task.

Can a memorial such as Auschwitz capture this adjacent story of horror? Should it? Site-specific memorials face a dilemma. If they only tell the story of "what happened here," they inevitably offer a partial, even myopic perspective. Auschwitz counters this with a poignant exhibit about Jewish life in Central and Eastern Europe prior to the war, with some attention to resistance, survivors, and postwar Jewish life. But if exhibits go too far in this direction, attempting to tell the "whole story" (think of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum), the sweep of information can easily overwhelm. In their efforts to provide the comprehensive narrative, well-intentioned pedagogues—such as those who designed the permanent exhibit at the Nuremberg Nazi Rally site we had visited just the week before—can risk overwhelming the visitors they hope to engage. (I succumbed to the excessive weight of information and gave up two-thirds of the way through.) So where to draw the line?

For years, telling the story of Polish suffering was held to be antithetical to the mission of Auschwitz. Commemoration was treated as a zero-sum game: to remember one group was somehow to neglect another. While this tension hasn't totally dissipated, a more integrative approach now exists. Speaking at the dedication of the memorial in the Katyń forest several years ago, Auschwitz Museum Director Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński called the history of Katyń and Auschwitz "inseparably connected," remarking on a later

Students looking at the "Every Person Has a Name" exhibit at Auschwitz

occasion that "these places are different faces of the same tragedy," and as such engender the "same need of memory." Cywiński is a diplomat for inclusive memory, if ever there was one. His admirable mission would be less fraught, I believe, if there were greater official recognition of the history of Polish anti-Semitism. But Polish memory work has apparently been exhausted by the task of rectifying the Cold War suppression of Katyń.

In her steadfast effort to bring recognition to the Polish prisoners at Auschwitz, Marta managed to convey another historical fact—namely, the routine exclusion of Jews from any sense of national belonging. For Jews were never really Poles, despite the huge role they played in Polish history and culture; during the war, they were routinely recorded as a separate "nation," and this practice is carried over into the museum today. It is too late now to make that correction. Marta got the history right, I think, but seemed unaware of what her story says—or withholds—about today's Poland.

At the main camp, we visited a room containing rows of huge white books, each with hundreds of oversized laminated pages. They hold the names, and brief personal data, of some of the inmates. This "Every Person Has a Name" project originated in Israel's Yad Vashem memorial and is designed to reverse the anonymity imposed on those who

died here. It is hard to explain the attraction of these massive books, but we were drawn to finger the pages and eager, even desperate, to learn more about the victims who died here. We were clearly not alone: the pages were darkened along the edges by thousands of other fingers.

It was in this room that Marta brought us up to date on Poland today. Jews, she explained, tend to view post-Holocaust Europe as one mass graveyard, and thus have not returned at all to "the Europe," emigrating instead to Israel or the United States. Having just come from Berlin, where our program is based, I knew that this wasn't quite true. Yes, in the immediate postwar years, many Jews fled Europe. But seventy-plus years later there is one prominent European country to which Jews—including many Israelis—have returned in astounding numbers: Germany, now home to at least two-hundred-thousand Jews, what *Haaretz* has called "the fastest-growing Jewish community in the world." So why not destination Poland? Marta correctly reminded us that Poland was the site of all the major extermination camps. But why does Germany, the actual perpetrator of genocide, fare better when it comes to the return of Jews?

Of course Germany's economic success plays a big role in spurring immigration. For Jews, however, the German consensus on the Holocaust has been even more decisive. Like no other country—ever—Germany has publicly come to terms with its national sins, commemorating its own state-sponsored genocide and making a series of dramatic, ritual apologies, beginning with Chancellor Willy Brandt's celebrated *Kniefall*, his seemingly spontaneous (but in fact carefully *planned*) genuflection during a visit to the Warsaw Ghetto in 1970. Historian Fritz Stern famously termed Unification Germany's great "second chance"; but in truth, that second chance dates to Germany's candid confrontation with its Nazi past, and has continued with its recent and dramatic admittance of over one million refugees.

Taking in refugees in these numbers altered Germany's conception of itself, as well as its reputation abroad. Like Poland, Germany has a tradition of ethnic homogeneity, and long insisted that it was no *Einwanderungsland* (land of immigration), specifically distancing itself from the American model of multiculturalism in favor of a society based on *das Volk*, the German people. For years, in the face of gradually increasing ethnic diversity, Germans spoke only of "guest workers" and "asylum seekers," remaining staunchly committed to the mono-ethnic ideal that still characterizes present-day Poland. But a number of factors converged, not the least of which is Germany's own low birthrate, to bring about a reversal of that self-definition. Today the federal government funds shelters, hostels, and even language classes—poignantly called *Willkommensklassen*, or welcome classes—for Syrian and other refugees.

Is Germany today the quintessential land of hospitality and openness? The answer is more complicated than such sunny phrases suggest: there is clearly little appetite to expand the welcome so generously extended to Middle Eastern refugees in 2015, and Germans—especially those in the East—readily grumble about the policy. Yet it is one they have nevertheless fundamentally accepted. Poles, in comparison, have no such policy and no such evolving story about themselves. To be sure, they did not perpetrate a genocide. Still, when it comes to reconciliation with Jews and to welcoming other religious and ethnic groups, the contrast between the two countries today is dramatic. Rather than embracing diversity, Poland has seen a profound inward-turning, cultivated by a sense of national victimhood. The belated recognition of the Soviet perpetration of the Katyń bloodbath occupied the public for almost two decades, culminating in reconciliation ceremonies in Russia presided over by Vladimir Putin. It is as if all the commemorational energy in Poland was absorbed by this effort. At any rate, during the almost seven hours of touring both Auschwitz and Krakow, we heard nothing—not a word—about Polish anti-Semitism, or about the extent to which some Poles collaborated not only in the Nazi occupation, but in the genocide itself.

The scope of that collaboration has been a subject of ongoing controversy. Jan Gross's 2001 book, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*, foregrounded the leading role of Poles in the murder of some Jews, and ignited a furious debate in Poland. If subsequent studies have found that Gross's thesis overreached somewhat, the basic fact of Polish collaboration remains. (Christopher Browning's widely admired *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1992) had already documented that fact.) Stanisław Musiał, a Polish priest who advocates for Polish-Jewish dialogue, credits Gross—and the conversation he ignited—with unwinding the myth of pure Polish victimhood. And Gross is not alone in this effort. Research into the Holocaust as it played out throughout Eastern Europe and the Balkans—with and without the willing assistance of local populations—is one of the most productive areas of contemporary research, evidenced by such influential works as Timothy Snyder's 2015 *Black Earth: Holocaust as History and Warning*. Yet if you take a tour of Auschwitz today, you will hear none of this. Instead, you will be reminded that Nazis removed local Poles from the town of Oświęcim so that they would know nothing of the atrocities occurring at Auschwitz. The refrain of a beleaguered "occupied Poland" casts the country as the site of Nazi crimes, nothing more.

Polish anxiety about cultural homogeneity continues today—possibly in some measure because of the nation's unresolved relationship to the Holocaust. Bishop Rydzyk, Poland's most influential Catholic, who presides over popular radio and television shows (and, according to Brzozowski, keeps a coterie of politicians in his pocket), actively opposes welcoming Muslim refugees. In defiance of Pope Francis's explicit exhortations, Rydzyk fans fears about the "Muslimification" of Polish Catholic society via his influential and extremely conservative *Radio Maryja*.

But while Francis is flatly ignored on the welcome of

Jews are led by German Waffen SS soldiers to the assembly point for deportation, Warsaw 1943.

Syrian refugees, he is prominently trotted out to document Catholic commemoration of the Holocaust: on numerous huge posters displayed in one of Krakow's beautiful central parks, visitors cannot miss seeing somber images of the pontiff, walking quietly along the pathways of Auschwitz. This strikes me as a puzzling, even paradoxical effort by the Poles. Of course the pope has his own reasons for visiting Auschwitz. But in a roundabout way it seems that his visit is being used to bolster what the Poles want to enshrine—the Holocaust as justification for Polish monoculturalism. This linkage makes that monoculturalism seem somehow inevitable, perhaps even a bit tragic. And it tends to relegate to history, and to others, what is really the responsibility of contemporary Poles.

The failure to thematize Polish anti-Semitism seems an odd and troubling lacuna at Auschwitz, a site where, rightly or wrongly, we expect a more or less definitive narrative. (Germans, for example, frequently use "Auschwitz" to stand for the genocide in its entirety.) While referring to Poland repeatedly and exclusively as "occupied Poland" is technically correct, it is also misleading. This incessant focus on Poland as victim, on Poland as violated and oppressed, obscures a more nuanced view, one that would face up to an ugly history of anti-Semitism. How many people know, for example, that a lethal anti-Semitic pogrom—resulting in the murder of some forty Jews in Kielce—occurred in *postwar* Poland, in 1946? The pogrom was initiated by, believe it or not, a medieval blood-libel rumor, the age-old anti-Semitic tale that a Christian boy had been kidnapped by Jews for nefarious ritual purposes. On top of the Holocaust itself, this homegrown Jew-hatred contributed to the postwar mass exodus of Jews from Poland, and helps explain why the country remains so ethnically homogenous today.

The legacy of Polish anti-Semitism remains important even today. In Berlin, the chief dramaturg at the Gorki Theater told us that his ensemble decided to support the choral theatre of celebrated Polish director Marta Górnicka in part because in Poland her work was deemed *zu jüdisch* (too Jewish). Without sacrificing its principal charge of telling the story of what happened on site, the Auschwitz memorial could, it seems to me, accommodate more historical context in this regard. Jews have not returned to Poland in any appreciable numbers because of the Holocaust; that much is certainly true. But let's be honest: it is also because Poland has neither vigorously confessed to, nor prominently commemorated, its own anti-Jewish bigotry and violence.

Kracow may lack Jews (Jan Brzozowski guesses there are "maybe two dozen Jewish families in Krakow, mostly expats doing business"), but it does have a bustling Jewish Quarter, where we spent a beautiful evening. According to our guide, it is an artists' quarter, home to "Cracowian bohemians." Totally refurbished since the end of the Soviet era, it is quite the tourist destination, boasting a picturesque square, several synagogues, and a couple of nice restaurants. Steven Spielberg filmed scenes from *Schindler's List* here, giving a boost to local tour operators. We ate an "authentic" Jewish meal in the cavernous cellar of the restaurant "Ariel," named after the Hebrew angel of wrath who metes out punishment. No sign of this avenging spirit intruded on this balmy summer evening, where we tourists happily handed over our zlotys in exchange for a good time. A pair of klezmer bands played to a full house, talented young musicians presenting klezmer-inspired jazz numbers, including some original work.

One can't help feeling that this resurrected Jewish District—where Jews once "happily" segregated themselves, according to Kasia—serves a crucial Polish public-relations function. And to be completely honest, on that temperate summer evening, it felt, well, almost restorative to us as well. After a long day at Auschwitz, it can feel good—maybe too good—to relax on this carefully constructed stage set: a reconstituted Polish Jewish District, only without the Jews. ■

VIC'S AUTO GLASS,

For Rachel

a crummy place
downhill by the railroad bridge
above Arts, Painting, and Music
where Franklin meets Abundance
before it cloverleaves into Treasure
in a continuous derelict suburbia.
A place of hurt and waiting, shards and splinters,
Auto glass repairs,
Vic, grumpy and grouchy,
tells customers to shut up in his Italian accent.
John Wayne stands tall on the John's door
and behind the counter Marilyn in a Seven Year Itch poster.
Technology: an old radio, a swiveling Scully chair
and a greasy phone Vic punches numbers on,
Mater dolorosa nailed on the wall,
year after year of church calendars
and Our Lady of Guadeloupe in multiple images,
her almond silhouette refracted through a hanging mirror.
A place of shattered glass punched out of their frames,
stripped off and replaced—
plain or tint privacy, Securit or High Impact Extra,
Vic thumbs through catalogs, punches more numbers,
and in a gravely Sicilian accent spills out quotes the speed of a ticker
the customer tries to catch like juggling balls.
He knows how glass breaks, pulling the veil of a windshield,
stones of anger hitting rear windows, Glock's neat hole of a near miss,
bad luck of road gravels and ricochets spitting out web shatter,
love and hatred on back seats, the redemption of light, the mere venial turned mortal,
what holds a piece of glass, what it magnifies and hides,
life to a binary choice it repeats: clear or privacy,
butts squashed over the garage like pin points in nicotine over oil rainbows,
a man rescued from his own cold war
a life spent between Wayne, his employee, and Jesus, limbs long over the patibulum of the door.

—Jean-Mark Sens

Born in France, Jean-Mark Sens has lived in the American South for more than twenty years. He taught in a start-up culinary program at Mississippi University for Women and lives in New Orleans where he works with the Goldring Centre for Culinary Medicine. His work has been published in the United States and Canada, and is the author of the collection Appetite *(Red Hen Press). He is also working on a culinary book* Leafy Greens & Sundry Things.

Rand Richards Cooper

A Hillbilly Heist

'LOGAN LUCKY'

What a monster of versatility Steven Soderbergh is! Can the person behind the coolly ironic *sex, lies and videotape* (1989) really also have made *King of the Hill* (1993), a warmly heart-rending tale of a Depression-era childhood; as well as *Out of Sight* (1998), a sexy Elmore Leonard adaptation with hip Tarantino-esque touches; *Erin Brockovich* (2000), a sympathetic portrayal of a single working mom; *Traffic* (2000), a sprawling saga of the drug wars—*and* such art-house oddities as *Kafka* (1991) and *Schizopolis* (1996)? Soderbergh is that rare crossover director who's both art house and A-list, his quirky experiments—like *Full Frontal*, his 2002 neo-French New Wave account of a day in the life of several Hollywood actors, shot on digital video in three weeks—alternating with sleekly popular entertainments such as *Ocean's Eleven* (2000) and its sequels. Along with directing, he has also served as producer, cinematographer, screenwriter, and editor. What other film credit might Soderbergh rack up? Popcorn popper?

Recent years have, if anything, accentuated his promiscuity in style, subject, and approach. There was *Che*, his 2008 ode to the Cuban revolutionary. *The Girlfriend Experience* (2009) cast a real-life porn star in its lead role. *Bubble* (2005) is a murder mystery shot with no script and non-professional actors. *Behind the Candelabra* (2012) was an uproarious biopic starring Michael Douglas (!!) as Liberace. *Magic Mike* (2014) explored the life of a male stripper. Soderbergh has even made a film shot entirely with iPhones (*Unsane*, not yet released). In 2014 the director announced his retirement, confessing moviemaking fatigue. But now he's back, giving us his first feature film in nearly four years.

Logan Lucky takes an iconic movie genre—the heist—and matches it to an iconic blue-collar American pastime, Nascar racing, in a down-home, hardscrabble version of *Ocean's Eleven*. Instead of George Clooney and his suave insinuations, Soderbergh gives us Jimmy Logan (Channing Tatum), an ex-high-school football star with a bum knee and bum luck in life. Working an excavator at a renovation project at Charlotte Motor Speedway, Jimmy lives up the road in West Virginia, where his ex-wife (Katie Holmes) has remarried a wealthy car dealer, and his brother Clyde (Adam Driver) tends bar in a dive called Duck Tape. Both brothers have suffered blue-collar American setbacks: Clyde lost an arm in Iraq; and, at the start of the film, Jimmy gets laid off, the company informing him that his bad knee is a "preexisting condition" they cannot insure him for. He's limping through life, with wounds both physical and psychic.

Clyde considers the Logan family cursed, but Jimmy rejects such fatalism and decides to fire back the slings and arrows of outrageous blue-collar fortune. What's a working man to do when an honest living is taken away from him? Try a dishonest one! Soon Jimmy posts on his fridge a list of tips for How to Rob a Bank.

It isn't an actual bank he has in his crosshairs, but the Charlotte Speedway. Having learned that the cash intake during events is funneled to a subterranean vault via a system of vacuum tubes, Jimmy plots to penetrate this system and steal the loot—and to do so during a legendary race, the Coca-Cola 600. To pull this off, he needs, of course, a crew. His team of masterminds begins with Clyde, adds their sassy sister Mellie (Riley Keough), then zeroes in on an explosives expert nicknamed Joe Bang (Daniel Craig, sporting a highly improvised Southern

Channing Tatum and Adam Driver in Logan Lucky

BLEECKER STREET

twang). Inconveniently, Bang currently resides in a state prison, and so the plan requires an extra little fillip—breaking him out of prison to pull off the heist, then sneaking him back in when it's done. Rounding out the crew are Joe's two brothers, a Mutt-and-Jeff pair of Scripture-quoting bumpkins who spout malapropisms ("the job just changed dramastically") and excitedly discuss grand larceny even as they solemnly profess their born-again faith.

The ensuing hijinks play out before a tapestry of Southern-rural-white Americana. Central is the loud and vivid glory of Nascar, with actual footage conveying the full panoply of patriotic symbolism, including a soulful rendition of "America the Beautiful" (by LeAnn Rimes) and the requisite fighter-jet flyover. Other Southern-heritage entertainments on display in *Logan Lucky* range from miniature tractor races for the kids, to bobbing for pigs' feet at a county fair, to a child's beauty pageant in which Jimmy's young daughter Sadie is dolled up like JonBenet Ramsey. Southern style points and social rituals predominate: for the women, rhinestone-studded blue jeans, audacious push-up bras, and deep-drawling gossip at the beauty salon; for the men, muscle shirts and muscle cars; rowdy barroom brawls, and above all, a laconic conversational style that makes these guys seem, as far as intellect goes, a beer or two short of a sixpack.

Such judgments raise the question of how in the world these yokels—the "Redneck Robbers," as they come to be called—can possibly pull off a caper requiring this much logistical finesse, including triggering a power outage so that customers have to pay cash instead of using credit cards, stoking the flow down those vacuum tubes. There's broad comedy to be found in the fastening of a cast of American hillbillies to a genre that so often features international intrigue, casinos, diamonds, and other avatars of glamorous high living. Channeling the Coen Brothers into a Southern version of the deadpan bucolic repartee exploited to such success in *Fargo*, Soderbergh is clearly enjoying himself, his tongue firmly lodged in cheek. The film credits cite a screenwriter, Rebecca Blunt, said to be an alias for the director himself (he has a history of working pseudonymously on his own films), and list Joe Bang's role as "Introducing Daniel Craig." *Logan Lucky* is an extended gag.

But at whose expense? That question ramifies especially amid the ruins of last year's election, with liberals wincing at the charge of having overlooked, and condescended to, the white-male-workingman cohort that is Trump's America. *Logan Lucky* has performed abysmally at box offices in the Midwest and the South—precisely those markets where Soderbergh surely hoped it would have particular resonance—and one suspects that its deadpan irony, applied to white rural lives and ways, has backfired. Soderbergh intends sympathy, but his means are satirical, and the result raises the specter of audiences of coastal cosmopolitans moved to mirth at these benighted hicks plotting their "Hee-Haw Heist."

Don't get me wrong—there's plenty to enjoy in *Logan Lucky*. Channing Tatum (who played the smart but naive stripper in *Magic Mike*) is pitch-perfect as Jimmy; coping with serial indignities while attempting to be a father to his young daughter, he conveys reserves of wounded tenderness within his hulking, hurting frame. And Daniel Craig is a hoot as Joe Bang, all blond-spiked hair, adrenaline, tattoos, and riffing insinuation. Visited in jail by Clyde and Jimmy, who ask how it's going, Joe replies, "I'm sitting on the other side of the table wearing a onesie. How d'you *think* it's going?"

Set in West Virginia, perennially among the whitest of white states, the movie takes as its refrain the plaintive folksy wail of John Denver's "Country Roads," and culminates in an impromptu group chorus of the song that, for an interesting moment, bumps the register from sardonic to sincere, and hints at what a different kind of movie it might have been if Soderbergh had opted not for broad comedy, but for a serious treatment of white rural pride and woundedness. Instead, and with mischievous delight, he has refracted *Ocean's Eleven* through the prism of *Gomer Pyle*. This kind of irony can easily be taken to condescend, and the film risks a lot with its cartoonishness. Are we laughing with these characters in their doltish enthusiasm, or at them? In terms of the red-blue divide, and the hope of bridging it—through mutual understanding, or even mutually enjoyable laughter—it's not clear that *Logan Lucky* is the solution. It may well be part of the problem. ■

Richard R. Gaillardetz

A Church That Can & Did Change

The Reception of Vatican II
Edited by Matthew L. Lamb and Matthew Levering
Oxford University Press, $99, 488 pp.

Our society's toxic "culture wars" have colonized too many sectors within the Catholic Church. One thinks, for example, of the "liturgy wars" concerning what constitutes "authentic liturgical reform" or the recent disputes regarding Pope Francis's pastoral accommodations for the divorced and remarried. At the level of Catholic ecclesiology, the "culture wars" have morphed into the "council wars," a fight over the authentic interpretation of Vatican II.

The latest entry in these acrimonious debates is *The Reception of Vatican II*, a sequel to an earlier collection of essays on the Vatican II documents (*Vatican II: Renewal within Tradition*, 2008). Unfortunately, the ideological agenda of the earlier volume continues to inform this new collection. There are some helpful essays to be sure (Driscoll, Wright, Meconi, and DeVille, to name a few) but, as with the previous collection, the fundamental flaw of this volume ultimately overwhelms its virtues. That flaw lies in the guiding convictions of the editors, Matthew Levering and Matthew Lamb, that the authentic reception of the council has been compromised by theologians who appeal irresponsibly to Vatican II in support of their heterodox views. The editors draw on Pope Benedict XVI's famous 2005 address to the Roman Curia in which he denounced readings of the council based on a "hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture," promoting instead a "hermeneutic of reform."

This preoccupation with the danger of "rupture" within the tradition has created a theological straw man. As Ormond Rush has argued, for the term to have any use in ecclesiology, we must distinguish between "micro-ruptures" that represent a break *with a specific feature within the larger tradition* (e.g., the council's break with Pius IX's teaching on religious freedom), and a "macro-rupture" that represents a repudiation of the tradition itself. It is hard to argue that the council's teaching contains no "micro-ruptures" whatsoever. Re-framing these "micro-ruptures" as nothing more than instances of "organic development" can seem like so much pious, theological spin.

On the very first page of the introduction the editors announce their opposition to conciliar interpretations that represent "a rupture with previously defined doctrine." It is not clear what is meant by "defined doctrine." Is this referring to the church's central dogmatic convictions? If so, it is hard to find more

BERNARD P. PRUSAK

Shuttle bus transporting cardinals at Vatican II

than a small minority of scholars who would be guilty of such a "rupture." Or, as I suspect is the case, do the editors mean all church doctrine? Both editors are accomplished theologians who know well that within the tradition there are clear gradations in the authority and binding character of church teaching. By lumping all normative church teaching into the same category, as they appear to do, they implicitly extend the mantle of infallibility over all church teaching, thereby precluding even the most respectful critique of specific doctrinal formulations. This editorial position taints their project, leading to a collection of essays in which a number of contributors carefully avoided even the appearance of challenging current magisterial teaching.

Consider Jeremy Driscoll's fine essay on the council's constitution on the liturgy. He helpfully draws the reader's attention to three seminal ideas informing the constitution: 1) the centrality of the paschal mystery, 2) the way the work of our redemption is communicated through the liturgy, and, 3) the full, active, and conscious participation of all in the liturgy. Driscoll demonstrates persuasively how these three ideas call forth a profound liturgical theology and spirituality still to be realized in the concrete worship of the church today. At several points, he acknowledges the inadequacies of the preconciliar missal. Yet he cannot bring himself to even mention, let alone criticize, Pope Benedict XVI's problematic teaching in *Summorum pontificum* that the Tridentine liturgy and the postconciliar missal of Paul VI represent equally legitimate forms of worship. Nor does he acknowledge the way, under Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, in which the Vatican's having seized control of liturgical translations is fundamentally at odds with the teaching of the liturgy constitution.

David Meconi's otherwise fine essay on the *Decree on Priestly Ministry and Life* suffers the same defect. The chapter stands out for its careful attention to the document's textual history and the reformist theology of the priesthood that emerges from that kind of analysis. He rightly notes, over the course of the constitution's various drafts, the significant terminological shift in the Latin text from *clerus* to *sacerdos* and eventually to *presbyter*, moving from a narrowly cultic conception of priesthood to one that was more pastoral. He also draws attention to the text's careful avoidance of *alter Christus* language (the priest as "another Christ"), its orientation of the priesthood toward service to all God's people, and its emphasis on the humanity of the priest. Yet he carefully avoids any hint of criticism regarding possible shortcomings in current magisterial teaching. One might have hoped, for example, for some comment on the problematic elevation of the discipline of priestly celibacy to a quasi-doctrinal status in Pope John Paul II's *Pastores dabo vobis*.

This preoccupation with continuity and its consequent minimization of any substantive shifts in church teaching are evident in too many of these essays. The Thomist scholar Thomas J. White contributes an essay on the *Pastoral Constitution in the Modern World Today (Gaudium et spes)*. Joseph Ratzinger, among others, had complained that the pastoral constitution had an under-developed Christology and Karl Rahner failed to find in *Gaudium et spes* a sufficiently developed theology of grace. These are legitimate criticisms but they don't justify a commentator pretending these neglected themes were in fact central to the document approved by the council. White argues for the document's essential Christocentrism and then asks the reader to endure a long excursus on the significance of thirteenth- and seventeenth-century debates on the nature/grace relationship. He does so in order to emphasize the pastoral constitution's continuity with a Thomistic theology of grace. This preoccupation with the demonstration of formal continuity leads him largely to ignore the constitution's emphases on the church's missionary character, its ecclesial humility, and its solidarity with the world.

Sara Butler seems similarly preoccupied with asserting continuity with the preconciliar tradition in her essay on the *Decree on the Renewal of Religious Life (Perfectae caritatis)*. Butler demonstrates an impressive mastery of the document's textual history and associated conciliar debates, but puts it mostly to the service of her questionable thesis that many theologians and professed religious have "received and accepted a flawed version of the Council's doctrine" on religious life. She argues that, against the more common reading of the council, the bishops in fact reasserted the objective superiority of religious life over other vocations to holiness.

Ralph Martin, in his essay on the *Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (Ad gentes)*, claims that an excessive "salvation optimism" regarding the situation of non-believers has colored the theological reception of *Ad gentes*. Unfortunately, he ignores some of the most significant contributions of the document on the relationship between faith and culture and its theology of the local church. The polemical tone continues in Michele Schumacher's treatment of the *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (Apostolicam actuositatem)* in a chapter dominated by a sweeping denunciation of the pervasive relativism and secularism of our contemporary age.

The merits of several of its essays notwithstanding, this volume suffers from a preoccupation with the refutation of any claim to the council's substantive revision of church teaching and the rejection of any legitimate critique of postconciliar magisterial teaching. This confrontational reading of the council is no small thing for it undergirds much of the current resistance to Pope Francis. This makes it all the more clear that the embrace of our first Jesuit pope, and the embrace of the dynamic and challenging teaching of Vatican II, go hand in hand. ■

Richard R. Gaillardetz *is the Joseph Professor of Catholic Systematic Theology at Boston College and the author of* An Unfinished Council: Vatican II, Pope Francis, and the Renewal of Catholicism *(Liturgical Press, 2015).*

Sarah Ruden

Ancient Identities

Paul
The Pagans' Apostle
Paula Fredriksen
Yale University Press, $35, 336 pp.

In the Apostle Paul's writings, I've found two matters particularly off-putting and difficult—and a lot of other people seem to share my feelings. One matter is Paul's cultural origins and attitudes. Was he more "Greek" or more "Jewish"? To what extent did either identity shape his mission and, through him, the character of early Christianity?

Just one problem here is how little we know, comparatively, about Second Temple Judaism, which lasted through the second half of the first millennium BC and up until the Temple's final destruction in 70 AD. Paul, who died around 67 AD, must have experienced stresses from the climactic conflicts within and around Judaism, but the Epistles and Acts are like half-inch-wide chinks through which to view this history; and its great chronicler from within, Josephus, was a self-justifying Romanized transplant.

If Paul acted as a Jewish man, what did this mean? Life among pagans—and he was at any rate a Diaspora Jew—is far better documented, and there is the suspicion that the dominance of Greek and Roman culture led to adaptations everywhere and left few sharp lines between societies and religions. Nevertheless, Paul's mission was plainly strained by the *different* experiences and expectations of pagans and Jews. I can't read the Epistles without wanting to know a lot more—yet feeling stuck.

The other matter I struggle with is apocalyptic thinking as an influence on Christianity's genesis and growth. I'm a poet and translator, inclined to urge celebration of biblical texts for their beauty and inspiration, and to prefer a light touch on whatever seems to invite historical over-parsing (especially any grim and condescending psychologizing about the oppressed) on the one hand or superstitious literalism on the other. It's easy—too easy—for me to shun, on these grounds, discussion of late Jewish and early Christian beliefs about the imminent end of the world. The trouble with that, of course, is that this subject matter is prominent in the texts, and clearly important.

For these reasons I'm grateful for Paula Fredriksen's *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle*. This wide-ranging, deeply learned, but accessible argument gives, at a minimum, a lot of help in bypassing anachronistic assumptions, mistranslations, and other blind alleys.

Fredriksen first explores what it meant in the ancient world to have an identity such as "Jewish" or "Greek"—not what we would think, given the identity politics of today. Ethnicity, nationality, clan, class, the arts, education, and religion formed something like a single, nonnegotiable legacy. Yet when it came to these categories, the ancients could be surprisingly accommodating. We might shake our heads at the thought of Jewish boys in Alexandria exercising nude in a gymnasium. We might imagine that a wealthy donor to a synagogue who also observed her city's polytheistic cult must have been shocking and singular. But letters, legal documents, and inscriptions don't lie, and the logic of live-and-let-live is plain: when custom and ritual mattered more than personal assent to dogma, there was much less to fight about concerning religion—even in cities where people fought like cats and dogs over politics and their ordinary personal affairs.

These realities entailed a surprising amount of fudging even with Judaism's famous "monotheism." In the pre-Christian and early Christian eras, the question of which god or gods *existed*

was, except to a few intellectuals, not compelling. Gods *existed* through their public and communal cults, which quite demonstrably and persistently existed. Through constant and elaborate observances, people acted out their loyalty to the commonwealth and its laws, to their common past and indivisible future.

Religious conflict did arise, but mainly in a way very different from modern religious conflict. If individuals neglected the cult that, in the public mind, enacted the soundness and fertility of humans, animals, and fields, the success of the army and the flourishing of trade, the god or gods would take revenge on the whole society, with plague, famine, economic collapse, and natural and military disasters. Not to honor one's own god or gods was the basic contagious sin. Because different societies could recognize that they shared this ethic and respect each other for it, even some pious Jews more or less condoned polytheism, backed up by Scripture treating the gods of other nations as inferior deities—*daimonia* in the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament. Paul evidently held this to be true.

In the eyes of many Jews, the apocalypse itself would be required for pagans to turn toward the worship of the one true God. Even then they might not be considered able to "convert" in the modern sense of fully joining another religion. (Jewish circumcision after the eighth day of life was widely held to be invalid, though some adult proselytes did have themselves circumcised.) Fredriksen calls the pagans who turned to Judaism "ex-pagan pagans"—quite an awkward formulation, but any other term would still have to account for what to us is a great paradox: in the heavenly arrays of the saved in apocalyptic literature, all the nations, tribes, and so on *are* who they *were* before. The only difference is that now they *do* one critical thing, worship God, having ceased to worship idols.

Christianity realized on earth, in the form of a multiethnic church, some measure of the apocalyptic visions long familiar to Jews. This came about, according to Fredriksen, by accident. The

Apostle St. Paul *by El Greco, circa 1612*

sense that God's Kingdom was coming encouraged the gathering in of Palestinian Jews to the Jesus movement in preparation; the failure of the Kingdom to manifest itself right away in material, historical form suggested that Diaspora Jews must come into the fold too. Pagans were already there in the Anatolian and European synagogues, participating in various ways, and Paul found them receptive to his message. When, generation after generation, the world failed to end, the Kingdom of God was reconceived and seen as transcendent; the terminology of Middle Platonism was helpful here.

So far, so plausible and so intriguing—but, when one thinks about it, also reductive.

Sometimes this book's pile-up of facts hauled in from the periphery threatens to get in the way of reading Paul, of gaining a commonsensical impression from his own words. Granted, my "commonsensical impression" may provoke snorts even among the reverent. Paul can come at a subject from several directions almost at the same time; he can use rhetorical tropes like a special language (this is the characteristic style of literary Greek); he can be peremptory and elliptical. But inherent in his message of God's unfailing love is a plea to the reader for patient toleration of complexity and strangeness. Complying with the plea isn't about complete, submissive agreement with the text's conclusions; it's just about an honest effort to read what Paul actually says rather than what one might expect or wish him to.

But in many of Fredriksen's arguments, irrelevant and contradictory information actually crowds out Paul's voice. For example, in discussing Galatians 3:10–14 and interpreting the word "cursed" as applied to crucifixion, she brings in far-flung instances of undeserving persons' being crucified, as if that somehow undermines Paul's—scripturally pretty well attested, empirically pretty sound—characterization of Jesus' crucifixion as a "curse." She concludes: "The idea that Jews would be (actively and aggressively) scandalized by the message of a crucified messiah because of his manner of death should be retired from New Testament scholarship." Say what?

In other places, Fredriksen narrows causality to suit her thesis. She claims that Paul's reason for discouraging marriage in the famous 1 Corinthians 7 passage was the swift coming of God's Kingdom. Paul does give this as one reason his followers might well choose to remain single (7:29–31). But another is that people have different spiritual gifts to deploy (7:7) under the overarching rule of avoiding fornication (6:13–20; 7:2,5,9). The passage is actually a nuanced treatment of calls to celibacy, drawing on both Jesus' new rules (7:10–11) and Paul's own authoritative opinion (7:12 *et passim*), and including tender-sounding advocacy of the state he considers less stressful, as well as more conducive to orderliness and devotion to the Lord (7:32–35).

Paul: The Pagans' Apostle is, on balance, a good source for historical context, a keen stimulus for rereading Paul's letters, and a great book to argue with. ■

Sarah Ruden *has published several books, including, most recently,* The Face of Water: A Translator on Beauty and Meaning in the Bible, *and a new translation of Augustine's* Confessions.

Robert K. Vischer

Agreeing on How to Disagree

Debating Religious Liberty and Discrimination

John Corvino, Ryan T. Anderson & Sherif Girgis
Oxford University Press, $21.95, 352 pp.

Though the legal debate over same-sex marriage has been resoundingly settled in this country, questions over how to treat dissenters show no signs of abating. Every month brings new culture-war flash points as florists, bakers, and even some public officials invoke a right of conscience not to support or participate in a same-sex wedding. These refusals, in turn, have triggered a redoubled commitment to the primacy of nondiscrimination laws among those committed to LGBT rights.

Last year, for example, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights declared that the civil rights guaranteed through nondiscrimination laws "are of preeminent importance in American jurisprudence," and that religious exemptions "significantly infringe upon these civil rights." The commission's chairman accused "religious liberty" of standing for "hypocrisy" when it is invoked to defend "homophobia," among other social ills, and warned that "religion is being used as both a weapon and a shield by those seeking to deny others equality." On the other side of the divide, GOP presidential candidate Mike Huckabee suggested that the embrace of same-sex marriage has the country on the path toward "the criminalization of Christianity."

If the leaders tasked with helping guide the citizenry through this clash of values resort to such simplistic characterizations, what hope is there for the rest of us? Though today's battles over religious liberty and nondiscrimination norms are centered on LGBT rights, common ground also appears to be shrinking in related debates about access to abortion and contraception, the rights of corporations, and the legal status of conscience more generally. And citizens more often encounter the issues not through nuanced analysis but through a barrage of 140-character tweets from people with whom they are already likely to agree. Reasoned discourse across the cultural divide is hardly the hallmark of our age.

Enter three philosophers and unlikely coauthors: John Corvino, a longtime same-sex-marriage advocate, and Ryan Anderson and Sherif Girgis, two outspoken opponents of same-sex marriage. Their new book, *Debating Religious Liberty and Discrimination,* is a direct challenge to our cultural moment, opting for careful analysis over clickbait, mutual understanding over demonization, and clearly demarcated disagreement over sweeping dismissal. The authors take the time to lay out their best arguments, then respond to the best arguments of their opponents. Whether or not the book ultimately causes readers to change their views is not the measure of its success. The authors provide a desperately needed model for engagement: they argue with, not at their opponent; they argue together. Several lessons emerge.

First, even steadfast opponents can share the same underlying fears. In this book, the bogeyman is "the Puritan mistake"—the historical tendency to win liberty for oneself and then deny it to others. Corvino claims that, while "we are all potentially Puritans," the "the rhetoric of 'religious liberty' today is more often invoked by those who seek to exclude than by those who favor a big tent." Anderson and Girgis, by contrast, argue that "a progressive Puritanism has arisen on these issues—an effort to coerce conscientious dissenters to live by the majority's views; to punish the heretic." By articulating the fear—that we are repeating our past liberty-denying mistakes—a common framework for the debate comes into focus.

Second, discourse is strengthened when we recognize the limitations of our own positions. We have become accustomed to a cable-news culture in which guests battle for every inch and concessions are taken as a sign of weakness. Corvino, Anderson, and Girgis are upfront about where their arguments do not and should not lead. Corvino does not reject religious exemptions categorically; he concedes, for example, that providers of a service should not be legally compelled to provide custom services that violate the dictates of their consciences; it is only when they refuse to sell the very same item to other customers on the basis of the customers' sexual orientation (or race, religion, etc.)

KYLE RUSH

National Equality March in 2009

that the law should intervene. For their part, Anderson and Girgis admit that "coercive policies would be needed…if discrimination were rife, so that LGBT people were locked out of the market or out of the public square or into second-class status."

Third, focused disagreement is productive disagreement. The authors cover a lot of ground. In the end, two questions emerging from the analysis strike me as the most salient and, in my view, would serve as prudent starting points for future debates over religious liberty and nondiscrimination. They do not lend themselves to easy answers, but they clarify the scope of disagreement. The first question is: What value should our legal order place on a person's ability to live with integrity? Anderson and Gergis explain:

> Harmony or integrity between one's convictions and actions grounds our concerns with the rights of conscience. Harmony between the self and others is about friendship and solidarity and social respect, rights of association and assembly, and antidiscrimination interests. And harmony between the self and the transcendent grounds our concerns with religious freedom.

They urge courts to weigh the value of integrity against the harm to be avoided through the imposition of nondiscrimination laws. Corvino counters that "harmony between belief and action may lack value when the underlying belief is badly wrong," and we can "determine when the belief is badly wrong" by "its tendency to cause harm to others." In those cases, "it is not clear that the integrity…deserves any 'weight' at all." This is a sharp and enormously important point of disagreement. Should our legal system value integrity as an intrinsic good, or only in cases where the underlying belief is not "badly wrong"?

The second question is this: Does the prevention of dignitary harms warrant imposing the law's coercive power on those whose exercise of conscience threatens such harm? In the vast majority of cases, a baker's refusal to support a same-sex wedding, for example, does not prevent the couple from obtaining a wedding cake. Most bakers are more than happy to take the money and bake the cake. But what about the harm from the denial itself, regardless of what is available from the shop down the street? Being refused service for reasons so closely tied to one's self-conception can be a deeply upsetting experience.

Anderson and Girgis point out that liberals appear to embrace a double standard when it comes to the legal treatment of these dignitary harms in cases of free speech versus cases of religious liberty. It is popular to protect "even offensive speech," which "can inflict far more of the dignitary harm that progressives would cut down religious freedoms to suppress." Given liberals' defense of the right of the Westboro Baptists to engage in antigay picketing, for example, why should the specter of dignitary harm compel a florist to provide services for a same-sex wedding?

Corvino contends that the relevant distinction is not between speech and religion, but between speech and action. The florist is free to say whatever she believes, as are the Westboro Baptists, but the action of denying service warrants a different legal outcome. Our answer to the question of dignitary harms will determine the resolution of these debates.

The book's fourth and, in my view, most important lesson: restoring relationships across the political divide does not necessarily require shared beliefs, but it will require shared work. The book's tone in this regard was set by the introduction, jointly authored by Corvino, Anderson, and Girgis. They identify foundational principles and recite a history of religious liberty in our country. In an era of rampant "fake news" accusations, setting out agreed facts before proceeding to engage arguments is (unfortunately) a bold gesture. When it comes to religious liberty and nondiscrimination, if we cannot agree on where we should go, can we at least agree on how we arrived where we are? The authors can and do. Consensus about the facts should not be mistaken for concession on the normative claims, though; neither side pulls any punches in the arguments that follow. Anderson and Girgis identify specific areas of consensus with Corvino after 237 pages of back-and-forth criticism. Robust, honest, and respectful argument can be an impetus to authentic, if not total, agreement.

Lobbing broad accusations across our religious-liberty battle lines takes very little effort and is a sure-fire way to draw an enthusiastic crowd of the like-minded. Corvino, Anderson, and Girgis are no strangers to these battles, but they have also taken the time to ensure that they are not strangers to each other. For a nation that seems more divided than ever, that's a great place to start. ■

Robert K. Vischer *is the dean of the University of St. Thomas School of Law and author of* Conscience and the Common Good: Reclaiming the Space Between Person and State.

Edward T. Wheeler

When Art & Spirit Meet

The Wounded Angel

Fiction and the Religious Imagination

Paul Lakeland

Liturgical Press, $24.95, 242 pp.

In *The Wounded Angel*—whose cover showcases the eponymous 1903 Hugo Simberg painting—Paul Lakeland sets out to do no less than reclaim the imagination. His book takes off from his conviction that "[t]he incapacity to grasp any sense of transcendence is simply a failure of imagination, one that has all but emptied the churches and that goes a long way toward explaining the anomie of our world." The implication is clear: heal the angel—a symbol of the mediation between the human and the divine—and the world will regain meaning, the church will be revivified, and belief will be reinstalled as our guiding hermeneutical principle.

The central argument put forward in *The Wounded Angel* rests on a recognition familiar to those who love literature—namely, that paraphrase or analysis can never encompass what a poem or novel (or any other work of art) does to us when we engage it. This surplus of meaning, Lakeland believes, constitutes a form of transcendence. From this assertion he will have us understand that the act of reading (or interpreting any serious work of art) offers a parallel to the act of faith.

To convince us of this claim, Lakeland must first define faith and reading as in a basic way parallel, then mark their intersection through imaginative power. This and other tasks taken on in *The Wounded Angel* involve some heavy lifting. Not only does Lakeland lay out the intellectual and historical structures for a definition of faith, he also takes a stance on what constitutes reading. Finally he defines the kind of imagination that can take one beyond aesthetic pleasure into the experience of the divine.

The Wounded Angel *by Hugo Simberg, 1903*

As a Catholic theologian he turns to familiar resources: Aquinas, Occam, and a group of modern French thinkers Lakeland sees as resisting a stale neo-Thomistic approach to faith. I cannot easily summarize the links he establishes (he is eclectic in his range of reference), but his conclusion is clear: "We describe the structure of the act of faith as the encounter with a person [Jesus Christ] in the space between the believer and the text." Holy Writ is a text we read and engage with fully. In an imaginative appropriation of the text of Scripture, and through the workings of grace, we somehow understand beyond articulation; indeed, we encounter the person of Christ.

To bolster his inquiry, Lakeland deploys a model of reading that he adapts from Wolfgang Eiser, a contemporary reader-response critic. Here he is on the model:

> The aesthetic object for Eiser is not the text itself but the product of reading it. The aesthetic object emerges in the interplay between the reader and the text.... We have to think of the aesthetic object as existing "in the space between" the text and the reader.

The imagination, Lakeland would have it—and this is his adaptation of Eiser—is best understood as defined by Coleridge (in the *Biographia Literaria*) as "the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM." Thus does *The Wounded Angel* link reading and faith in a fundamental way, with imagination doubling for something like the breath of Spirit.

There is a radical element in all this: the church is failing; the believer is unsupported by this secular age; and the burden of belief has to be an act of interpretation. In Lakeland's vision, the healing of the imagination can take place only through its exercise; convalescence depends upon the will to read and interpret. Again I will have to pass over the many literary sources he employs (and why is there no list of "Works Consulted"?), but he is particularly focused on Henry James's insistence that the "matter" of his novels is never subject to summary statement: the meaning in the fullest sense escapes us and, in what I think is a clever misprision on Lakeland's part, suggests the "Absolute."

Lakeland ruminates on the theology of the imagination, entertaining both those critics who might offer objections to his thesis and those who seem to second it. He does not want to leave himself open to charges of didacticism or naiveté. His effectiveness in this attempt is, as one might expect, a matter of faith; in the end we are asked to appreciate a neo-humanism which has as its core readers of lively intellect and imagination who break the insularity of the individual through the community of letters to face modern life. Reading is salvific if pursued in good faith.

The proof of the argument will lie partly in its application. To that end, Lakeland offers us model readings of

a range of works to allow us to see the positive results gained by an interpreter whose imagination rises to transcendence. The texts he uses show once again an eclectic range, some surprising (Camus, Naylor, Penny, Harrison) and others less so (Greene, O'Connor, Endo); and to his commentary he summons Karl Rahner, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Paul Ricoeur, and many others.

For the believer these readings are acts of affirmation, while for the nonbeliever they offer at least an approach to the ethical and certainly a nod to the good. But are they revelatory? Lakeland seems most concerned to defend secular writing as having something to say to faith. He does discuss "the Catholic novel" and suggests the impoverishment that such a genre might court, but he has a special appeal: the act of reading offers a means of spiritual regeneration, a wakening, as that Romantic soul Wordsworth has it, to "arouse the sensual from their sleep of death."

It may be that to locate the power of the imagination in acts of reading that approach the unsayable is to condemn oneself to failure—or at least to anticlimax. *The Wounded Angel* suffers a bit from that; yet it is nonetheless a serious attempt to think through the meaning of a life lived in part through works of the imagination, and to speculate intelligently upon how art and Spirit might meet.

Lakeland offers us many opportunities to question and to disagree, and I have filled the book's margins with objections and exclamation marks. More important are formulations that go to the heart of what is dear to us in great books. In that spirit, and having recently read poet Christian Wiman's faith meditation *My Bright Abyss*, I will close with a suggestion that Lakeland would probably approve—namely, that we move from his analysis to the work of poets and novelists themselves, in hope of seeing his healing project enacted on their pages, and in our minds and hearts. ■

Edward T. Wheeler, *a frequent contributor, writes from Quaker Hill, Connecticut.*

LETTERS continued from page four

and action of government but is the responsibility of the military as well. Here is where the United States conduct of the Second World War often fails the test of just-war theory. The principle of non-combatant immunity was completely annihilated when weapons of mass destruction were used. One cannot call on a teleological argument that the end justifies the means. Some will attempt to justify the nuclear bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima as saving thousands of other lives; however, this violates just-war theory. Furthermore, the fire bombings of a number of Japanese and German cities ignored this principle. According to *jus in bello*, homes of civilians, undefended towns, hospitals, buildings dedicated to religion, art, science, charity, and historic monuments may not be destroyed. The bombing of the Dresden cathedral was a particularly egregious violation of this principle.

I hope this discussion will continue in *Commonweal* and other publications. My fondest hope is that it will be widely presented and discussed in parishes. Since the Second World War, we have used our military in Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, two wars in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and other smaller conflicts. I do not believe in any way that any of these conflicts met the criteria of just-war theory, either *ad bellum* or *in bello*. For American Catholics, this is possibly the most important issue of our era. Personally, I have often vacillated between pacifism and just-war theory. But I find myself more in agreement with Steinfels that a strict application of just-war theory, if fully supported by government and citizens, would put a stop to most wars.

MARGARET P. GILLEO
St. Louis, Mo.

PETER STEINFELS REPLIES:

As these thoughtful letters indicate, Gerald Schlabach and I could have written much more, no doubt revealing points of agreement for fruitful dialogue. Just as he insists on an ethic that does not come into play only at the time of war, I would have liked to develop the line of thought opened by the late Jean Bethke Elshtain: Just-war thinking, she wrote, "presupposes a 'self' or citizen of a certain kind… attuned to moral reasoning…strong enough to resist the lure of…violence… laced through with a sense of responsibility…in other words, a morally formed civic character."

Here I will confine my remarks to Michael Gallagher's highly pertinent letter about the "third rail" of nuclear deterrence.

I do remember his 1987 *Commonweal* article. I had a hand in accepting, editing, and publishing it—and a hand in writing the editorial that disagreed with it.

Two factual preliminaries: First, was the American pastoral letter on nuclear arms "gutted" by John Paul II and Joseph Ratzinger? Did the Vatican's intervention, pressing the worries of the French and German "NATO bishops," keep the American drafters from condemning all nuclear deterrence and, in effect, calling for swift and unilateral nuclear disarmament? Or did the bishops, quite on their own, conclude that such a position would not only be politically unrealistic but internationally destabilizing? I believe the latter.

Second, the unusually long *Commonweal* editorial—"Is Deterrence Moral?"—did not appear in the next issue but four months later. It asked that question in the context of a host of issues, especially how to focus disarmament in the wake of hopes (and possibly illusions) stirred by the Reagan-Gorbachev meeting at Reykjavik and by Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative ("Star Wars") as a supposed replacement for deterrence.

Does nuclear deterrence depend on launch officers' willingness, at every moment, to commit a grossly immoral act? That objection, raised by Gallagher and others before him, is a grave one. The American bishops struggled with it in a way that, as far as I can see, their French and German counterparts did not. Both *Commonweal* and Gallagher criticized that struggle. For Gallagher it should never have occurred. For *Commonweal*, although far more appreciative, it remained finally unresolved.

continued on page 38

LETTERS continued from page 37

This discussion should be renewed. Unlike the case in 1987, Vatican officials are denouncing nuclear deterrence. In July the UN General Assembly approved a treaty to ban any possession of nuclear weapons. At the same time, amid talk of "fire and fury" (Donald J. Trump) and "enveloping fire" (North Korean military) many people are urging reliance on nuclear deterrence as the least dangerous policy. Morally and strategically, nuclear deterrence may be a terrible policy; evidently, it is not the worst one. My only plea is that those who condemn it recognize what motivates others who, in "fear and trembling," as *Commonweal*'s 1987 editorial said, hesitate to do so. They fear that precipitous, one-sided, or unverifiable abandonment of these awful weapon systems, rather than very careful, reciprocal, and verifiable stepping away from this balance of terror, can actually increase the danger of what Gallagher, invoking Nikita Khrushchev, calls a "ravaged world" and the massacre of "uncounted millions."

GERALD SCHLABACH REPLIES:
Every writer who labors to craft unambiguous prose worries that he or she is not being clear enough. As John Courtney Murray, SJ, once said so well, "disagreement is a rare achievement, and most of what is called disagreement is simply confusion." If an argument has not landed well enough to at least achieve true and helpful disagreement, the thought nags: Could I have done something else to communicate more clearly? And yet, as I read responses to my article on "just war," I wonder whether something else is going on. If so, it constitutes additional evidence that even when just-war discourse aims to limit war, it undermines its own best intentions with a meta-message of support for war.

At the April 2016 conference in Rome that issued the appeal urging the Catholic Church to "re-commit to the centrality of Gospel nonviolence," I was actually a voice warning against the sort of blanket condemnation of just-war theory that alienates conscientious practitioners of just-war analysis who have often been allies in antiwar efforts and peacebuilding work. My *Commonweal* article reflected reasons for this warning as I laid out and implicitly affirmed the first two of three historic purposes to which just-war teaching has been put: First, it has offered a way to provide pastoral counsel for Christians in positions of power, and second, it has thus built up the framework of international law. Indeed, half of my twofold purpose for this article was to continue my warning to fellow Catholic peace activists lest they discredit every use of just-war categories and thus overstate our case.

It is disheartening but also telling that critics of my article (beginning with Peter Steinfels) seem to have read past the nuance with which I tried to make a "yes but" argument concerning just-war discourse, and lectured me about all the useful ways that stringent just-war practitioners have applied the theory to critique and hopefully delimit specific wars. I had already stipulated such points in order to underscore what I take to be the "unassailable" central argument of the Rome appeal, which led me to support it as a consensus statement despite misgivings. Namely, the just-war tradition has failed in its third purpose of forming the people of God to be peacemakers who put loyalty to God and love of neighbors in other lands above national loyalty when even just-war principles themselves would counsel resistance to war.

Hasty readings on the way to a counter-defense of the just-war system demonstrates my point. Beyond the granular application of just-war criteria in specific times and places, which seek to meet policymakers where they are for the sake of violence reduction, "just war" is a whole greater than the sum of its parts. The system as a whole evokes a loyalty in both populace and pews that tends to authorize war even when its conscientious application requires resistance to wars. And the logical principle that *abusus non tollit usum* (misuse of something is no argument against its proper use) is simply not convincing as applied to the just-war theory. For in order to override both the plain words of Jesus and early Christian scruples against all bloodshed, and to justify exceptional recourse to violence in order to prevent more violence, the best and perhaps only argument has always been some claim of greater realism. But as I argued, the persistent manipulation of just-war discourse is itself a data point concerning reality, a "hard fact" with which its advocates must grapple far more. To evade such grappling by insisting it could still work in theory is something of a bait and switch.

I do agree that it is unwise of nonviolence activists to claim that no just war is ever possible—and was unwise in Rome—if for no other reason than that a disputant need only supply a single counter-example to deflect one's larger argument. I would be glad if we could at least "achieve disagreement" over exceptions, but can only repeat my invitation to that effect: "If just-war theorists wish to maintain the option of exceptional recourse to the 'just war,' they should join in the call to encourage the teaching and training of active nonviolence within a robust framework of just peace" since "the logic of just-war theory itself, implies that we can't really know if warfare is necessary in the last resort unless we first resort to other strategies."

Present in Every Page

Robert E. Lauder

Periodically the topic of "the Catholic novel" raises its head. What is the status of the Catholic novel? Does the Catholic novel even truly exist? A lifetime of avid reading assures me that it does, and that it may be roughly defined as follows: a novel whose theme is based on some dogma, moral teaching, or sacramental principle, and in which the mystery of Catholicism is presented affirmatively.

I came to the Catholic novel as a high-school senior, and while I might not have been able to define it at the time, after reading Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock*, I was hooked for life. In the ensuing years I devoured novels by Greene, François Mauriac, Georges Bernanos, and Evelyn Waugh. I loaned them to my friends, all of whom had graduated from Catholic colleges—yet somehow had never read any of the novels, or apparently even heard of them or their authors.

Unfortunately, even today those classic Catholic novels remain largely hidden treasures. Just try persuading English teachers in Catholic high schools or colleges to offer a course on them! My impression is that they think the topic too parochial. Of course, the meaning and mystery dramatized in Catholic novels is the opposite of parochial. The stories deal with the most profound truths about human persons.

The importance of the traditional Catholic novel, and also of its disappearance, was underlined by Richard Gilman in his provocative 1987 memoir, *Faith, Sex, Mystery*. Gilman relates how his conversion from secular Judaism to Catholicism was greatly aided by the novels of Greene, Mauriac, Bernanos, and Waugh. He writes that "I wanted to hear about God then," and that he found him "lurking in all those fictional worlds, more or less a factor in the plots, often an antagonist, and his presence there—*His* presence.... He was *someone*, a character not wholly unlike all the others."

When Gilman later moved away from Catholicism, he observed accurately that no one was writing the kind of Catholic novel that had led him into the church. But something else has appeared since that time, a newer kind of Catholic novel, the most striking examples of which are the works of Alice McDermott. To my mind McDermott's seven novels dramatize the idea put down in Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem "As Kingfishers Catch Fire": "*Christ plays in ten thousand places, / Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his / To the Father through the features of men's faces.*" Alice McDermott seems especially attentive to those words. And her power of observation and ability to express what she observes are awesome.

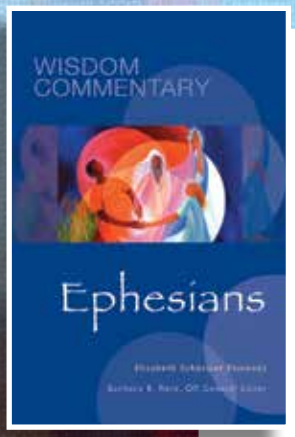
At the risk of oversimplifying, I see the religious adventure in those earlier, classic Catholic novels as the drama of a transcendent God, the Hound of Heaven, dramatically entering into the life of a sinner poised at the gates of Hell. It is a drama of spiritual intervention, whose centerpiece is the rescue of a stubborn sinner: Scobie committing suicide in *The Heart of the Matter;* the whiskey priest in *The Power and the Glory*, unable to ask forgiveness for his sin of fornication; the adulterous relationship of Sarah Miles and Maurice Bendrix in *The End of the Affair*; Mme la Comtesse in *The Diary of a Country Priest*, who closes herself to God's grace after the death of her child; or Lord Marchmain, whose last action is blessing himself on his deathbed in *Brideshead Revisited*.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

In contrast, such masterful McDermott novels as *Charming Billy* or *After This* involve no dramatic entrance of God, because God is present from first page to last. In McDermott's fictional worlds each reality is a word from God, a word speaking to us. Here God could never be described as an outsider or an intruder—it is not Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven" that illuminates her work, but (again) Hopkins, whose insight that "the world is charged with the grandeur of God" she shares. McDermott sees creation as sacramental, and within this sacramental world grace works ever so subtly.

For fear of giving away crucial plot points, I hesitate to say much about McDermott's latest novel *The Ninth Hour*, which is one of her best. But let one early scene speak for the whole. In it, a nursing sister is finishing her visitations when an unexpected emergency arises which requires her response. At the same time, her bladder is almost bursting, and she desperately needs to get to a bathroom. Simultaneously a call from God and a call from nature: talk about the sacred and the profane! The scene's gentle and forgiving comedy reminds us that there are not two worlds, the natural world and the supernatural world. In McDermott's world everyone is involved in a cosmic love adventure. All is grace, from saying a rosary to cleaning a commode; from the cleansing waters of baptism to the washing of stained linen. Christ is everywhere, playing in ten thousand places; he is the horizon against which all the drama takes place. Can a person be a horizon? McDermott's writing reveals her belief that a Risen Christ can. ■

Fr. Robert Lauder *teaches philosophy at St. John's University in Queens, New York. His lectures on the Catholic novel are available on YouTube.*

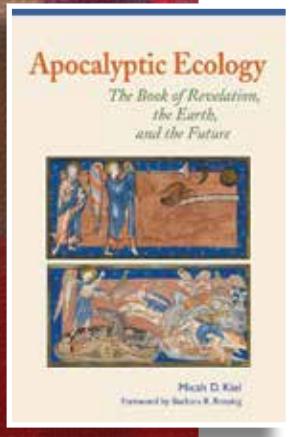


Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza

Ephesians

In this commentary, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza examines the political understandings of *ekklesia* and household in Ephesians and how they formed early Christian communities and still shape such communities today.

Hardcover, 232 pp., $39.95



Micah D. Kiel

Apocalyptic Ecology

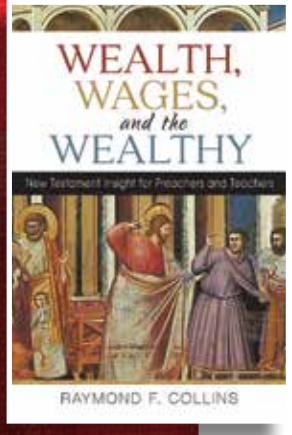
The Book of Revelation, the Earth, and the Future

Foreword by Barbara R. Rossing

"Kiel skillfully unleashes Revelation's surprisingly rich potential for developing a contemporary, theocentric ecology."

Ian Boxall

Paperback, 188 pp., $24.95



Raymond F. Collins

Wealth, Wages, and the Wealthy

New Testament Insight for Preachers and Teachers

"Every pastor needs to have this in his or her library. It will also be of great use in the undergraduate classroom in courses that deal with the practice of Christian morality."

Mary Kate Birge, SSJ, PhD

Paperback, 366 pp., $34.95

Eunjoo Mary Kim

Christian Preaching and Worship in Multicultural Contexts

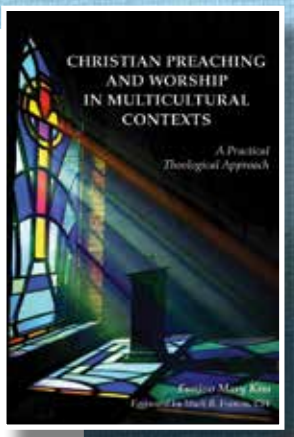
A Practical Theological Approach

Foreword by Mark R. Francis

"Kim walks her readers, step-by-step, through the processes of multicultural biblical interpretation, liturgy formation, and sermon preparation. This is a must-have text for those who are committed to worship that truly reflects the reign of God."

Debra J. Mumford

Paperback, 240 pp., $29.95



Albert Gerhards and Benedikt Kranemann

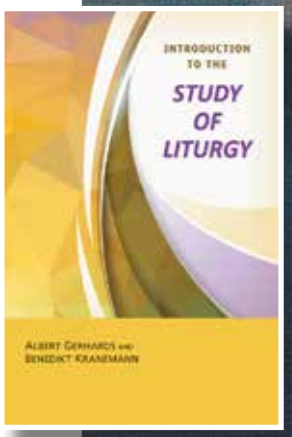
Introduction to the Study of Liturgy

Translated by Linda M. Maloney

"This comprehensive volume breaks new ground in the field of liturgical studies and will serve as an indispensable resource for years to come."

Keith F. Pecklers, SJ

Paperback, 416 pp., $44.95



Jill Y. Crainshaw

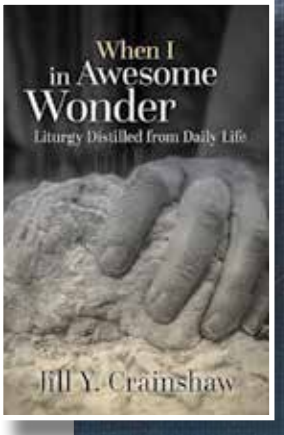
When I in Awesome Wonder

Liturgy Distilled from Daily Life

"Drawing from a deep well of sacramental theology, Crainshaw shows us the profound relationship between our sacred rituals and our daily lives, that we may live more mindfully, passionately, and faithfully."

Kimberly Bracken Long

Paperback, 184 pp., $19.95



LITURGICAL PRESS

litpress.org • 1-800-858-5450

All titles also available as eBooks.