

America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REVIEW

APRIL 4-11, 2016 \$4.99

A Listening Church

COMMUNICATIONS
IN THE AGE OF FRANCIS

FRANCES FORDE PLUDE

One of the greatest Christian writers who ever lived is the unknown author of this ancient homily from the second century, a meditation on Holy Saturday. Happy Easter from the editors and staff of **America**.

MATT MALONE, S.J.

What is happening? Today there is a great silence over the earth, a great silence, and stillness, a great silence because the King sleeps; the earth was in terror and was still, because God slept in the flesh and raised up those who were sleeping from the ages. God has died in the flesh, and the underworld has trembled.

Truly he goes to seek out our first parent like a lost sheep; he wishes to visit those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. He goes to free the prisoner Adam and his fellow-prisoner Eve from their pains, he who is God, and Adam's son.

The Lord goes in to them holding his victorious weapon, his cross. When Adam, the first created man, sees him, he strikes his breast in terror and calls out to all: "My Lord be with you all." And Christ in reply says to Adam: "And with your spirit." And grasping his hand he raises him up, saying: "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.

"I am your God, who for your sake became your son, who for you and your descendants now speak and command with authority those in prison: Come forth, and those in darkness: Have light, and those who sleep: Rise.

"I command you: Awake, sleeper, I have not made you to be held a prisoner in the underworld. Arise from the dead; I am the life of the dead. Arise, O man, work of my hands, arise, you who were fashioned in my image. Rise, let us go hence; for you in me and I in you, together we are one undivided person.

"For you, I your God became your son; for you, I the Master took on your form; that of slave; for you, I who am above the heavens came on earth and under the earth; for you, man, I became as a man without help, free among the dead; for you, who left a garden, I was handed over to Jews from a garden and crucified in a garden.

"Look at the spittle on my face, which I received because of you, in order to restore you to that first divine inbreathing at creation. See the blows on my cheeks, which I accepted in order to refashion your distorted form to my own image.

"See the scourging of my back, which I accepted in order to disperse the load of your sins which was laid upon your back. See my hands nailed to the tree for a good purpose, for you, who stretched out your hand to the tree for an evil one.

"I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side, for you, who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side healed the pain of your side; my sleep will release you from your sleep in Hades; my sword has checked the sword which was turned against you.

"But arise, let us go hence. The enemy brought you out of the land of paradise; I will reinstate you, no longer in paradise, but on the throne of heaven. I denied you the tree of life, which was a figure, but now I myself am united to you, I who am life. I posted the cherubim to guard you as they would slaves; now I make the cherubim worship you as they would God.

"The cherubim throne has been prepared, the bearers are ready and waiting, the bridal chamber is in order, the food is provided, the everlasting houses and rooms are in readiness; the treasures of good things have been opened; the kingdom of heaven has been prepared before the ages."

106 West 56th Street
New York, NY 10019-3803
Ph: (212) 581-4640; Fax: (212) 399-3596
Subscriptions: (800) 627-9533
www.americamedia.org
facebook.com/ Americamag
twitter.com/ Americamag

PRESIDENT AND EDITOR IN CHIEF
Matt Malone, S.J.

EXECUTIVE EDITORS
Robert C. Collins, S.J., Maurice Timothy Reidy
MANAGING EDITOR Kerry Weber

LITERARY EDITOR Raymond A. Schroth, S.J.

SENIOR EDITOR AND CHIEF CORRESPONDENT
Kevin Clarke

EDITOR AT LARGE James Martin, S.J.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR, AMERICA FILMS
Jeremy Zipple, S.J.

POETRY EDITOR Joseph Hoover, S.J.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR AND VATICAN CORRESPONDENT
Gerard O'Connell

ASSOCIATE EDITOR AND DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL STRATEGY Sam Sawyer, S.J.

SENIOR EDITOR Edward W. Schmidt, S.J.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS Ashley McKinless, Olga Segura, Robert David Sullivan

ASSISTANT EDITOR Joseph McAuley

ART DIRECTOR Sonja Kodiak Wilder

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT Zachary Davis

COLUMNISTS Helen Alvaré, John J. Conley, S.J., Daniel P. Horan, O.F.M., James T. Keane, John W. Martens, Bill McGarvey, Angela Alaimo O'Donnell, Margot Patterson, Nathan Schneider

CORRESPONDENTS John Carr (Washington), Anthony Egan, S.J., and Russell Pollitt, S.J. (Johannesburg), Jim McDermott, S.J. (Los Angeles), Timothy Padgett (Miami), Steven Schwankert (Beijing), David Stewart, S.J. (London), Judith Valente (Chicago)

MODERATOR, CATHOLIC BOOK CLUB
Kevin Spinale, S.J.

EDITOR, THE JESUIT POST Michael Rossmann, S.J.

EDITORIAL E-MAIL
america@americamedia.org

PUBLISHER AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
Edward G. Spallone **DEPUTY PUBLISHER** Rosa M. Del Saz **VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT** Daniel Pawlus **ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER** Chris Keller **DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR** Kerry Goleski **BUSINESS OPERATIONS STAFF** Khairah Walker, Glenda Castro, Katy Zhou, Frankarlos Cruz **ADVERTISING CONTACT** ads@americamedia.org; 212-515-0102 **SUBSCRIPTION CONTACT/ADDITIONAL COPIES** 1-800-627-9533 **REPRINTS:** reprints@americamedia.org

© 2016 America Press Inc.

Cover: Pope Francis listens to a woman while greeting the disabled during his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on March 11, 2015. CNS photo/Paul Haring

CONTENTS



ARTICLES

15 EXAMINING CONSCIENCE

Ancient wisdom on judgment, justice and the heart James F. Keenan

19 HIP-HOP THEOLOGY

Life lessons from street scriptures Alex Nava

22 A LISTENING CHURCH

Communications and collegiality in the age of Francis Frances Forde Plude

24 ON CHRISTIAN HOPE

What makes it distinctive and credible? Marcel Uwineza

COLUMNS & DEPARTMENTS

4 Current Comment

5 Editorial Fair Campaign Funding

6 Reply All

9 Signs of the Times

14 Column Facing the Front-runners Margot Patterson

18 First Monday Nine Justices Needed Ellen K. Boegel

28 Vatican Dispatch Money and Saint-Making Gerard O'Connell

29 Generation Faith Light the Way Caitlin Dermody

41 The Word Witnesses to the Resurrection; The Lamb and the Sheep *John W. Martens*



BOOKS & CULTURE

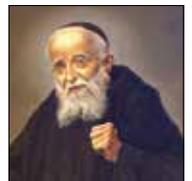
32 FILM "Deadpool" OF OTHER THINGS College Orientation

BOOKS *Submission; Union Made; The Catholic Church and Argentina's Dirty War* **POEM** Celtic Urn



ON THE WEB

The story of **Leopold Mandi**, a Capuchin "saint of mercy." Plus, "Peter Quinn" talks about the **Easter rebellion of 1916** on "America This Week." Full digital highlights on page 43 and at americamagazine.org/webfeatures.



Accountability From Above

On March 7, U.S. drones and manned aircraft killed about 150 people in Somalia. The Obama administration claimed the dead were Shabab fighters gathered for a graduation ceremony from a “terrorist boot camp” of sorts and that no civilian lives were lost. Many Americans seem ready to take government officials at their word. As Glenn Greenwald, an outspoken critic of the president’s counterterrorism policy, wryly put it, “Huge numbers of people today who have absolutely no idea who was killed are certain that they all deserved it.”

The body count in Somalia made these strikes notable; but the shadowy, unaccountable manner in which they were conducted is unfortunately not unusual in the U.S. stealth drone program, which has been conducted away from active war zones in countries like Yemen, Pakistan and Libya. The Obama administration announced in March it would soon release a detailed report on how many combatants and civilians have died in such strikes since 2009. Coming in President Obama’s final year, his pledge that these figures would be released annually rings hollow, as no future administration will be obligated to do so.

The Congress can and should mandate a yearly casualty report. But as the news from Somalia makes clear, much can be masked even by a seemingly open accounting of military and covert operations. When we hear that 10, 50 or 100 “terrorists” were killed, it is easy to lose sight of the human realities behind the numbers as well as the legal and moral questions raised by taking even one life. Telling us “how many” is hardly sufficient from a president who claims to head “the most transparent administration in history.” True accountability demands that he also explain why and on what authority.

Fix the Primaries

The presidential primary calendar is patently unfair. This year’s campaign raises the question of whether the system even does what it was designed to do. For more than 40 years, Iowa and New Hampshire have held the lead-off contests for both parties’ presidential nominations. Largely rural and almost entirely white, the two states establish front-runners and drive most of the others from the race. This year’s calendar also gave disproportionate power to the South; every state in that region held relatively early primaries. In contrast, several large states (including California, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin) will vote too late to help any aspirant who has already foundered.

The supposed advantage of letting Iowa and New Hampshire vote first is that they promote “retail” politics, giving lesser-known candidates the chance to win and build momentum. Jimmy Carter won the White House this way in 1976, but no one has accomplished a similar feat since. This year, Donald J. Trump won the Republican primary in New Hampshire despite spending little time in the state. Polls suggest that a national G.O.P. primary on Feb. 1 would have given Mr. Trump a plurality of the vote, and it appears that the party will end up with the same result after a primary season lasting more than four months and including at least a dozen nationally televised debates.

It is long past time to find a better way to select presidential nominees—one that gives all regions of the United States, and all types of communities, an equal voice. Both major parties should be held accountable for meeting this goal.

Border Law and Order

On Oct. 10, 2012, José Antonio Elena Rodríguez, 16 years old and unarmed, was shot 10 times from behind while walking in Nogales, Mexico, near the border fence that separates the city from Arizona. It took more than two years for the name of the Border Patrol agent who fired the shots, Lonnie Ray Swartz, to be disclosed under court order in a civil suit and almost another year before he was criminally indicted. This tragic story was told in detail in a New York Times Magazine article published in early March. On March 15 the Customs and Border Protection Integrity Advisory Panel submitted its final report to the Secretary of Homeland Security, a draft of which was obtained by The Los Angeles Times. The report concluded that the agency’s “discipline system is broken,” with far too much time passing between allegation and final resolution for it to serve as an effective deterrent to corruption and excessive use of force.

The Border Patrol employs more than 21,000 armed agents, having more than doubled in size since 2004. Its officers have been charged with corruption at a greater rate per capita than other federal law enforcement agencies, and a 2013 report concluded that in many instances, C.B.P.’s practices encouraged agents to use deadly force, instead of removing themselves from dangerous situations.

When our politicians talk about the need to secure the border, it is important to remember this necessary goal cannot be accomplished simply by allocating extra resources or agents. The more pressing need—along with reasonable immigration reform—is for law enforcement activity at the border to be better managed, not just increased.

Fair Campaign Funding

‘W’e have become, now, an oligarchy instead of a democracy,” former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said in an interview last fall. Mr. Carter described current U.S. politics as driven by an obsession with raising money rather than directly engaging voters.

The money chase became more intense in 2010, when the Supreme Court ruled, in the *Citizens United* case, that the government cannot restrict political spending by corporations and unions. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, spending on U.S. Senate races by so-called super PACs and by nonprofits known as “dark money” groups (whose donors can remain anonymous) more than doubled from the 2010 to 2014 election cycle, to \$486 million. These groups accounted for 47 percent of all spending in that year’s 10 most competitive races, almost as much as the spending by political parties and by the candidates themselves. Candidates who are not favored must spend more and more of their time begging for financial contributions in order to remain competitive.

This is a troubling development, as super PACs and other outside groups are not necessarily concerned with what the voters want in a state or district but instead pursue their own narrow agendas. So far their success in presidential elections has been limited, but they have been far more influential in state-level and local elections, often with lower turnout, where because of limited press coverage many voters get most of their information from television and other advertising.

In light of the court’s decision, the U.S. Constitution should be amended to allow for better regulation of campaign spending, a proposal that has the support of both Republicans (including recent presidential candidate Lindsey Graham) and Democrats. Jeff Clements, whose nonpartisan group Free Speech for People is trying to overturn *Citizens United*, argues that a constitutional amendment is not impossible, and he points out that amendments were responsible for, among other things, ending slavery, allowing women to vote and guaranteeing voting rights regardless of race.

But in the meantime, efforts to curb spending, which can pave the way for a constitutional amendment, should begin at the local and state levels. Promising campaign-finance initiatives are already being implemented. Arizona, Connecticut, Maine and the city of Seattle have adopted

public-financing schemes to reduce the influence of big-money groups. New York City currently has a small-donor matching system, under which candidates running for offices like mayor and city councilor receive \$6 in funding for every dollar raised through individual contributions, as long as the candidates abide by certain donation limits.



This system has encouraged a more diverse candidate field, including both men and women from different racial groups and income levels who previously might have had difficulty raising enough money to be competitive.

The New York program is echoed in a federal proposal called the Government by the People Act, which would provide similar matching for contributions up to \$150 to congressional campaigns and a tax credit for donations. Such matching systems could allow candidates to compete more effectively against opponents heavily funded by super PACs and other outside groups.

Another innovative tool is Crowdpac, an independent, nonpartisan political fundraising website. It facilitates political participation for both citizens and those interested in running for public office. Politicians are able to crowdfund their campaigns, and citizens are able to find and donate to candidates who match their beliefs. Steve Hilton, the co-founder and chief executive officer of Crowdpac, said the purpose of the site is “to level the playing field in American politics and put power back where it belongs—in the hands of the people.” One example of a candidate who has benefited from Crowdpac is the activist DeRay Mckesson, who recently announced his candidacy for mayor of Baltimore. In under a month, he raised almost \$250,000 through the website.

Removing all money from U.S. politics is neither practical nor desirable. But super PACs and other groups that represent narrow factional groups should not be allowed to exercise more and more control over who serves in office. Initiatives like the small-donor matching systems would help reform campaign finance and also give everyday voters a louder voice in public policy. A true and just democracy is one in which the greatest number of citizens not only trust the government, but are able to influence and elect its members.

REPLY ALL

Holy Mary

I very much enjoy John Anderson's film reviews, but I have a quibble with his recent "Lives of Christ" (3/14). In the first part of the review, which focuses on "Risen," Mr. Anderson notes that one of the most humorous parts of the film occurs when "half the men bashfully raise their hands" after being asked, "Who knows Mary Magdalene?"

Even though Mr. Anderson parenthetically admits that this joke is based on something that has absolutely no basis in Scripture, I found this part of the film in poor taste, poorly informed and not funny in any way. As an instructor of college students—the majority of whom believe that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute—this portrayal of the saintly "Apostle to the Apostles" must end. It is past time for us to call out directors and authors who impugn this holy woman, whose fidelity to Christ was unmatched in the Gospels. It is not humor but calumny.

DAN COSACCHI
Norwalk, Conn.

Complicit Citizen

Re "Voter's Complex," by John Keenan (Reply All, 3/7): In response to "The Greatness of a Nation," by Bishop Robert McElroy (2/15), Mr. Keenan writes that because of the politics of abortion, "voting for the right candidate is not so complex after all." I have struggled with the question: Should I be more concerned with charging the "other" as being immoral (as would be the case of a man, who will never face the question, charging a woman who sought an abortion) or should I be more concerned with my guilt for being complicit in a community that is, at the least, blind to true social justice or is, at the worst, systemically unjust?

I do know that it is much easier for me to point to the immorality of the "other" (especially when I, as a man, will never be in the place of the other) than to accept my personal and corporate guilt when I refuse to consider the possible injustice in the systems that I promote. If I remain more interested in only pointing out the wrongs of others, then Mr. Keenan is correct—voting for a candidate is pretty simple.

PAUL MARX
Online Comment

Sound But No Solutions

Re "Mind the Gap" (Current Comment, 3/7): I feel obliged to say that this comment is underwhelming: Do the editors search out problems to raise? Do they propose solutions?

Fairfax County, Va., and McDowell County, W.Va., are separated by 350 miles, about a half-day's drive. Residents of Fairfax County are among the longest-living in the country: Men have an average life expectancy of 82 years and women, 85, about the same as in Sweden. In McDowell, the averages are 64 and 73, about the same as in Iraq.

Would you consider moving people from Iraq to Sweden or Fairfax County—or vice versa—to solve this issue? I ask because a) differences among us seem to be "inequalities" and b) cursing the darkness rather than lighting a candle seems to be a trend today. If we each try harder to love God and love our neighbor, the important stuff will be accomplished. If we simply decry the status quo we waste time and energy and sound like Donald Trump.

ROBERT O'CONNELL
Online Comment

Not Following

In "What Will Francis Say?" (2/29) Gerard O'Connell looks ahead to what Pope Francis might say in his upcom-

ing apostolic exhortation on the family. I do not understand. Will he reaffirm the indissolubility of marriage and then, in direct contradiction, say a person can indeed dissolve a marriage, enter into an adulterous relationship and receive Communion? I do not believe I am the only one who is totally exasperated by this papacy. Why bother taking up one's cross and making the effort to live by the church's moral teachings if Francis will just say "don't sweat the details"? I will continue to try and live by the catechism rather than Francis' teachings. He has lost me.

KEVIN MURPHY
Online Comment

Ashamed Ascetics

Thanks to John Conley, S.J., for his column "Lenten Freedom" (2/29). I still do not understand why the church became more and more lax after Vatican II. Were we confused or ashamed of our ascetical practices? Did the church think that purging practices like fasting and abstinence would lead more people to attend church and come to God?

I am at the age where I attend more and more funerals. The local parish priests tell us at each one that the deceased is now in heaven—even when the deceased themselves were quite determined to make it to purgatory at best. If most Catholics think heaven is their next stop after death, then it is no wonder Lenten asceticism is more and more rare.

HENRY GEORGE
Online Comment

Victim Industry

Re "Create in Me a Just Heart," by Megan McCabe (2/8): There is no victimless pornography, and in the world of Internet and amateur porn the possibility that someone, somewhere not of age or not able to freely consent was

Letters to the editor may be sent to **America's** editorial office (address on page 2) or letters@americamagazine.org. **America** will also consider the following for print publication: comments posted below articles on **America's** website (americamagazine.org) and posts on Twitter and public Facebook pages. All correspondence may be edited for length.

coerced into the production of the video is quite high. The impact of pornography on the common good must be judged by its victims, not by whether the more violent scenes are acted out in any private or public sphere. A strict focus on personal morality perpetuates the myth of the male sexual drive tempted by the female body and fails to consider the entirety of the victimization of the industry on all genders.

Catholics must address porn as a matter of both personal and social morality. Ms. McCabe's article underemphasized the role of lust in first luring, then hooking and literally addicting men (and women) to pornography. Indeed, her article did not even mention sexual addiction, from which so many men and women suffer. That vast social and economic structures—fueled by profit—promote, inculcate and reinforce women (and men) as objects, there can be no doubt. Both lust and its cousin “control-domination” are incited and aroused by porn.

Pornography is diabolical precisely because it uses one of the most tender, sublime and beautiful gifts of God—our human sexuality—and perverts it to consumptive use, abuse and violence. It is yet another manifestation of what St. John Paul II called the culture of death.

MARIA DAVILA
Online Comment

Unnecessary Divisions

Re “What’s Catholic About It?” by the Rev. J. Michael Byron (2/8): It is ironic that a representative of the theological academy seems so perplexed by the rise of the Catholic studies curriculum. I see it as a beast of their own creation. Its inception in the 1980s was no doubt a response to the pervasive lack of respect for and dismissal of church history and magisterial teaching in Catholic universities in the 1970s and beyond. Perhaps the “John Paul II and Benedict” Catholics think it a worthwhile venture to study

the teachings of pontiffs who actually participated in the Second Vatican Council. Pope Francis is not the sole proprietor of the breezy “spirit” of the council, as he has indicated well in his writings. Alas, here is another fabricated division in Catholicism where there need be none.

BARBARA SIROVATKA
Online Comment

A Tradition of Service

In “Wading Into the Deep Blue” (2/8), a review of “Blue Bloods,” Nicholas Sawicki writes, “One of the biggest criticisms of the show is that it tends to be too archetypal in the way it portrays the Reagan family...with the three oldest men in the Reagan family being veterans of the U.S. Marine Corps, each of whom served overseas in three different wars.”

I think not. The show is successful because it is so real. My father was a part of the New York City Fire Department and served in the Navy in World War II; I served two tours in Vietnam and had a U.S. Army career. My son went to the U.S. Military Academy and served a year in Iraq. In the show, the Reagans have a divorced daughter, a difficult teen, some serious family fights, marriage stresses, a grandmother who died too young and more. Their faith is real, and it helps

them to fight many negative forces and to stay together—while keeping their Catholic identity.

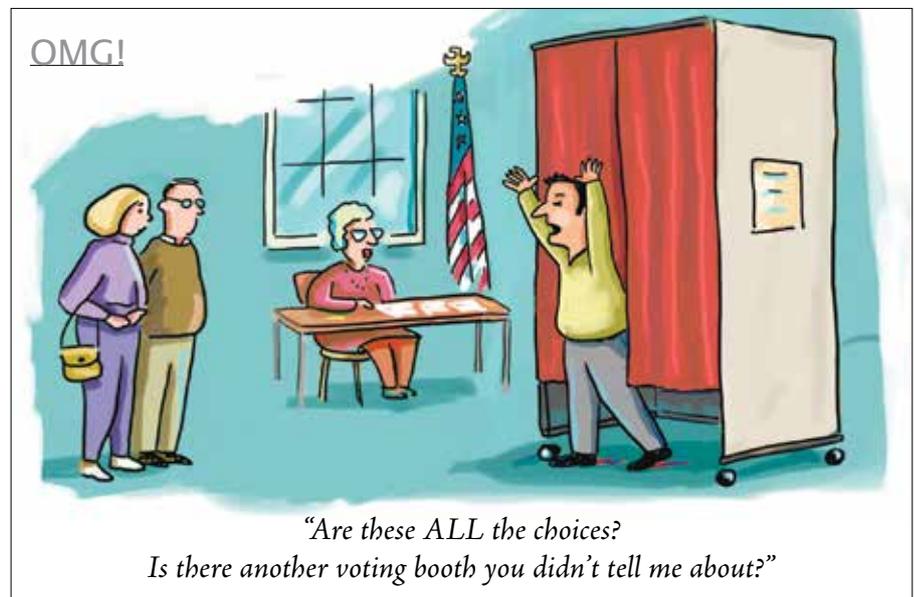
TOM FIELDS
Online Comment

Evolving Faith

In the article “Our Reason for Being” (2/1), Michael Naughton, Don Briel and Kenneth E. Goodpaster rightly fault Catholic education for falling short of being faithful to the “updating” called for by the Second Vatican Council and required by the long-accepted principle that “faith supposes reason.” Reason supposes informed understanding; but when understanding is misinformed and faith follows it, faith runs amok. In part, the ecological crisis—advanced in Christian colonialism—results from such misunderstandings.

Pope Francis’ impassioned encyclical, “Laudato Si,” identifies human ecology as evolved in and with nature’s ecology. If the church is dismissive of evolution and the evolution of symbiosis, it presents to the faithful faulty premises of understanding. St. John Damascene defines God as “a sea of infinite understanding.” It is of the waters of God-understanding we must drink if we would get nature right, evolution right, reason right and faith right.

SYLVESTER L. STEFFEN
New Hampton, Iowa



Granddaughter, I Love You Always

Personalized Heirloom Music Box



Plays the melody
"You Are My Sunshine"

FREE
Personalization!



Shown smaller
than actual size
of about 6" x 4"

- A loving sentiment and ever-blooming roses adorn crystal-clear glass within a silver-plated filigree frame
- Fine heirloom music box is hand-crafted and finished in rich mahogany for lasting beauty



Includes a
poem card

PLEASE ORDER PROMPTLY

SEND NO MONEY NOW

THE
BRADFORD EXCHANGE
-COLLECTIBLES-

P.O. Box 806, Morton Grove, IL 60053-0806

YES. Please accept my order for the *Granddaughter, I Love You Always Personalized Music Box(es)*. I need send no money now. I will be billed with shipment. More than one granddaughter? Please fill in the name for each box ordered (up to 10 letters).

One Box: _____ Two Boxes: _____

Three Boxes: _____ Four Boxes: _____

	Mrs. Mr. Ms. _____ <small>Name (Please Print Clearly)</small>
	Address _____
	City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Box personalized with
any name (up to 10
letters) **FREE!**

*Plus a total of \$9.99 shipping and service per box. Please allow 4-8 weeks for shipment. A limited-edition presentation restricted to 295 crafting days. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.

01-21049-001-E39413

Personalized Gift ... Exceptional Value!

Act now to acquire your exclusive *Personalized Heirloom Music Box*. The limited edition can be personalized on the lid with your granddaughter's name for just \$59.99*, payable in two installments of \$29.99. Our 365-day money-back guarantee assures your 100% satisfaction. Send no money now. Just return the coupon today, and indicate the name for personalization.

www.bradfordexchange.com/21049

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

AFRICA

Catholic Agencies Struggle With Dual Crises of Terror and Drought



LAND SURVEY. A dry walk in late January through failed crops and farmland in Afar, Ethiopia.

AP PHOTO/MULUGETA AYENE

A Catholic aid official warned that church life faces “grave disruption” from Boko Haram in Cameroon, and a local bishop said the Nigeria-based group had caused a “psychosis of fear.”

“This movement opposes all Western values and is also hostile to Muslims who won’t accept the reign of Shariah law,” said Rafael D’Aqui, head of the Africa section at Aid to the Church in Need. “They’re now trying to draw world attention with cross-border attacks, and since foreign priests and nuns are a key prize, the missionaries on whom the local church depends have had to leave.”

D’Aqui said on March 16 that Boko Haram had infiltrated Cameroon’s northern Yagoua and Maroua-Mokolo dioceses after suffering military setbacks in neighboring Nigeria, despite “huge efforts” by Cameroon’s armed forces. He added that Boko Haram marauders were still regularly taking control of whole villages, abducting child hostages to be brainwashed and used in “random suicide attacks.”

Extremist groups “are obtaining huge sums of money from Saudi Arabia and elsewhere to build mosques where there were previously no Muslims and train imams in a hard, radical school,” D’Aqui said. “There’s a militant fraternity now, which is intent on invading and establishing a presence in Christian areas.”

Catholics account for 38 percent of Cameroon’s 20.4 million inhabitants, with Protestants making up 26 percent and Muslims 21 percent. More and more, Catholic communities have been attacked by Boko Haram.

In an interview in early March with the German-based news service Aid to the Church in Need, Bishop Bruno Ateba Edo of Maroua-Mokolo said that some villages had set up inter-faith patrols and “watch committees” in collaboration with the army but said there was “no clear frontier” between Cameroon and Nigeria, with families living on both sides and speaking the same languages. “It’s the entire population they’re attacking in crowded marketplaces—there’s a psychosis of fear,” Bishop Edo said.

Formed in 2002, Boko Haram publicly allied itself with the Islamic State in March 2015 and has killed at least 17,000 people in Nigeria during a seven-year insurgency. The group also operates in Chad and Niger and has left 2.3 million displaced and 5.6 million facing hunger, according to a U.N. report of March 9.

As churches in central Africa struggle with the human menace of Boko Haram, a crisis of a different character accelerated in eastern and southern Africa, where 36 million people grapple with the worst drought in decades. Over 10 million people face hunger in Ethiopia. Agencies are racing to save the country from falling into a famine similar to the crisis in 1983-85, which killed around a million people.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Ethiopia said nine dioceses are affected by what they see as the worst-ever effects of climate change and environmental degradation. “The severity of the situation is continuously increasing the number of people affected,” said Cardinal Berhaneyesus D. Souraphiel, the archbishop of Addis Ababa.

Linked to extreme El Niño weather conditions, the drought has hit countries like Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya,

South Sudan, Malawi and Zimbabwe, among others. The conditions have reversed normal weather patterns, upsetting people's livelihoods.

"In parts of Somaliland, where people live on livestock and agriculture, the problem is serious," said Roman Catholic Bishop Georgio Bertin of Djibouti, a country in the horn of

Africa. In 2011, a drought made worse by Islamic terrorism forced thousands of Somalis into a refugee complex in northeastern Kenya.

"We are intervening," said Bishop Bertin, who is relying on the help of Caritas, the international Catholic relief organization. "We are providing food to very poor families."

FLINT, MICH.

Finding Safe Water a Deportation Risk for Some Residents

Imagine turning on the tap in the morning and seeing something that "looked like toilet water coming out of your faucet," in the words of one Catholic leader. That's been the reality facing thousands of residents of Flint, Mich., every day for more than a year. Now, imagine looking for safe, potable water and getting arrested for your trouble. That, too, is the reality—and the fear—for Flint's undocumented migrant residents.

Deacon Omar Odette, pastoral administrator of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Flint, said he knows members of his parish who have been arrested for not having immigration documents.

Officials from the Department of Homeland Security have advised that "they will not put undercover people in the [water] distribution centers—but that's only the distribution centers, not the rest of the city," Odette said.

"They're picked up, hauled away, given a court date," he said. "The Border Patrol is only an hour and 10 minutes away from Flint" in Port Huron, which is separated from Canada by the St. Clair River, "and they come through quite a lot looking for people."

Odette was part of a delegation from the P.I.C.O. Neighborhood Network and Michigan Faith in Action that flew



from Flint to Washington to attend a House hearing on March 17 about the ongoing Flint water crisis with Gov. Rick Snyder of Michigan and the Environmental Protection Agency administrator Gina McCarthy.

In Washington, Odette and Faith in Action delegates updated representatives of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the U.S. bishops' domestic antipoverty arm, on the situation in Flint, "how distribution is

going and what they need still," Odette said. "Looking long-term down the road...it's not going to be the rest of this year [to end the water crisis]; it's going to be two, three years...adapting to whatever people need," he explained.

Our Lady of Guadalupe became a water distribution center out of necessity. "They weren't giving people water because they didn't have driver's licenses," Odette said. "That's how we got into distributing water—our people were getting denied. I don't know how many Hispanic communities came by to give us water, but there were semi-loads."

"We still distribute five days a week. We go from 9 to 6," Odette said. "Every day we're learning something new in how to do this. They didn't teach this in the seminary."

Two years ago, city managers decided to switch the city of Flint's water source from Detroit's supply to the Flint River. The city has been since reconnected to the Detroit water supply, but during the period when residents were dependent on the Flint River, the more corrosive river water ate away at old lead-lined service pipes that connect to residents' homes.

When the crisis started making headlines, "people in Flint weren't just going to lie down and be nonresponsive," Odette said.

"There really hasn't been a good plan yet. They've started replacing some of the piping, but they do one a day. They call it 'fast-laning,' but when you have 30,000-some houses, it's going to take a long while if you do it one a day."

It may require replacing "things in the house that are bad" because of lead contamination, Odette said. One reason for the trip to Washington, he added, was to "let all facets of the government know that Flint's going to

need money—lots and lots of money—unless you want to keep on poisoning 100,000 people.”

Obstacles in Jerusalem

Israeli restrictions on reaching the Church of the Holy Sepulcher for Holy Week and Easter are part of the current Israeli government’s policy of making Jerusalem an exclusively Jewish city, Yusef Daher, secretary general of the Jerusalem Interchurch Center, alleged in March. Deploring the network of Israeli police barriers that disrupt the number of people able to reach the church, Daher said such restrictions “did not happen 10 years ago.” The Holy Fire ceremony involves the sharing of fire, which, according to tradition, is brought forth miraculously from the tomb of Jesus. The ceremony has become a point of contention over the past 10 years between the Israeli police and local Christians. Police say the single exit into a plaza makes the ceremony a high risk for visitors if a fire breaks out. Palestinian Christians living in the West Bank and Gaza also struggle to receive permits to attend Holy Week and Easter ceremonies.

Crisis of Indifference?

Pope Francis in his Palm Sunday homily on March 20 decried what he called indifference to the refugees flooding into Europe, making a comparison to authorities who washed their hands of Jesus’ fate before his crucifixion. The pope abandoned his homily text to lament Europe’s handling of the influx of migrants and asylum-seekers fleeing war, persecution or poverty from Syria, Iraq, Africa and elsewhere. Pope Francis connected Jesus’ experience in Jerusalem, triumphantly received and then rejected, to the contemporary plight of Middle East refugees. Jesus was “denied every justice,” he said. “Jesus

NEWS BRIEFS

On March 18 Vatican officials confirmed a **papal visit to Armenia** was “being studied” but denied that it had already been set for June 22-26. + The **John Paul II Medical Research Institute** in Iowa City is launching a research program to pursue treatments for a variety of rare, genetic illnesses that afflict millions of Americans. + On March 17 U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry confirmed that atrocities carried out by the Islamic State group against Yazidis, Christians and other minorities **constituted genocide**, the first such U.S. declaration since Sudan’s Darfur crisis in 2004. + On March 18 three Franciscan friars—Robert D’Aversa, 69, Anthony Criscitelli, 62, and Giles Schinelli, 73—were arraigned on **child endangerment and conspiracy charges** related to their supervision of a sexual predator who may have molested more than 100 children in Pennsylvania. + In what may be his first public comments about his successor, Pope Benedict XVI said in an interview published in March that Pope Francis “finds himself in full accord” with St. John Paul II’s “profound” concept of **the centrality of mercy** in the church—“a sign of the times...that the idea of God’s mercy is becoming ever more central and dominant.”



John Kerry

also suffered indifference in his own flesh, because no one wanted to take on responsibility for his destiny,” the pope added. “And I am thinking of so many people, so many on the margins, so many refugees” for whom “many don’t want to assume responsibility for their destiny,” Francis said in a clear reference to Europe’s migration debate. In an effort to fight refugee smuggling, E.U. and Turkish officials just made a deal to send back to Turkey migrants now arriving on Greek islands.

Drug Abuse Dilemma

With Massachusetts facing a growing epidemic of opioid addiction, the state’s Catholic bishops urged in a statement released on March 2 that action be taken to quell the epidemic. “The abuse and misuse of opioids has become a national and local epidemic.... On average, four people lose their

lives each day in this state, due to illegal and legal drug overdoses. It is a disturbing trend that must be stopped,” said the statement signed by Cardinal Seán P. O’Malley, O.F.M.Cap., of Boston, Bishop Robert J. McManus of Worcester, Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski of Springfield and Bishop Edgar M. da Cunha of Fall River. The statement was issued through the Massachusetts Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the Catholic Church in the commonwealth. In their statement, released on March 2, the bishops asked that health care providers “demand improved education within their own professional groups about the appropriate indications, prescriptions and use of opioid medications.” Additionally, they urged lawmakers to continue working on legislation to combat the opioid crisis.

From America Media, CNS, RNS, AP and other sources.

DISPATCH | LOS ANGELES

Longing for the Green Flash

When you live beside the Pacific Ocean, it is almost instinct to stop whatever you're doing near dusk and watch the sun slowly disappear. In Angeleno beachside communities like Santa Monica or Hermosa Beach, crowds gather even on a weekday just to see our distant star slip once more beneath the horizon, suffusing sea and sky in creams and pinks and purples. Most evenings there aren't even clouds for the setting sun to transform into sheets of orange and gold. But no matter; the moment of sunset draws us like iron to a magnet.

But amid the crowds one also finds ordinary people scrutinizing the horizon with the keen eye of a scientist or an ancient farmer. They murmur about weather conditions, the purity of the air, the clarity of the horizon. A particular term recurs that to the uninitiated sounds like the latest in Hollywood's endless pantheon of superheroes. In fact, it is the name of a meteorological phenomenon—the green flash.

As the sun approaches the horizon, its rays become slightly dispersed by the earth's atmosphere. As through a prism, its wavelengths are divided and darker colors are freed. The indigo we cannot see, nor usually the blue. But sometimes in the sun's final moments, when the air is quite clear, green light can be seen creeping in around its edges to finally form a momentary spot of viridescence in the space where it had just been.

In 1838 Captain George Back of the H.M.S. *Terror* offered one of the earliest descriptions of the green flash. As he traveled in the Arctic, Back looked to the east: "I had observed the upper limb of the sun, as it filled a triangular cleft on the ridge of the headland, of the most brilliant emerald colour," he wrote.

The French author Jules Verne gave

In the sun's final moments, green light can be seen around its edges.

the phenomenon a whole mythology, explaining in his 1882 novel *The Green Ray* that if you saw the green flash, it gave you special powers of perception. "At its apparition all deceit and falsehood are done away, and he who has been fortunate enough once to behold it is enabled to see closely into his own heart and to read the thoughts of others." (Ironically, at the very moment two of his characters are finally present for a green flash, they are so caught up in the realization of each other's beauty that they miss it entirely.)

Other wild stories have been concocted about the green flash, like the one told by Admiral Robert Byrd, who said in 1929 that he saw one in Antarctica go on for over half an hour (which would have required either time or the planet to stop). But what's truly strangest about the green flash is that some people seem to be completely unable to see it. Maybe it's some slight and otherwise undetectable col-

orblindness; maybe they just don't realize what they're seeing or don't know where to look. The term "green flash" is certainly deceptive; it's not a flash at all but a small and subtle ball of light.

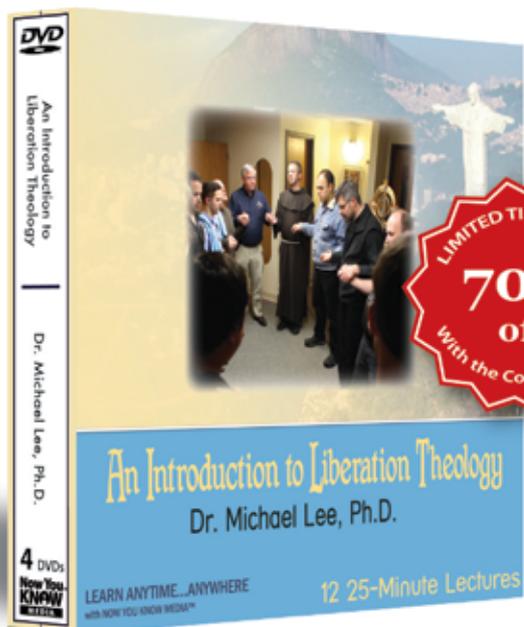
Whatever the explanation, on a lovely Southern California evening a group can relish together a sunset, yet when that final slice of disc hits the horizon some may "ooh" and "ahh," while others can only look on, bemused. No doubt there's a metaphor in here about our capacity for wonder—the way maturity shrivels the human imagination, our willingness to see the beauty in our world.

But in this season of political wrangling, what seems more striking is how much reality itself has become like the green flash—readily demonstrable, yet still contested. Pundits argue whether climate change exists, no matter that these last 15 years have been the hottest on record. The escalation in U.S. gun violence is measurable—and denied. Minorities tell story after story of police brutality, even provide compelling evidence of it; yet rarely is an officer charged with an offense, let alone convicted. In Los Angeles County alone, over 375 people were shot by the police between 2010 and 2014. Twenty-five percent were unarmed, and not a single police officer was charged. No officer here has been publicly prosecuted for an on-duty shooting since the turn of the century.

Despite its name and elusiveness, the green flash is not magic but meteorology. Still, it's hard today not to wish for a strange sunset flash of light that could strip away all obfuscation and lay bare the truth.

JIM McDERMOTT

JIM McDERMOTT, S.J., a screenwriter, is *America's Los Angeles correspondent*. Twitter: @PopCulturPriest @jmcidsj.



Explore One of the Most Dynamic Movements of Our Time: Liberation Theology

In the midst of poverty and oppression, liberation theology emerged in twentieth-century Latin America as a beacon of hope. Dramatic in its context and sweeping in its scope, it continues to offer fascinating ways to engage with issues such as inequality, violence, and ecological concerns. Now, *An Introduction to Liberation Theology* gives you the opportunity to understand its context and implications today.

In these 12 lectures, you will ask such questions as: What does it mean to understand Jesus Christ as a liberator? How is sin social as well as personal? How can the Church be of and for the poor? As you encounter the richness found in a spirituality of liberation, you will reflect upon your own faith and the meaning of the gospel.

When you listen to this superb course, you will explore how to address economic, political, and social liberation with a robust and meaningful faith. Learn how to live in a world calling for justice, hoping for peace, and needing reconciliation.

Must order within 30 days of issue date

1-800-955-3904

<https://www.NowYouKnowMedia.com/Lee>

Now You Know Media, Inc.
12115 Parklawn Dr., Unit B • Rockville, MD 20852

An Introduction to Liberation Theology

5-CD or 4-DVD Program

Presented by

Dr. Michael Lee, Ph.D.
Fordham University

Lecture Titles

1. Introduction to Liberation Theology
2. From Colonial to Liberating Faith
3. Liberation Theology's Method: See-Judge-Act
4. The Biblical Roots of Liberation Theology
5. Social Sin and Liberation
6. The Preferential Option for the Poor
7. Jesus the Liberator
8. Salvation, Suffering, and Martyrdom
9. The Church of the Poor
10. Spirituality: Faith, Politics, and Discipleship
11. Liberation Theology and Its Critics
12. Liberation Theologies: Expanding the View

An Introduction to Liberation Theology

12 Lectures on (25 minutes/lecture)
+ electronic study guide

SAVE \$150

4-DVD Set ~~\$209.95~~ **SALE \$59.95**

5-CD Set ~~\$119.95~~ **SALE \$35.95**

+ \$8.95 Shipping & Handling
100% Satisfaction Guarantee

Coupon Code: A1951

Now You Know Media's mission is to bring you the best Catholic professors and retreat leaders in America. Carefully selected for their scholarship, faithful insight, and teaching excellence, our speakers will touch your heart and engage your intellect. Visit our website to browse our growing catalogue of over 250 courses and retreats available in CD, DVD, and MP3 formats.



Facing the Front-Runners

Love him or loathe him, people can't stop talking about Donald J. Trump, almost always in hyperbolic terms.

As I write this, Mitt Romney has just uttered his very unlike-Mitt Romney *cri de coeur* about the intolerable impending fate the Republican Party is about to meet if Mr. Trump becomes its presidential candidate. Now that the unlikely may become the inevitable, Republican leaders are in full-throated cry that the end of the Republican Party as we know it is upon us.

This does not seem the worst thing in the world, given how much the Republican Party has become the Party of No. And the Republican angst on display does have its diverting side. Mr. Trump's deviation from party orthodoxy—on trade, taxes, entitlements and other issues—has party leaders between a rock and a hard place. Do they embrace the outsider who has wriggled into the fold, bringing new voters with him, or turn to the much-disliked but more ideologically reliable Ted Cruz?

Mr. Trump has scrambled the Republican Party into a frenzy. Listening to his rivals on the debate stage assail him as a liar, a fraud, a phony and con man, you might think that if he wins the nomination Republicans will have to forgo partisanship this fall and vote Democratic. But no. Apparently the good of the country extends only so far.

The Democrats are hardly to be outdone in their loud repudiations of Mr. Trump. Last weekend I went to a party where my hostess compared him

to Hitler and the U.S. economy to that of post-World War I Germany. These are big statements, almost Trumplike in their overreach. Certainly, we have problems in this country, and both Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump are tapping into Americans' anxieties: about their own economic prospects, about the growing divide between rich and poor, about the capture of our democracy by special interest groups and oligarchs.

Still, to compare the economy of the United States, which is actually doing pretty well, with that of post-World War I Germany is a considerable stretch. So is the comparison of Trump with Hitler. The man is a populist egomaniac playing to people's xenophobia, but is he bent on world conquest? I don't think so. He wants to wall off the United States from the rest of the world, not plant the flag in non-American soil.

The pendulum always swings. Whatever criticisms you have of Barack Obama, he is a sophisticated man possessed of elegance and grace. Perhaps it's surprising, then, that the Republican front-runner to succeed him is a loud-mouthed vulgarian. If by chance Mr. Trump becomes president, the American public will soon be remembering fondly Obama's fine qualities: his intelligence, his discretion, his scandal-free administration. He has not always provided answers, but few people suggest that he does not have a good grasp of the problems.

Enter Donald Trump, the blowhard and braggart, the thrice-married man with several bankruptcies in his

past and a string of lawsuits in his present, the man for whom everything is very simple. ISIS? Syria? Not to worry. He is very, very smart and will quickly sort out those pesky problems in the Middle East.

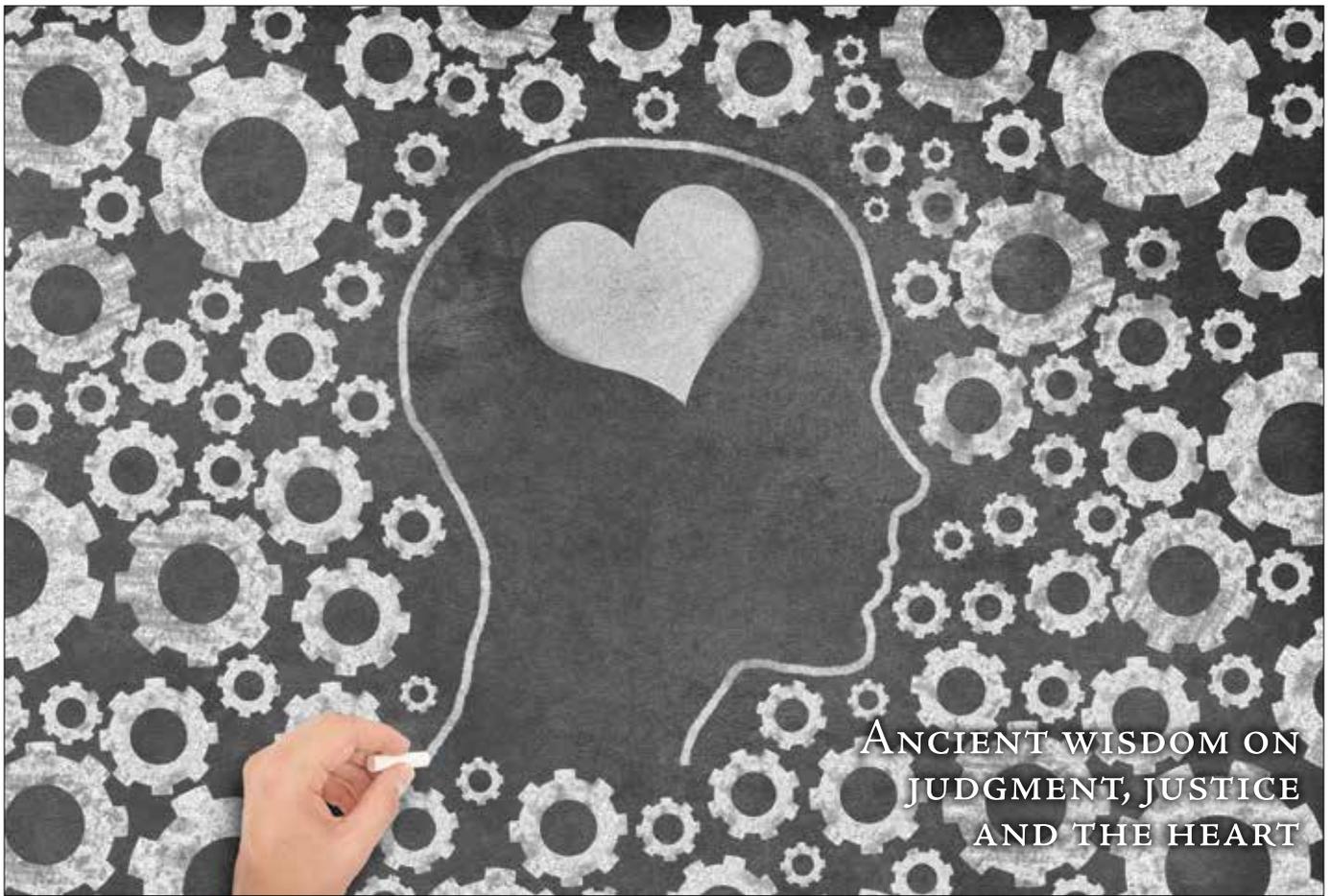
Mr. Trump is not Hitler so much as our own Silvio Berlusconi, the billionaire businessman and former prime minister of Italy whose time in office was marked by corruption charges, sex scandals and verbal gaffes. Like Berlusconi, Trump is a rich man with the common touch. Authenticity is what he has going for him. His candor, even more than his nationalism, is what supporters like. What detractors see as abusiveness his admirers see as courage and evidence of integrity.

A contest between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton will pit polar opposites. One is well-qualified and experienced; the other is very much not. She is controlled and disciplined; he is dynamic and loose-lipped. He seems unscripted and unfiltered. Her every word seems carefully crafted and run through a political calculus.

And yet there's a curiosity factor with both. What does each really believe? Mr. Trump seems so entirely pragmatic one wonders if he has any principles. Clinton seems like she does, but she's so much the politician you're never going to find out what they are.

It will be an interesting match, and you can count on the rhetoric escalating. Even now it's as over the top as Mr. Trump's hairstyle.

Mr. Trump
is not
Hitler so
much as
our own
Silvio
Berlusconi.



ANCIENT WISDOM ON
JUDGMENT, JUSTICE
AND THE HEART

Examining Conscience

BY JAMES F. KEENAN

At the gathering of the Synod of Bishops in October 2015, church leaders discussed a wide range of challenges facing modern families, including—though not limited to—sensitive questions around Communion for divorced and remarried Catholics, contraception and same-sex marriage. In their final report, the bishops noted that in cases where a marriage has broken down, “Pastoral discernment, while taking into account a person’s properly formed conscience, must take responsibility for these situations” (No. 85). And in his final address to the synod, Pope Francis noted that “apart from dogmatic questions clearly defined by the Church’s Magisterium...what for some is freedom of conscience is for others simply confusion.”

To clear away some of this confusion, it is helpful to turn to the Bible and the tradition of the church, which provide widely applicable insights on the topic. Here let me offer four of the major contributions to the church’s understanding of conscience today.

First, in the Hebrew Bible, the term most analogous to conscience is “heart”—*lebab* in Hebrew, *kardia* in Greek. There are literally hundreds of references to heart in the Bible. In fact, while the Protestant editions of the Bible translate most of these instances as

JAMES F. KEENAN, S.J., a moral theologian, is the Canisius Professor at Boston College.

“conscience,” the Catholic edition of the Revised Standard Version insists on keeping the specific word *heart*.

Often enough, heart is that which God judges. In Sir 42:18, God “searches out the abyss and the human heart; he understands their innermost secrets.” In these instances, heart is not identified with conscience, because the former simply refers to one’s deep, personal interests: Knowing one’s heart is like knowing where one’s true commitments are. Other times, however, Scripture suggests that God’s examination of the heart empowers it to become what today we would call a person’s conscience, as in Jer 17:10: “I the LORD search the mind and try the heart, to give to every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.”

Occasionally the heart is where one recognizes one’s guilt. We call this a judicial conscience because it judges our past actions. In 1 Sm 24:5, we read that “afterward David was stricken to the heart because he had cut off a corner of Saul’s cloak.” Here the heart is a conscience convicting the self, the fruit of an examined conscience.

Today we distinguish between a judicial conscience that looks back and a legislative conscience that guides future courses of action; there are a few instances of the latter in the Hebrew Bible. There conscience is not the heart but a voice, a voice that accompanies us. This notion of a voice being with us captures the *con* of conscience, a word that means “knowing with.” In Is 30:21, we read: “And your ears shall hear a word behind you: ‘This is the way; walk in it,’ when you would turn to the right or the left.” This voice directs our lives. Still, heart also occasionally becomes the guiding conscience that needs to be formed, as in 2 Mc 2:3: “And with other similar words he exhorted them that the law should not depart from their hearts.”

In short, conscience in the Hebrew Bible is found primarily as a matter of the heart. Though many instances of heart are no more than that which God examines to reveal our preferences, still other instances of heart are identifiably related to an active conscience, through which one turns to God, judges one’s past, guides one’s future and looks to be shaped by the law of God.

Listening to the Truth

As we turn to Greek and Roman philosophy, we discover that from Democritus on, conscience has a singular feature: It is judicial. Unlike the Hebrew notion of the passive heart that can be judged, this version of conscience does the judging. In fact, most often it disturbs as it judges. Though Cicero’s own conscience judged him well, in most of ancient philosophy the function of conscience is to cause us distress

over our wrongdoing.

The Greek and Roman notion of conscience is found in everyone, but always as judge; like Yahweh, it judges each person. It does not dwell quietly in anyone when evil is done; it awakens the wrongdoer with pangs. Conscience forces us to recognize our own misdeeds. In that rude awakening, many encounter conscience for the first time. To have a conscience is to recognize one’s own guilt.

A guilty conscience is precisely one that recognizes a lack of connection between what we thought was acceptable and the guilt we feel afterward. Its pangs not only awaken us to our misdeeds; they awaken us to conscience itself. When we are awakened, we suddenly realize that we have within us a moral sense that does not like to be disturbed. By these pangs we begin to realize that we carry within ourselves a moral beacon that troubles us when we are wrong and validates us when we are right. That is what ancient philosophy gives us: the birth of conscience, the experience, like that of Isaiah, of a voice that we can hear. Conscience becomes a new form of understanding and a new form of listening to the truth.

Conscience becomes a new form of understanding and a new form of listening to the truth.

Speaking the Truth of Christ

When we turn to the New Testament, St. Paul leads the way. First, he places his conscience in the light of faith and under the governance of the Holy Spirit. “I am speaking the truth in Christ, I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit” (Rom 9:1). On trial before the Sanhedrin, Paul states, “Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience up to this day” (Acts 23:1; see 2 Cor 1:12).

There is a humility to his conscience, however. For all his reliance on following his conscience, he still acknowledges the outstanding judgment of God: “I am not conscious of anything against me, but I do not thereby stand acquitted; the one who judges me is the Lord” (1 Cor 4:4). God’s impending judgment does not replace one’s conscience, however; until the judgment comes, it is conscience that we have as a moral guide: “Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience” (1 Cor 13:5).

According to Paul, we are called “to hold faith in God and a good conscience” (1 Tm 1:19; 3:9). Paul is mindful of the Gentiles, too. While they might not have the law, the law is written in their hearts and they have consciences that witness to them; and, like all, on the last day they will be judged (Rom 2:14–18).

Finally, Paul believes that it is through conscience that we grow, both the weak and the strong, together. In his discussion about idol meat, he considers those with unformed

consciences who, on seeing their fellow Christians eating meat that has been offered to the idols, think that these Christians are participating in idol worship (1 Corinthians 8). Paul warns his fellow Christians that although they are strong in their consciences, they should be mindful of the confusion that they might be causing in others. In this bit of casuistry, Paul teaches Christians that loving one's neighbor means helping and not scandalizing. With Paul, then, we have conscience as our moral judge and guide, with the realization that for all Christians, both the weak and the strong, there is always more to learn until we arrive at the day of judgment.

Finally, Thomas Aquinas offers a further development on conscience. In the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas asks whether an erring conscience binds. He answers that "absolutely speaking" every variance with conscience, "whether right or erring, is always evil." Aquinas explains that though the error is not from God, the dictate of an erring conscience "puts forward its judgment as true, and consequently as being derived from God" (I-II, q. 19 a.1); therefore, when erring conscience "proposes something as being commanded by God, then to scorn the dictate of reason is to scorn the commandment of God." For Aquinas, conscience is what God gives us to discern the right, and therefore we must always obey it.

Nonetheless, as Paul teaches, even though we must follow our consciences, we might still be in error. Immediately after the question of whether we can ever reject the dictate of conscience, he asks whether the will is good when it follows an erring conscience (I-II, q. 19 a. 6). Here, Aquinas determines whether we are responsible for the erring conscience and writes that if we could have known the truth and avoided the error, then we are not excused from the wrongdoing; if we could not have known otherwise, then we are excused.

Tradition Today

If we want to know what our tradition today holds about conscience, nothing could surpass the Second Vatican Council's "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World." Having seen the influence of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Greek and Roman philosophers, St. Paul and St. Thomas Aquinas, I believe we can understand why the council used words like heart, law, voice, error, dignity etc. The text that we hold today rightly embodies the sources that produced it (No. 16). Let us read it anew:

In the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. Always summoning him to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience when necessary speaks to his heart: do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law written by God; to obey it is the very dignity of man; according to it he will be judged. Conscience is the

most secret core and sanctuary of a man. There he is alone with God, whose voice echoes in his depths. In a wonderful manner conscience reveals that law which is fulfilled by love of God and neighbor.

In fidelity to conscience, Christians are joined with the rest of men in the search for truth, and for the genuine solution to the numerous problems that arise in the life of individuals from social relationships. Hence the more right conscience holds sway, the more persons and groups turn aside from blind choice and strive to be guided by the objective norms of morality. Conscience frequently errs from invincible ignorance without losing its dignity. The same cannot be said for a man who cares but little for truth and goodness, or for a conscience which by degrees grows practically sightless as a result of habitual sin.

Many Catholics today think of conscience primarily as that which gives us the right to dissent from teaching. That opinion, unfortunately, is a truncated notion of conscience. Any right to dissent derives first from the responsibilities we have to conscience—that is, to examine our own conduct, to form and inform our consciences daily and to determine the right direction of our lives. The language of conscience is not so much the language of a right, therefore, but of a duty always to act in conscience—that is, the obligation to find and to follow what we understand to be God's will. A

"God hears the cry of the poor." But do we?

Just by enjoying the taste and aroma of a cup of freshly roasted Colombian coffee you can educate a child, provide adult job training, and food for the elderly. All profits go to our Catholic Missions to promote social justice.

www.saintbasilcoffee.com
or call 713-880-9090

SAINT BASIL COFFEE

Our coffee is certified "fair trade."

Nine Justices Needed



As the fight over Judge Merrick B. Garland's nomination demonstrates, the Supreme Court is not free from politics. Nevertheless, since *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), the court has asserted itself and been accepted as the nation's impartial referee. Chief Justice John Marshall, who penned the decision, was himself a lame duck appointee nominated after the presidential election and sworn in just a month before Thomas Jefferson's inauguration. The shrewd decision, which invalidated the appointment of Marshall's fellow Federalist jurists, enshrined the power of the court to pass judgment on both executive and legislative actions.

Only the Supreme Court is able to establish nationally applicable constitutional standards. The willingness of the nation to assent to that authority is crucial to our democracy. As Justice Robert Jackson wrote in 1953, "We are not final because we are infallible, but we are infallible only because we are final." A vacancy on the court impairs its ability to issue controlling decisions and may undermine its role as our last and best guardian of the rule of law.

The court sets its own calendar and selects most of the cases it hears. A vacancy's impact can be minimized by putting off some cases and resolving others on less controversial procedural grounds, but some critical, time-sensitive issues must be resolved. A prolonged vacancy creates the possibility of 4-to-4 ties that leave conflicting lower court decisions in place and subvert the court's role as a unifying force. Until a new justice is appoint-

ed the outcome of several important cases hangs on the ability of the eight remaining justices to reach consensus.

State restrictions on abortion services. The Fifth Circuit has determined that Texas may require abortion clinics to comply with standards applicable to ambulatory surgical centers and doctors who perform abortions to have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital (within 30 miles). An appeal from that decision was heard on March 2, 2016.

Justice Anthony Kennedy likely will cast the deciding vote unless the justices send the case back to the trial court for further findings of fact. If the court decides the merits of the case and Kennedy sides with the conservatives, the likely tie will result in a win for the state, but the decision will not have precedential value outside the Fifth Circuit.

DAPA and expanded DACA immigration benefits. On April 18, the court will hear arguments regarding the Obama administration's decision to grant employment authorization and lawful presence status to certain unauthorized aliens. The case presents several questions of law. The court could decide it on narrow procedural grounds or issue a substantive decision on the scope of executive authority. A third option is to delay until after the election. In that event, if a Republican becomes president, the program will be eliminated and the case could be declared moot; if a Democrat wins, the court will be forced to issue a decision.

Voting rights and election law. Perhaps the most compelling argument for the speedy appointment of a

new justice is *Bush v. Gore*. The case that decided the outcome of the 2000 presidential election dramatically demonstrates the importance of maintaining the court's ability to make final and binding legal rulings.

Many disagreed with the 5-to-4 decision that reversed the ruling of the Florida Supreme Court, but Mr. Gore and the nation acquiesced. No one knows what would happen if a weakened court is unable to resolve

a similar voting rights dispute or a challenge to a candidate's "natural born" citizenship.

Executive and legislative responsibilities. The Constitution requires the president to fill Supreme Court vacancies "by and with the advice and consent of the Senate." Political considerations have led

to several bitter appointment battles over the years, but only eight in our history have led to vacancies that lasted longer than one year, with the most recent spanning 391 days in 1969/70. Most modern vacancies have been filled within six months.

A divisive political standoff resulting in a prolonged vacancy on the court threatens not only current cases but could have a long-term impact on the nation's confidence in the court's neutrality.

Judge Garland is undeniably moderate in his judicial temperament and could foster compromise on the court that would generate fewer divisive 5-to-4 decisions. Those who oppose his confirmation and appointment may later regret this missed opportunity.

ELLEN K. BOEGEL

ELLEN K. BOEGEL, who teaches legal studies at St. John's University in New York, clerked for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

'Ghetto Gospel'

Life lessons from street scriptures

BY ALEX NAVA

ON STAGE. Lauryn Hill performs during the Amnesty International Bringing Human Rights Home concert in New York, on Feb. 5, 2014.



PHOTO: REUTERS/ SHANNON STAPLETON

At first glance, God and hip-hop must seem like odd bedfellows, like mixing together the sacred and profane, the sublime and the vulgar. If we dig deeper, however, there are some surprising points of compatibility, especially when considered in light of the Christian story, where God appears *sub contrariis*, at the “opposite” of the world’s expectations and values. Like Christianity in its earliest beginnings, or the blues in American life, hip-hop is proof that God can appear in unsuspecting locations, in swamps and ghettos as much as churches.

While many of the rebukes of rap music are necessary and appropriate—depending, naturally, on the artist and

song in question—there are times when these criticisms seem to sample and rehearse the denunciations of black music throughout the 20th century. Slander was often tossed at blues, jazz, R&B and soul music: the blues for its exuberant sexuality; jazz for coming out of the red-light district of New Orleans; R&B and soul for stealing the rhythms and ecstasies of gospel music. In each instance, there was an inquisitorial strategy at work that sought to censure, if not excommunicate, these styles of art from American life, with glaring, if largely unspoken, prejudices about the people who created the music.

In some cases, African-American musicians were depicted as Faust-like figures who gave their souls to the devil and received sorcery-like powers to mesmerize or hypnotize their listeners in return. In numerous legends, these genres were cast as forms of black magic that could spell doom for pious folk, that could bring a hellish, charring fire to Americans who were better off with a simmering music of

ALEX NAVA is a professor of religious studies at the University of Arizona and the author of *Wonder and Exile in the New World* (Penn State Press) and *In Search of Soul: Religion, Literature and Hip Hop*, forthcoming from the University of California Press.

decorum and composure, not this boiling cauldron of grunts and grinds. Coming into contact with this music was like handling a radioactive isotope or playing with hazardous material; it could poison you with its toxic energy, rock your small, white world.

While hip-hop flirts more aggressively with the profane than its forerunners, it nonetheless belongs to the same orbit of sound and feels the same gravitational pull of the heavens as the blues, jazz and R&B before it. I do not deny that the music can have a very vulgar pitch to it and, at times, circles the drain in displays of prodigal excess, from hedonistic revelry to swaggering curses. And yet, even in the thick mud of this wild prodigality, there remains a concurrent flow of the deepest spiritual tributaries, one that taps into subterranean springs from black history and adds a mournful, blues-like trickle to the more raging waters of rap's hollers, shouts and boasts. In these instances, hip-hop can strike a note that is thoroughly baptized in spiritual waters, in rivers that roll like the Jordan and bleed like the Red Sea. In the best of hip-hop, there is spiritual profundity and brooding depth in its beats and lyrics, and it can be powerful witness to the process of "soul-making" as described by John Keats: the schooling of the intelligence by the pains and troubles of the world.

Hip-Hop Theology 101

Hip-hop first came to me in childhood with all the mystery and thrill of a first love (to use the rapper Common's metaphor). I fell for her because of her big, fat, apple-bottom beats, bewitching flows and bombastic wiles. As the years went on, hip-hop would change and ripen, sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse, but whatever the case, I remained a loyal listener. I began graduate school at the University of Chicago in religious studies in the 1990s, the decade of some of hip-hop's most brilliant creations. Tupac Shakur burst onto the stage of hip-hop wearing multiple masks—villain and saint, pimp and preacher, street hustler and prophet—and many others would follow suit.

Even when playing the part of these former characters, Tupac remained haunted and hounded by God and would frequently interrupt his raps with prayers, supplications, wails and Job-like protests unto God. "Shed So Many Tears," for example, combines a description of raw anguish with a desperate longing for God's presence: "Lord, I suffered through the years, and shed so many tears/ Lord, I lost so many peers, and shed so many tears." "I Ain't Mad at Cha" grieves in this same vein and dreams of a ghetto heaven that would give rest and redemption to the most vulnerable of our world: "I beg God to make a way for our ghetto kids to breathe/ Show a sign,

make us all believe." Many other songs, including "I Wonder if Heaven Got a Ghetto," "Black Jesus," "Ghetto Gospel," "Only God Can Judge Me," "Hail Mary" and "Are You Still Down?" echo similar themes, as Tupac makes his voice swing between ethereal highs and mournful lows, searching for the right frequency to reach God. And Tupac is not a lone theological voice in rap: Bone Thugs–N–Harmony turns the infamous crossroads of blues narratives into a place where God is encountered instead of the devil; Nas cries out for the "Holy Spirit

to save me.... Cause my eyes have seen too much suffering"; and Lauryn Hill, to summon this remarkable female voice, raps about "change the focus/ From the richest to the brokest.... Let God redeem you/ keep your deen true."

Needless to say, as a student of religion I was particularly intrigued by rappers who would wantonly traverse the borders of the sacred and profane in this way. The list was a long catalog

of the most distinguished rappers: Tupac, Nas, Lauryn Hill, Public Enemy, The Geto Boys, Common, Mos Def, KRS-One, the Fugees, Bone Thugs–N–Harmony, Wu-Tang Clan and numerous others. These figures created music that was earthy and coarse but laced with unmistakable notes of transcendence. The result was often a more mature, if tortured, spirituality than could be found in many churches, a thug's theology so to speak. Instead of a view of God from the pulpits or the ivory towers of the universities, artists in this vein were rapping about God out of the baritone depths of the human soul. From these guttural regions, they would sometimes reach surprising heights of sublimity as they wrestled with the crushing weight of suffering, the pits of despair, the darkness of God, and somehow came out kicking.

During my years in graduate school, I also started listening more carefully to the wild alphabet of rap narratives, the way letters, inflections and syntax were arranged and delivered, the way notes and rhymes were made out of the dissonance and cacophony of street blocks, the way these rappers would rip up the surface of older sounds in order to make room for their own voices and emotions. I took all of this as a science of the streets, served up with delicious beats, throaty moans and lyrics that, Muhammad Ali-like, bounced, floated and boxed the listener's ears. More and more, I wanted to see if these street scriptures had anything to add to my formal studies at the university.

Talking 'Bout Chi-Town

While my experience in the classroom at the University of Chicago was nothing but enthralling and elevating, I was also discovering at the time new streetscapes on Chicago's South Side that were unlike anything I knew in my hometown of

Hip-hop can strike a note that is thoroughly baptized in spiritual waters.

Tucson, and the experience was like a surreal jolt that opened my eyes to the distressed parts of Chicago. In these neighborhoods, only a stone's throw away from the university, streets change with great suddenness, turning from Eden-like gardens into concrete jungles where death rates are alarmingly high. This was the Chicago described by Common, Kanye West and Lupe Fiasco more than the Chicago of Nobel laureates. "I walk through the valley of the Chi where death is," Kanye bellows, "God show me the way because the devil's trying to break me down." West's Chicago is a perilous and terrifying jungle, where serpentine forces are coiled in the corners, ready to snatch and claim your soul. Another Chicagoan, Common, even gives these dangers a precise location on the South Side: "Corners leave souls opened and closed/ hoping for more/ with nowhere to go/ rolling in droves.... These are the stories told by Stony and Cottage Grove." In these renditions, hip-hop is a testimony to all the untold stories of the corners and peripheries of America. It is testimony to a second or third world America, where the specters of segregation seem alive and well, as if Jim Crow still rises from his grave to stalk new generations of black folk like a revenant ghost.

While I felt shielded from many of these dangers when I was at the university, my academic focus on Latin American and African-American traditions imposed a set of expectations on me that required attention to the problems that surrounded the university. With some remarkable teachers like the Rev. David Tracy, Anne Carr and Homi Bhabha, my mind was encouraged to branch out and create bridges between the worlds of theory and practice, academia and the broader world. They gave me the skills and daring to cross the invisible borders that divide various disciplines and communities. They encouraged me to venture into unexplored and forbidden zones of thought and experience.

As a first-generation college graduate, I felt suddenly uprooted from my desert homeland in Arizona and planted in a garden of intellectual delights. I also had the opportunity at the time to attend a lecture by a relatively unknown professor from the Chicago Theological Seminary: Michael Eric Dyson. I didn't know who he was, but his subject matter, "God and hip-hop," addressed themes and issues that I recognized as revelatory in my life. Along with his focus, Professor Dyson's lecturing style also had an effect on me: It was a fusion of preacher, professor and rapper. (His lecture inspired me to write on the topic and to develop a related class at the University of Arizona, titled "Rap, Culture and God.")

Hip-hop has been an unmistakable tutor in my life, helping me to see parts of the American landscape that are often invisible to the official cartographers and surveyors of the body politic. With hip-hop banging in my ear, I took up my studies at the University of Chicago from a unique angle, one that helped me scrutinize higher education for its capacity, or failure, to spotlight the trials and tribulations of our world.

Instead of distancing me from the figure of Jesus, hip-hop brought me closer to him. I came to see his parables as the older, wiser but not altogether different effort of rap artists to use words and beats, like a Kabbalistic incantation, to exorcise the demons of war and division, misery and despair that have always plagued the lives of the poor and oppressed. Hip-hop confirmed for me a fundamental theme in Christianity: God reveals wisdom in the ruins of history, where the young and poor are in the struggle for survival and where outcasts fight for their daily bread. The rocks and graffiti of hip-hop's iconoclasm made me more Catholic, more attentive to the universal problems faced by people of color throughout the Americas and throughout the world. For me, it has been something like a secular riff on a *theologia crucis* or a *memento mori* on the deaths of countless young lives throughout the world. And it has helped me locate the death of Jesus—killed as an outlaw and thug by the Roman Empire—in the faces of the poor and destitute of our age.

Hip-hop also confirmed a truth found deep in the American grain: There are wilder truths, and more soulful lessons than the classroom can offer, that a whaling ship could be one's Harvard and Yale (Melville), that the slums and tenements of New York could be the finest tutors (Stephen Crane) and that "beyond the walls of intelligence, life is defined" (Nas). ▲



GETHSEMANI

SINCE FARMS 1848



Fruitcake • Fudge • Unique Gifts

Great Gift Ideas for Mother's Day - May 8th



**Kentucky Bourbon
Fruitcake**
\$35.95 Item #250



**11lb Bourbon Chocolate
Fudge & 11lb Butter
Walnut Fudge**
\$36.95 Item #95

To place an order, visit www.GethsemaniFarms.org
use coupon code **AM62** & **SAVE 10%** before **May 8, 2016**
or call Toll Free **1-800-549-0912** Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm EDT

A Listening Church

Communications and collegiality in the age of Francis

BY FRANCES FORDE PLUDE

How does the center of institutional authority—in the Catholic Church, the papacy and the Vatican—allow dialogue within a global, decentralized, talk-back culture? The answer is: with great difficulty.

Pope Francis' open and friendly communication style has stirred interest globally, especially among communication-study specialists. Much attention has been focused on his personal style in communications, but he is also developing and implementing a new style of communications within the church itself. When the pope urged candid discussions at the recent assemblies of the Synod of Bishops on the family, it was interesting to see how this worked and where it proved challenging among church leaders.

There were two types of challenges visible in the synod: negotiating the *content* divisions—the arguments over the theological material at hand and the decisions to be made—and dealing with the *processes* set up to facilitate healthy dialogue. While the discussions over content, especially about Communion for the divorced and remarried, received the most global media attention, the way the dialogue itself worked was at least as fascinating. This is not surprising, because process issues are basic to facilitating fruitful dialogue. Much valuable theory and practice already exist to aid the institution in establishing authentic dialogue. But the system resists.

The issue is this: How does a tradition of centralized hierarchy interact with and communicate effectively in a decentralized digital world? This devolution of power is a current challenge for many centralized organizations and power structures globally, as Moisés Naím has explained expertly in *The End of Power: From Boardrooms to Battlefields and Churches to States*.

When he spoke to the bishops on his trip to the United States, Pope Francis spoke of a “culture of encounter” in which “dialogue is our method.” He recognizes that whatever challenges may be encountered in official, centralized com-

munications, there is a deeper and more basic level at which communication—in the sense of dialogue and encounter—is at the heart of the church's mission to carry the message of the Gospel to the world.

While the recent synod meetings provided plenty of evidence of difficulties with and even occasional resistance to this commitment to dialogue and encounter, Pope Francis was not deterred. He showed patience at synod sessions. This patience is motivated, it seems, by a long view of how the process of dialogue within the church needs to develop.

The pope has said that the church should not be run like a top-down organization, with all authority and power radiating from the center; he said it should be an “inverted pyramid” in which the bishops and pope exercise their au-

thority and deepen their identification with Jesus “in serving the people of God.” In his address marking the 50th anniversary of the Synod of Bishops, the pope made clear the church should not just hold synods; it should become synodal. He said that the Second Vatican Council's hope for “the spirit of episcopal collegiality has not yet been fully realized,” and he urged a “healthy decentralization” away from Rome.

Indeed, these challenges are not new. Over 30 years ago, while attending a conference on communication and theology, I had a lovely lunch in a quaint Italian village with three respected theologians, one each from France, Germany and the United States.

Fueled by a glass of Italian wine, I asked them, “What is the key challenge facing the Catholic Church today?” They answered virtually in unison: “truly listening to the local church.”

The three decades since have seen a significant development of resources in communication and theology that can help to facilitate a synodal church. Here are a few examples:

- Eight international meetings have been held linking communication studies to moral theology, ecclesiology and other areas of theology.

- For a decade, an annual seminar was held at the convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America so theologians and communication specialists could interact and think together.



FRANCES FORDE PLUDE, a member of the Catholic Theological Society of America, has worked to integrate communication studies into theology.



CNS PHOTO/PAUL HARING

LENDING AN EAR. Pope Francis listens to a woman while greeting the disabled during his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on March 11.

• European Catholic funding supported a small international ecumenical commission to meet annually for a decade on various continents to think together with local leaders about media, religion and culture.

• For three years the U.S. bishops' conference and the Vatican have sponsored seminars at Santa Clara University allowing theology and communication experts to push these ideas further.

• A document called "A Communication and Theology Resource Kit" has been produced, collecting key writings to date.

As valuable as all these resources are, however, the larger challenge is to implement these ideas at the parish and diocesan level so that the life of the church can be enriched by more dialogue, drawing in the gifts of the people of God beyond the hierarchy, of women and other laypeople. This has already been demonstrated in Europe where Matthias Scharer and Bernd Jochen Hilberath have developed a project, documented in *The Practice of Communicative Theology*, involving workshops that attracted hundreds of church members.

According to one participant, through "experimenting with, and reflecting on, group processes that promote personal and collective discernment and decision-making in the church...they have developed a theologically integrated approach to group communicative practices." Similar workshops could easily be organized regionally in the United States. Another example is the practice of local diocesan synods, such as the one conducted in 2014 in the Diocese of Bridgeport, Conn., discussed at length by Bishop Frank

Caggiano in an interview published on *America's* website ("Church Reform From Below," 7/27/14).

One insight emerging from all this work is that churches, for centuries, have used various communication channels as instruments of conversion. Now, however, communication and computer technologies have merged into global dialogic networks. Individuals, groups and cultures have become mediated—totally suffused by a global media ecosystem. Churches have found their one-way messages are not being heard or valued either internally or externally, especially by young people. Desperate individuals and leaders have not been listening appreciatively to each other; gridlock has spread. William Isaacs, who wrote *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*, says that in most dialogues, "we don't listen; we just reload."

Pope Francis has spoken out against "a hermeneutic of suspicion" or "hostile rigidity." In his encyclical "Laudato Si" he used the word *dialogue* 25 times.

Communication theory and practice are keys to the church's future success. Digital communication technologies are an essential part of the infrastructure of connection, but they can be used effectively only if the church learns how to integrate dialogue and listening at the heart of its structures of authority. This is especially important as talk proceeds about decentralization. It is also critical if "the people of God," predominantly at the level of local churches, are to be deeply involved in this renewal.

The pope reminded the bishops at the synod: "I cannot ever tire of encouraging you to dialogue fearlessly." The whole church needs to hear that encouragement as well. **A**

On Christian Hope

What makes it distinctive and credible?

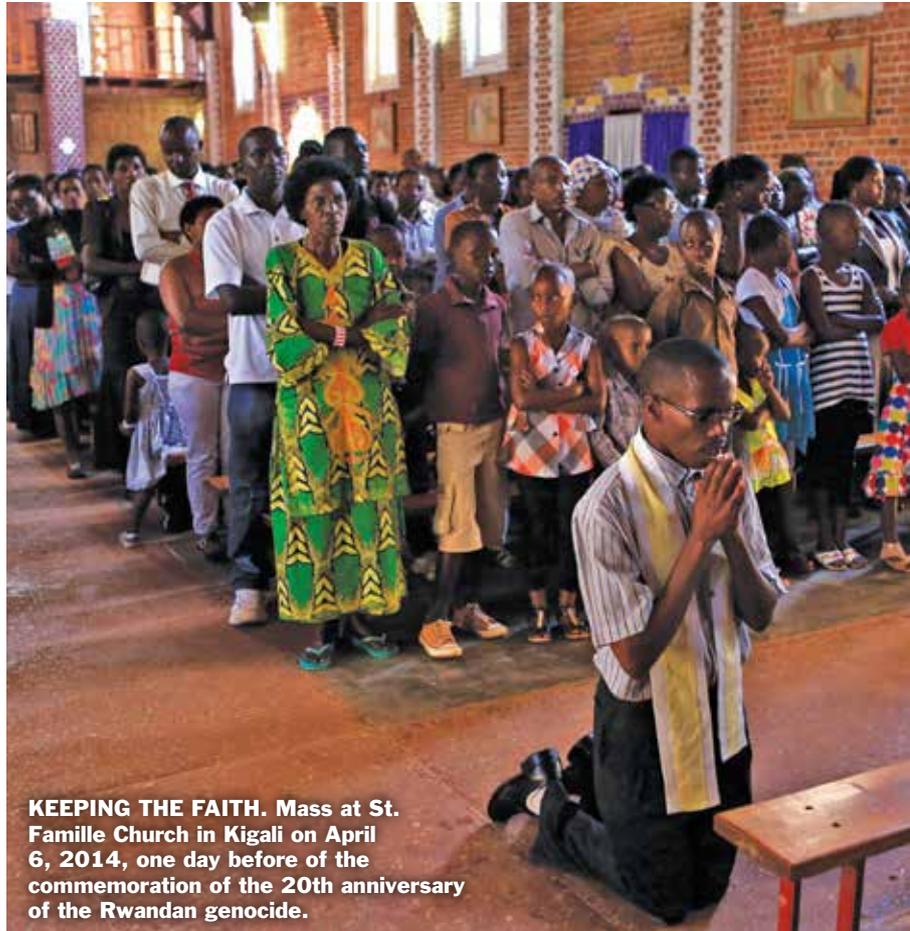
BY MARCEL UWINEZA

The genocide that took place in Rwanda in 1994 was rooted in ethnic divisions among the Hutu, the Tutsi and the Twa; and the effects of this divide were felt painfully in the country for many decades leading up to that atrocity. During the genocide—which occurred over the course of about three months, beginning in April of that year—close to a million Tutsis were killed, including my parents and many of my relatives. Afterward, the country was in ruin: dead bodies were everywhere, leaving innumerable widows and orphans; demolished houses characterized every hill. Every Rwandan was wounded, regardless of one's ethnic affiliation, though wounds varied by degree. Prisons were filled with perpetrators of genocide. In villages, people lived with suspicion; those who had survived were not sure whether they would live to see the next day. We all asked ourselves: Will the sun shine on Rwanda again? (*Ese izuba rizongera kuva mu Rwanda?*) Where has the God of Rwanda gone? (*Mana y'u Rwanda wagiye he?*)

More than 20 years later, the country has experienced great healing; and improvements in government, the economy, community, technology and education have given many people reason to hope. So, has the sun shone again on Rwanda? The answer is indeed, yes! We hope that it will continue to shine in the hearts of the people and leaders as we continue to reconcile with one another. But economic success will not be enough if hearts are not healed and remain divided.

So, where did the God of Rwanda go? It is clear now that God never left us! We left God; we realize this ever more deeply as we search for the truth and our faith is deepened.

Over the last 20 years, God has led me through a school of forgiveness. One day I met one of the killers of my brothers and sister. Upon seeing me, he came toward me. I thought he was coming to kill me too. But I could not believe what happened. As if in a movie, he knelt before me and asked me



KEEPING THE FAITH. Mass at St. Famille Church in Kigali on April 6, 2014, one day before of the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide.

to forgive him. After a time of confusion, asking myself what was happening, and by a force which I could not describe, I took him, embraced him and said: "I forgive you; the Lord has been good to me." Ever since that moment, I have felt free.

I have realized that forgiveness heals the forgiver even more than the forgiven. My wounds have been able to heal others. I later found myself desiring to give the gift of my very self to the Lord as a Jesuit. The Jesuits attracted me first by the depth of their preaching and conversation at Centre Christus, a Jesuit spirituality center in Kigali, Rwanda's capital. They sounded different; they knew the brokenness of our world and made us realize that the Son of God was broken too. The power of God was manifested through weakness on the cross. "Rwanda can rise again," they preached.

MARCEL UWINEZA, S.J., is a doctoral student in theology at Boston College.

CNS PHOTO/NOOR KHAMIS, REUTERS

I thought God could never call me to priesthood, but God works in strange ways. As a Jesuit, I have experienced serenity. I have learned how my woundedness profoundly relates me to God, allowing for God's grace to be seen. I am able to help others who are wounded in their struggle and their darkness as we all seek reconciliation and salvation. I look to Mary, Mother of the Word, who came to Kibeho, Rwanda, to obtain for us continuous conversion.



We are made for something different. Despite poverty, discrimination, racism and genocides, history shows that this is not the end of the story.

Signs of Hope

My experience and encounter with suffering in Rwanda have led me to believe that, whatever our situation, we must continuously look for hope. I believe that the following five points are distinctive markers and credible signs of Christian hope in the face of human suffering.

1) *Jesus is our only hope.* I was standing in the middle of a genocide memorial church at Nyange, Eastern Rwanda, and I could not contain myself. I felt I was standing in what the German Catholic theologian Johann Baptist Metz calls "a landscape of cries." Emmanuel Katongole of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies has written: "On April 12, 1994, three thousand people took refuge in this church. The parish priest and a businessman ordered some workers to use two bulldozers to bring down

the church. They demolished the church, killing nearly all the people inside."

As I visited this genocide site, I was told how the bodies, members of Christ's body, were buried. Some are buried under what used to be the altar of the church. I knelt there in prayer on what was holy ground that became a place of slaughter. I lamented, "How long, Lord, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our relatives?" How long? "How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, 'Violence!' but you do not save?" (Hab 1:2). I prayed that those below the altar might join me in this lament. "How long will we go with a mock of Christianity that takes the tribalism of our world for granted?"

The longer I cried out to God on top of broken bodies and bones, the more I became certain that Jesus is our only hope. In these dangerous memories and their discomfort, I could only remember the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. I was kneeling where the passion and resurrection of Jesus had been celebrated during liturgy. In fact, Easter Sunday was on April 3 in 1994. The church of Nyange was sadly destroyed at the end of the Easter octave. What my prayer in Nyange helped me see—in the ruins, skulls and bones of that building—is that through the prayer of lament there is indeed hope, but only if we come to the breaking point of crying together: How long? Christian hope joins our voices as one as together we turn toward Christ.

2) *We are destined for better things.* We are made for something different. Despite poverty, discrimination, racism and genocides, history shows that this is not the end of the story. If humankind agreed all these evils were acceptable, then we should be seriously worried. But in fact, it seems impossible that anyone, in good conscience, could stand up publicly and say, "I support Nazism," or "I support the genocide in Rwanda." Instead, there is something in us that thirsts for knowledge and for the discovery of the truth.

During the genocide in Rwanda, people were killed, burned and arrested. Dogs were turned on them. People were shot. Women were raped. Babies were smashed on walls. People were thrown into pit latrines (including my brothers and sister), and mothers were thrown into rivers. But in the end, freedom ultimately wins out. Hitler thought he had a lot of power. Where is he today? Mussolini thought he had a lot of power. Where is he today? Idi Amin and Mobutu Sese Soku thought they had a lot of power, but where are they today?

Recognizing the truth about our goodness matters more than ever. We are made not only like God but also for God. Planted in the center of our being is the longing for the transcendent. Being made for God means that anything less than God will not suffice for us. Furthermore, as Father Metz says, "In the end, our hope is, God will make right

even with those who have died.” That is a tremendous distinction and gift of Christian hope. This hope is not only for me but is hope for the salvation of others.

3) *Our identity is rooted in love.* While history shows that the human person has a remarkable capacity to be vicious, cruel and almost devoid of humanness, at the same time we experience the remarkable and magnanimous capacity of people to forgive those who tortured, oppressed and abused them. That was certainly true in my case, when I met the man who killed my family and then felt some new fresh air in my life. Our Christian hope lies in the courage of that small band of people who understand their Christianity in nonethnic terms, who walk justly and mercifully and courageously and pay a shocking price in physical and material terms for their faithfulness. This hope manifests the church that cannot die. To cite Emmanuel Katongole again:

Across the road from the church that was bulldozed at Nyange is where students refused to separate Hutu from Tutsi in 1994. In 1997, militiamen came by night, surrounded the high school and killed the guard. These men entered a classroom and demanded that students separate themselves along ethnic lines, but the students refused, maintaining, “We are Rwandans.” Frustrated, the militia indiscriminately launched an attack that killed many of them.

They are martyrs to the new identity that bound them together in life and in death. Christian hope forges an identity where waters of baptism become thicker than ethnic blood. I hear these children saying to us Rwandans, “You have messed up Rwanda and we are going to get it right.” These young children are now officially honored as Rwanda’s heroes. Indeed, we are hope-based creatures, and what we believe as our ultimate future determines how we live now.

4) *We are agents of transformation.* We are agents of transformation who cooperate with God to transfigure his world. Remember the story of God’s conversation with Moses: “I have seen the suffering of my people...” (Ex 3:7). Our God is a God who knows, sees and hears. There is hope that nightmares will end, hope that seemingly intractable problems will find solutions. God has some tremendous fellow workers, some outstanding partners.

I have been privileged to have personal conversation with Paul Farmer, M.D., who has been at the forefront of health care in poor countries. I asked him, “What keeps you going as you help the poor?” Dr. Farmer said, “Our credibility and legitimacy come from how we render service to the people, how we transform their lives. On top of competency, we do it with love.”

I am indebted to people like Dr. Jim Yong Kim, president

**The Annual
Mary Milligan, R.S.H.M.
Lecture in Spirituality**



“Discipleship in a Time of Impasse”
Featuring M. Shawn Copeland, Ph.D.
 Professor of Theology, Boston College

Wednesday, April 13, 2016 | 7:00 p.m.
 Loyola Marymount University

This lecture is free and open to the public. RSVP is required.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER, PLEASE VISIT
[HTTP://BELLARMINE.LMU.EDU/MILLIGAN.](http://bellarmine.lmu.edu/milligan)**

There will be a real-time webcast of the lecture and a video will be available after the event at the website listed above.




America | MEDIA

A JESUIT MINISTRY

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Our multi-platform media ministry includes:



Digital



America
THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REVIEW



Films



P2P



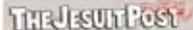
Radio



Press



Social



TJP

www.americamedia.org

of the World Bank and a man of deep faith, who, together with others, helped to transform H.I.V./AIDS from a death-sentence pandemic to a life condition in which people's lives could be prolonged at a time when everybody was saying that it is impossible to treat H.I.V. in Africa.

In Burundi, where I worked for some time, I met some H.I.V.-positive women who frequently told me, "Father Marcel, if we had not met the Jesuit AIDS Center [Service Yezu Mwiza], we would now be turning into our graves." Some of these women got H.I.V. through rape, war or domestic violence, but their lives had completely changed because of access to antiretroviral drugs. They are now living with great hopes of seeing their children go to school. I have experienced "the Lazarus effect" in working with people living with H.I.V. and AIDS. All this helps us to hope. In the face of suffering, tears do not replace action.

5) *The resurrection of Christ.* The resurrection of Christ means that we believe and know that death is not the end. Suffering, hate, death do not have the last word. At Jesus' death, he felt excluded and abandoned. He was even crucified outside the gate, as a sign that he was excluded from his people. Because God treated Jesus as we deserved, our faith in the risen Christ makes us hope that God will also treat us as he treated his risen Son. This opens a space of commitment in the present, knowing and believing that at the end life shall prevail. Consequently, this eschatological hope im-

plies and does not preclude temporal commitment. This is illustrated in the "resurrection" of the Rwandan people after the genocide, the commitment to education and care for the environment, the thinking of the next generations. Life does not end with us.

The Christian hope in the resurrection, in life after death, in the new heavens and new earth, in the fulfillment of God's promises makes us live our earthly life in a distinctive Christian way. It makes us commit ourselves to justice and compassion and the peace in living the reality of God's kingdom within that specific Christian tension of the already and the not yet.

There is a story of a priest in Russia who was confronted by an aggressive young physicist who rehearsed all the reasons for atheism and arrogantly said, "I do not believe in God." The priest, not put off at all, replied quietly, "Oh, it does not matter. God believes in you." God does believe in us. That is the fundamental object of our Christian hope, and it makes us strive to make this world a great home.

Christian hope is fundamentally based on the love of God for everyone: rich and poor, black and white, gay and straight, Jew and Arab, Palestinian and Israeli, Serb and Albanian, Hutu and Tutsi, Pakistani and Indian—none are outside the purview of God's love. Remember what Jesus said: "I, if I am lifted up, will draw all to me" (Jn 12:32). Not some, but all. ■

THE ANSWER
TO YOUR
CALLING.

Get your
Master of Science in
Church Management.

Discover new ways to serve the church with a
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN CHURCH MANAGEMENT.
Villanova School of Business offers the only curriculum that
addresses complex management issues from a faith-based
perspective and in a convenient on-line format.

MSCM.Villanova.edu

 **VILLANOVA**
UNIVERSITY
Villanova School of Business



Money and Saint-Making

Continuing his reform of Vatican finances, Pope Francis issued a decree on March 4 approving new norms relating to the administration of the “goods,” mainly money, of the causes for beatification and canonization of saints in order to ensure full transparency and accountability in this area.

He took this decisive step after the commission he set up in July 2013 concluded that there was little or no oversight on how the considerable sums of money collected for a particular cause were spent. The commission’s report revealed that the system approved by St. John Paul II in 1983 lacked effective oversight and failed to prevent abuses. John Paul II beatified 1,138 persons and declared 482 saints, and it was known in Rome during his pontificate that money had been an important factor in advancing some of them.

In early August 2013, Francis received alarming reports from the commission on this matter, and he immediately ordered the blocking of some 400 accounts of the postulants of the causes of beatification and canonization held at the Institute for the Works of Religion (commonly called the Vatican Bank). That was but the first step; the new norms are the latest.

That there were abuses in the system was long known. It became public knowledge when two Italian journalists, Gianluigi Nuzzi and Emiliano Fittipaldi, drawing on the commission’s leaked report, published books that revealed that while hundreds of

thousands of euros were collected for a particular cause, there was little or no control over how this money was spent. The average cost for a beatification was around 500,000 euros (US \$550,000). Fittipaldi, for example, highlighted the high costs for the cause of Archbishop Fulton Sheen. Most of the 450 postulants are religious, but Nuzzi cited the report as revealing that two lawyers (laypeople, both named) handled a disproportionate share of the 2,500 causes, with 90 cases each. Moreover, the family of one of them was among the three printers given contracts by the congregation to print the position papers (sometimes several volumes) for the causes.

While holiness is indispensable for canonization, Francis acknowledges in his preface to the new norms that causes “require much work, involving expenses,” first at the local diocesan level, then at the Roman level (the congregation) and finally for the celebration of the beatifications and canonizations. While the parties that launch a cause give a contribution, he said the Apostolic See “bears the costs” at the Roman level and also has the task of overseeing the incomes and expenditures.

According to the new norms, when an “actor” (such as a diocese or religious order) accepts a cause, it then sets up a fund to advance it. Contributions to this fund may come from individuals or juridical persons. Furthermore, a cause needs a postulator to promote it, and he or she normally requires professional input from medical, research, legal and other personnel, who may

demand fees for their services.

The new norms establish that each cause is to have an administrator, who can also be the postulator general. They define the administrator’s tasks as including presenting a budget and balance sheet each year to the competent authority, namely the bishop, eparch, major religious superior or other ecclesiastical authority. The competent authority has the obligation to exercise vigilance over the money flow, approve the balance sheets and send a copy to the congregation, the highest instance of oversight, which has the power to discipline those who may misuse funds.

For the Roman phase of the cause, the norms say the congregation requires a contribution from the one who launches the cause. The norms give precise regulations on how all the money is to be used at the different stages and insist that all financial contributions for causes must be sent by bank order.

A “solidarity fund” is to be established at the congregation, the norms state, and whenever money is left over from causes that have ended, it is to be deposited there. This fund is to be used for causes that lack money to get them started. Francis is well aware that whereas countless causes from Italy, Spain and Poland thrive every year, many in Latin America, Africa and Asia cannot even reach the starting blocks, or move forward from there, because of the lack of human and financial resources. That is another reform on his radar.

That there were abuses in the system was long known.

GERARD O’CONNELL

GERARD O’CONNELL is *America’s Rome correspondent*. *America’s Vatican coverage is sponsored in part by the Jesuit communities of the United States*. Twitter: @gerryorome.

Light the Way

Following my grandfather's example of faith

BY CAITLIN DERMODY



Scranton, Pa.: August 2014

It is two days before I leave for college, and you and I are on our final Monday outing of the summer. Three green glass candles nestle in the third row of candleholders in the Grotto of St. Ann's Shrine in Scranton, Pa. I think the old woman who sits at the teacher-like desk in the corner to collect the offerings sets them out for you right before we arrive every Monday at 1 p.m. You give the old woman \$15 as I scamper to the center of the grotto, unable to conceal what is left of my childlike excitement during our brief visit.

I snatch a long wooden stick from a tin can and dip it into the liquid light of another candle. Passing on the flame to our three unburned wicks, I repeat, "For Nan-na, for Aunt Katie and for Uncle Tim" in my head. After extinguishing the burning stick in the sand

of another tin can, I turn to see you—my grandfather—praying in the pew directly behind me.

You always have the same focused posture when you pray, resting slightly on the edge of that creaking wood, softly closing your eyes and gently clasping your hands. As I take my place beside you, trying to mirror your image, I wonder how many candles you have lit in the nine years since that terrible summer of unexpected goodbyes.

I come with you to St. Ann's only during the summer, yet I feel as if I myself have performed this ritual hundreds of times. I try to churn my curiosity into concentration as I begin my prayers for Nan-na, Aunt Katie and Uncle Tim, but my focus soon stalls on the image of the juicy cheeseburgers that we will eat after this at our favorite restaurant. I wait for you to unclasp your faithful hands.

Paris, France: July 8, 2015

It is exactly four months since you passed away, and I am on the trip to France that we talked about over tea and spice cake at the kitchen table

during my spring break. Small votive candles encased in thin metallic shells fill a paper box next to a row of candleholders in Notre Dame. I pluck one tiny disc from the top of the pile, and, unable to find a stick to light it with, resolve to perch the candle over another burning wick.

A flame ignites just before my fingers start to sting from the heating metal. As I set the small glimmering light amid the communal glow, I still feel as if I am doing this special task for you. I want to turn around, hoping that the pew directly behind me will not be empty, but I study the glow of the flame instead. I try to think of you and focus all my attention onto my prayer, yet my jetlagged hunger cracks my concentration. I pause for a large group of tourists to pass before I start toward the exit.

In my final waiting gaze, a small wooden pillar next to the box of candle grabs my attention. "2 Euro" is carved into a golden plate affixed to its front. I forgot to pay the old woman in the corner of the room at the teacher-like desk.

CAITLIN DERMODY is a sophomore at Yale University. This past summer, as she traveled and studied in France, she honored her grandfather, Thomas P. Cummings Sr. (1928-2015), by continuing the ancient tradition of lighting candles for the dead.

Lourdes, France: July 16, 2015

It is the last day of my trip before I begin my travel-writing course in the south, and I have been thinking a lot about you. Long white candles with blue bottoms are stacked like firewood in a wooden trough right before the entrance to the grotto outside the Sanctuary of Lourdes. Remembering my indiscretion in Notre Dame, I push a two-euro coin through the metal slot

on the side of the trough and pull out one candle.

I walk into the grotto, passing two rows of charred black stalls containing candleholders, and light my wick from another flame. I set the burning tower in the middle of the third row in one of the stalls. Sunlight streaming through a phrase cut out from the metal backing of the stall dilutes the golden glow of the candles, but concentrates my

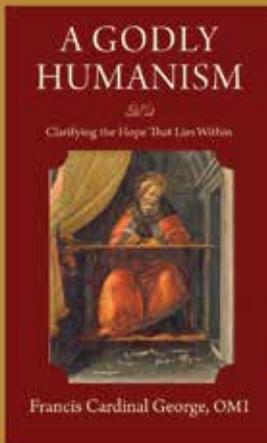
attention: "This flame continues my prayer." I study the collection of candles surrounding me. Some new additions, like mine, stand tall; others, half their original size, drip with melting wax; and a few stubs shrunk by time struggle to keep their wicks upright. Yet they all glow, preserving their lights until they no longer exist.

The flames will still burn even after I walk away, after I say my prayers, after I start thinking about lunch. My candle will keep my prayer for you alive even after my mind moves to more earthly things. I no longer repeat this ritual to replay a memory with you, but to honor you. For the first time, I say, "For Poppa."

Auvillar, France: July 19, 2015

It is the second day of my class, and I am exploring the church alone for the first time. Skinny, egg-white candles rest in a box attached to the back right pillar of St. Pierre's Church in Auvillar, a comforting sight in a new place. My one-euro coin plunks to the bottom of the nearly empty donation container above the candle box, and I grasp one of the rough wax renderings. I follow the worn path in the brick to the circular candleholder in front of the St. Jacques statue. This is where pilgrims on the Santiago trail come to say a prayer for their safety, a prayer that will endure even after they return to their journey, but I come with my continual prayer for you.

I light my wick and slip the smooth candle into a metal holder. I try to keep my focus on you, but a new feeling arises within me. As I study the flame, I feel like you are here, somehow embodied by the flickering light, comforting me by your presence. I grasp at this present moment, even more than I cling to the longevity of my prayer. Illuminated by the candle's flame, my ritual reveals itself as more than an act of honor for you. Instead of my usual remembrance, I repeat something new in my head before I unclasp my faithful hands. "Please be with me." ▲



A GODLY HUMANISM
Clarifying the Hope That Lies Within
Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.

*The Lumen Christi Institute & Catholic Theological Union
present a reception to celebrate the publication of*

A GODLY HUMANISM

by Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.

TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 5:15-7:15PM
UNIVERSITY CLUB OF CHICAGO

With remarks by scholars Gary Anderson (Notre Dame),
Jean-Luc Marion (Univ. of Chicago), and Anna Moreland (Villanova).
\$50 Registration includes a copy of the book. Advanced registration is required.

REGISTER ONLINE AT AGODLYHUMANISM.ORG

Rekindle Your Spirit . . .

The Journey Begins Here

■ STRESS ■ BURNOUT ■ DEPRESSION
■ TRANSITION ■ RELATIONSHIP ISSUES ■ ADDICTION ISSUES

We offer:

- Spiritual Direction
- Liturgy and community prayer
- Professional counseling
- Small-group environment
- Bilingual counselors
- Serene wooded grounds
- Affordable pricing



SHALOM CENTER

*A Residential
Renewal and Treatment Center
for Clergy and Men and Women Religious*

For information please call us at 281-399-0520.

13516 Morgan Drive • Splendora, Texas 77372 • www.shalomcenterinc.org



Endangered:

Religious Minorities in the Middle East and Their Struggle for Survival

Tuesday, May 10, 2016 | 6 p.m.

12th-Floor Lounge | E. Gerald Corrigan Conference Center
113 W. 60th St. | Fordham University | New York City

Persecution, fear of genocide, and even cultural extinction threaten minority faith communities in the Middle East as never before. In a region once rich in religious and cultural diversity, Christians, Yazidis, and other marginalized communities now face surging intolerance.

Can imperiled faith traditions preserve their heritage amid the rise of ISIS and ongoing conflict?

This lecture series is made possible by the Russo Family Foundation in memory of Wanda and Robert Russo Sr., MD, FCRH '39.

Eliza Griswold, journalist and author of *The Tenth Parallel: Dispatches from the Fault Line Between Christianity and Islam*

Rabbi David Saperstein, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom

Mar Awa Royel, Bishop of the Assyrian Church of the East, Diocese of California

Haider Elias, founder and president of Yazda: A Global Yazidi Organization

Sarhang Hamasaheed, senior program officer for Middle East and Africa, U.S. Institute of Peace

FORDHAM
THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

FREE ADMISSION

RSVP: crcprogram@fordham.edu | fordham.edu/crc

In Memory

If a Jesuit or Loved One has changed your life...



Consider a memorial gift to honor a special Jesuit or loved one...

Support *America* through a one-time or endowed gift today.

For more information contact Dan Pawlus at 212-515-0118 or pawlus@americamedia.org

Please note when writing your Will, our legal title and address are: America Press, Inc. 106 W. 56th Street, New York, NY 10019-3803 • (212) 581-4640

FILM | NATHANIEL ROMANO

EXCESS AND ACCEPTANCE

The surprising earnestness of 'Deadpool'

What a time to be alive! Take note, gentle reader, that we live in an age when leaked test footage of one of the most over-the-top comic book characters of one of the most over-the-top comic book eras can provoke sufficient

enthusiasm to make a movie. Made with a relatively modest budget, the *Deadpool* movie embraces the violence, sex and ridiculousness that lies in its comic book core and seizes an R rating with gusto. To top it all off, it had the highest-grossing opening weekend

for an R-rated film in North America. “*Deadpool*” is a phenomenon.

Among comics, *Deadpool* was a standard-bearer for the excesses of the 1990s comics industry. The '90s were the age of *extreme!*—or at least as extreme as the testosterone-laden fantasies of teenage boys could tolerate. If one gun was awesome, two guns must be awesomer. And all-the-guns would be *extreme!*-ly awesome. From this start, however, the *Deadpool* franchise evolved into something like a running meta-commentary on comics themselves. Breaking the fourth wall and calling out clichés, *Deadpool* became an intentionally self-parodying character, all while maintaining—of course—the violence and sexuality that made him *extreme!*

The movie embraces this personality. It is violent: the opening credits play out over a slow-moving tableau of *Deadpool* viciously destroying a carpool of mercenaries on a highway. It is sexual to the point of being quite raunchy: the relationship between the two leads, Wade Wilson (Ryan Reynolds) and Vanessa Carlyle (Morena Baccarin), is illustrated by a montage of sexual exploits across a variety of holidays over the span of a year.

At the same time, the movie embraces the self-referential and self-parodying humor of the character. Those opening credits omit the names of actors, writers, producers, directors, the whole lot. In their place are generic descriptions: the leads become “God’s Perfect Idiot” and “A Hot Chick,” the director and producer are referred to with phrases unlikely to be reprinted in a family magazine; the writers are “the Real Heroes Here.” In the middle of that sexual montage, there is a scene with the two leads, fully clothed, sitting in chairs opposite each other, with a gentle snowfall outside the window; Wade looks up at



ON THE ROCKS. Ryan Reynolds and Morena Baccarin in “*Deadpool*”

OTO CREDIT: JOE LEDEBERER - TM & © 2015 MARVEL & SUBS. TM AND © 2015 TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX FILM CORPORATION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. NOT FOR SALE OR DUPLICATION.

SELF-HATING HERO. Deadpool (Ryan Reynolds) reacts to threats by Colossus (voiced by Stefan Kapicic).



Vanessa, smiles, whispers “Happy Lent” and blows her an air kiss. The movie is also packed with cameos and references to other pop culture ephemera.

It is because the movie mimics the comic so faithfully that it feels not so much extreme as earnest, actually. All involved genuinely enjoy these characters and want to do right by them. They have embraced them and the “Deadpool” franchise for what they are. It just so happens that what they are is: incredibly violent, sex-obsessed, self-aware, comic book antiheroes. Embracing that spirit created a movie that has been incredibly successful and, truth be told, enjoyable.

Isn’t that how it ought to be? As if the formula for authenticity and success is to accept *x* for itself. It’s nice. The weird thing is that the story being told by all these accepting people is about a man unable to accept who he is. Wade Wilson, our violent, sex-obsessed, well-accepted antihero, is an incredibly unhappy dude because he is convinced that Wade Wilson *should* be unhappy.

Here, in three paragraphs, is how it happens. Wade’s happiness comes from his relationship with Vanessa; with her he is able to be his vulnerable, quirky self. They fall in love and happiness follows, but it is fractured when Wade receives a terminal medical diagnosis.

Vanessa wants to stay with him, to fight the cancer and to live what time they have together. But Wade can’t take it, and he leaves. It is his inability to accept both his illness and the fact that Vanessa can love him in the midst of their suffering that causes him to run after the fantasy of a cure that turns him into Deadpool. Throughout the movie all he wants is to return to Vanessa, but he is scared off by the disfigurement the “cure” has inflicted on his body. He is unable to accept that he can be loved in his condition, which leads to the rampaging hunt to force those who disfigured him to somehow fix him.

When Vanessa discovers he is alive, she is angry not because he is disfigured (or even, strangely, that he has been on a killing spree...) but because he rejected

the possibility of her love.

For all its comic book trappings, “Deadpool” is, in its own way, a traditional tale about accepting who we are. It tells us that refusing to be ourselves, refusing to accept that we are loveable even with our limitations and disfigurements, will lead to the very harms we want to avoid. This text is only emphasized by the meta-text of the movie, one that embraces the limitations and realities of the antihero comic book genre. “Deadpool” really loves itself and because of that, it is an enjoyable and successful film.

Nobody will mistake “Deadpool” for a morality play or a parable. But it is a traditional story in its own right, about a conflicted man whose fears lead him down a dark path. The enjoyment in watching this story comes from the fact that the movie does precisely what its hero could not: be itself.

NATHANIEL ROMANO, S.J., is a scholastic currently in studies at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University in Berkeley, Calif.

COLLEGE ORIENTATION

It's not a conversation topic that naturally presents itself; but if you're in the company of 30-somethings and you're feeling bold, ask them how much they owe in student loans. The answer might shock you. As I was researching for the updated edition of my book, *The Freshman Survival Guide* (being published this April), I spoke to numerous people who have been out of college for over a decade, and I was stunned at how many still had significant student loans.

According to CNBC, Americans have more than \$1.2 trillion in outstanding student loan debt. That's 40 million borrowers with an average balance of \$29,000. It's a sobering statistic that has enormous implications for our cultural and economic future as people are postponing marriage, children and the purchase of their first home. Not to mention how it will impact their ability to indulge their entrepreneurial spirit and start businesses.

While talking to students, administrators, faculty, residential advisers, campus ministers and the like about making the transition to college, I found myself having sidebar conversations that went beyond freshman survival strategies. Instead, they revolved around the impact a college education can have and how precarious the situation can be for many Americans. It dawned on me that, in terms of higher education, Americans are faced with a Sophie's choice of sorts not unlike the one we face in health care.

As someone who has purchased his own health insurance in a for-profit health care world for 20 years, I've often felt as though Big Pharma and insur-

ance companies present us with choices along the lines of: "We've developed a treatment that can save your life...how much are you willing to pay for it?"

Similarly, we tell people "this college degree (and, most likely, this graduate degree) are essential to having a successful future. What is it worth to you?"

It's no wonder that student stress levels are through the roof. One recent study found that 45.6 percent of college students reported feeling that things were hopeless, and 30.7 percent felt so depressed that it was difficult to function.

Regardless of how misguided this narrow fixation on what constitutes college "success" has become, the truth is that the stakes are still reasonably high and the financial investment is significant with or without loans. With that in mind, it is essential that students—and their hyper-involved parents—prepare for the transition to college. While college life is always dynamic and evolving, many of the challenges students face remain the same. Here is a brief overview of both the ever-evolving issues and the evergreen ones.

Evolving. Anyone following the news over the past few years knows that the issue of sex on college campuses is increasingly fraught. Many campuses have raised the bar in response to new state laws that require a verbal yes to have sex with someone. An estimated 1,400 institutions of higher education now use some type of affirmative consent definition in their sexual assault policies.

Studies show that the majority of college students are sexually active. But they also indicate that students—and everyone else—believe there is a lot more sex happening on campus than there actually is. One researcher found that 45 percent of the students he interviewed reported that they had never "hooked up." But the students in that same study thought hookups were the norm for their peers, with 90 percent believing that having had at least two hookups was typical for their peers.

Technology continues to change college as well. Instant access to professors, classmates and scholarship is one of the benefits of being a digital-age student.

Issues of privacy, isolation and unintended consequences are the liabilities. A study in 2014 found that 16 percent of 18- to 25-year-olds are involved in compulsive Internet behavior (almost all of the 16 percent admitted to spending over 15 hours a day online).

Evergreen. The classic transition issues still apply. Homesickness, adjusting to new academic expectations, learning time management, developing a new support system are all part of the constellation of concerns. But these pale in comparison with the challenges involved in developing one's own identity. Who are you? What do you believe? What do you value? What kind of person do you want to become? These questions are at the core of any true education. It may be impossible to put a price tag on it, but without it we are certainly bankrupt.

It's no wonder
that student
stress levels
are through
the roof.



BILL MCGARVEY, a musician and writer, is the author of *The Freshman Survival Guide*, owner of *CathNewsUSA.com* and was the longtime editor in chief of *BustedHalo.com*. Twitter: @billmcgarvey.

CONTINENTAL CONVERSION

SUBMISSION

By Michel Houellebecq

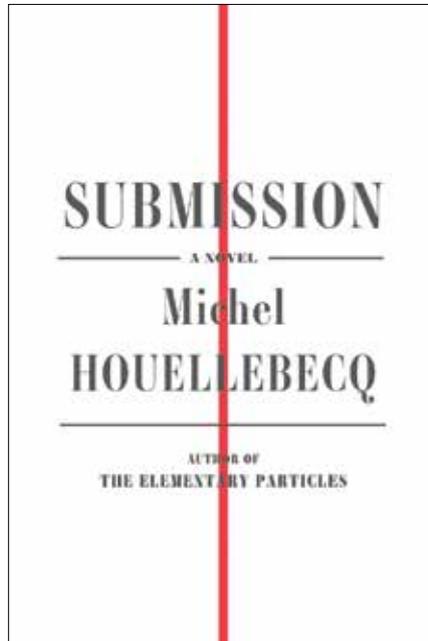
Translated by Lorin Stein
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 256p \$25

This novel, published on the day of the Jan. 7, 2015, attack in Paris on the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, has continued as a best-seller at the center of critical wars for over a year. Its author, a French novelist, filmmaker, poet and biographer, has published several novels, the most famous of which, *The Map and the Territory* (2010), won the Goncourt Prize in France for its satiric portrait of the art world. His writings have provoked laughter and criticism, most often for their vulgarity, caricatures of women and races, and, in this most recent novel under review, of Europeans and Islam.

Reviewers questioned not only his pessimistic narrators, stereotypical characters and exaggerated plots but also the political correctness of his themes. *Submission* was even denounced by the French prime minister for being unpatriotic. Reviewers asked, Is this novel a satire on religion or secularism? Is the narrator, François, a nihilistic caricature of contemporary French academics or all European males? What is the attitude of the novel toward religion, especially Islam and Catholicism? What is the role of the narrator's favorite author, J. J. Huysmans, and his decadent 19th-century background or his religious conversion? Some readers found the novel offensive, but many admitted it was thought-provoking. Some have compared its tone to that of a Jonathan Franzen novel for its misogyny and pessimism.

The novel begins by exposing the biases of the narrator, a French professor of 19th-century literature at the

Sorbonne, who feels no vocation as a teacher, dislikes students (except as female sex objects), has few friends at the university and is estranged from politics and religion. Only in 2017, after his graduate-student mistress departs for Israel during a sudden upheaval in French politics, does the



narrator become fascinated by the coalition between the Socialists, Muslims and later some conservatives to defeat the National Front nativists. Five years later, in 2022, the coalition elects Mohammed Ben Abbas, a popular Muslim leader, as prime minister. The government soon takes over education, transforms the Sorbonne into an Islamic university and forces teachers like the narrator to retire unless they become Muslims. Women are gradually pressured out of jobs and return to family life and more modest public attire.

During this upheaval, the narrator escapes Paris to the southwest, where he visits Martel and the shrine of the Black Virgin at Rocamadour, admiring its young pilgrims but finding its tradi-

tions to be only a “vanished universe.” Although he feels “a desperate desire to be part of a religion,” he returns to Paris “deserted by the Spirit.” There, he laments the death of his parents and the loss of his mistress, eventually feeling “close to suicide.” He makes one brief effort to follow his literary hero, Huysmans, by making a retreat at a Benedictine monastery but finds its Catholicism too weak and otherworldly, and the smoke-free retreat proves to be “a mistake from the beginning.”

His second return to Paris, which is prospering peacefully from Arab oil and North African efforts to join the European Union, draws the narrator back to academic life. With help from a publisher who wants him to edit a new edition of Huysmans, he is drawn by a former professor, who has become a Muslim and an administrator at the Sorbonne, to consider returning to university life and possibly converting to Islam. Like the administrator, the narrator is attracted by this offer, partly because of his religious search but primarily because of the high salary and polygamous family life. The novel ends with the narrator accepting the job and foreseeing a “submission” to “a second life.”

Like the narrators in many satirical novels by Jonathan Swift, George Orwell, Evelyn Waugh and others, François is a conflicted and unlikeable narrator, with several contradictory traits, including misogyny, cynicism and secularism mixed with pursuit of women, conservative idealism and bursts of religiosity. The only consistent values he displays are his dedication to literature and to a religious quest. He seems to model his life on Huysmans but never achieves his literary hero's artistic achievements or later spiritual sincerity. The main question for readers remains unsettled: How much of the author Houellebecq can we find in the narrator François? According to a long interview in *The Paris Review* that appeared at the

time of the publication of the novel, Houellebecq sharply distinguishes himself from his narrator, as he had from narrators of his previous novels.

Celtic Urn

Manching, Bayern

In dark matter,
the hot bolt of deer—

brambled rack,
coiled haunch,
stone spoon.

A great stag
bridled
barely,

its rider
long
thrown.

This trace
of breaking
from wild,

hint
of bit.

DAN MACISAAC

DAN MACISAAC lives on Vancouver Island, Canada. His poetry has appeared in the print magazines *Poetry Salzburg*, *Vallum*, *Poetica* and *Agenda*. His writing can also be viewed at www.this.org. He is the winner of the 2014 Foley Prize.

He asserts that he began this novel as a response to the deaths of family and friends, a response that first took the form of an agnostic's search for religion in Catholicism similar to that of Huysmans's.

When this earlier novel did not work out, he revised it radically, including some satiric dimension with regard to politics and journalists, but affirming a serious spiritual journey of a greatly flawed narrator. As Houellebecq said in the interview, "I think there is a real need for God and that the return of religion is not a slogan but a reality, and that it is very much on the rise.... I don't believe that society can survive without religion." When asked about the improbability of a large conversion to Islam in France, the author admitted that the novel was not meant to be realistic, but part of its sensational side as a social critique includes "scare tactics." What he is critiquing, however, is not religion or immigration but what he calls "the philosophy handed down by the Enlightenment, which no longer makes sense to anyone, or to very few people." Thus, as a critique of contemporary secularism and decadence, the novel affirms the worldwide return of religion, whether in the Islamic world or the Western world of Catholicism under Pope Francis (the latter, according to Houellebecq, "is doing rather well").

The main themes of the novel have been clarified by later reviewers of the English translation, including one by the Scandinavian novelist Karl Ove Knausgaard (*The New York Times Book Review*, 11/8/15). He calls the plot unlikely but possible, and its thematic target "an entire culture's enormous loss of meaning, its lack of, or highly depleted, faith, a culture in which the ties of community are dissolving." For this reviewer, the satire is aimed at "the intellectual classes, among whom no trace is found of idealism, and not a shadow of will to defend any set of values, only pragmatism

pure and simple." The basic question the novel raises, as the author and late reviewer seem to agree, is: "What does it mean to be a human being without faith?" The novel's narrator is on a search "directed beyond the human to the divine, the truly sacred."

A further dimension of the novel that few of the reviewers have mentioned is the quasi-political values that the Islamic government tries to put into place in the last section of the novel. These two values are *distributism* and *subsidiarity*, the latter of which has been at the heart of Catholic social teaching since the 1930s. G. K. Chesterton was one of the proponents of distributism, as what the novel calls "a third way" between capitalism and socialism, a way that combined capital and labor by promoting worker-owned small businesses. Subsidiarity also became part of social change in the novel by means of the Muslim prime minister's promotion of local and regional government and economy, similar to that proposed by the papal encyclical letter "Quadragesimo Anno" in 1930.

The lack of realism in the details of the politics and reforms described in the novel should not distract readers from seeing in the novel what one critic calls "a dystopian conversion tale." It portrays an unlikely scenario of a Muslim political takeover in France but is a much more plausible critique of Western secularism and hedonism. However, the recent surge of immigration from Syria and North Africa into Europe since the appearance of this novel only make more complex the political future of the European Union. Although France is predicted to become 10 percent Muslim by 2030, some cities in Europe are already 20 to 25 percent immigrants from the Middle East, including Amsterdam, Birmingham and Marseilles. Although the media focus primarily on the social conflicts in Europe that have resulted this past year in terrorism and

violence, little mention has been made of the spiritual influence of the cultural changes caused by religious movements on the continent. Interreligious conflict can also be the opportunity for interreligious dialogue and harmony. More significant for readers is the

main point of *Submission*, the need for a retrieval of religious and spiritual values in Western society.

DAVID LEIGH, S.J., is professor of English at Seattle University. His latest book is *Patterns of Apocalypse in Twentieth-Century Fiction* (2008).

GARY L. CHAMBERLAIN

WORKS IN PROGRESS

UNION MADE Working People and the Rise of Social Christianity in Chicago

By Heath W. Carter
Oxford University Press. 296p \$35

“Poverty exists...because the toiler does not receive a just and equitable proportion of the wealth which he produces.” These are not the words of 2015 presidential contender Bernie Sanders, but the 1867 cry of Andrew Cameron, member of the Chicago Typographical Union, rallying Chicago workers after the general strike of that year. Cameron went on to articulate one of the main themes of Heath W. Carter’s story, *Union Made*, in this harsh criticism of Chicago’s churches: Poverty exists “because the Church, through the paid toadies of employers, has denounced every attempt on the part of the working classes to assert their rights and remove the curse which has bound them hand and foot, and has prostituted the high and holy calling of a minister of Christ to the level of a village pettifogger.”

Ten years later, the Rev. Simon McChesney, pastor of Park Avenue Methodist, fell in with Cameron’s criticism when he argued against immigration, “Europe has been emptying her criminal classes upon our shores.” The Rev. Norman Ravlin at the Free-Will Baptist Church carries on in describing those working classes and organized unions as mobs

of “communist offscourings,” “disorderly classes,” “roughs and thieves,” “lowest rabble” and “vicious element.” Substitute “Mexico” for “Europe” in Rev. McChesney’s remark above, and we are transported to the nativism of Donald Trump and other presidential candidates in 2016.

In this brief but incisive historical analysis, Heath W. Carter traces the tumultuous struggles among labor, capital and the Christian churches in the microcosm of ever-expanding Chicago from the mid-19th century to the early 20th. The focus is Carter’s exploration of the rise of “social Christianity.” Most studies of the rise of the “social gospel,” which flowered in the early 20th century, feature such dynamic middle-class Protestant theologians and leaders as Walter Rauschenbusch, Richard T. Ely, Josiah Strong, Washington Gladden and others. That movement did indeed involve the churches in the practical issues of the day by applying the Gospel message of Jesus to the causes of economic inequality and poverty, alcoholism, racial tensions, slums, unclean environment, child labor, poor schools and the danger of war.

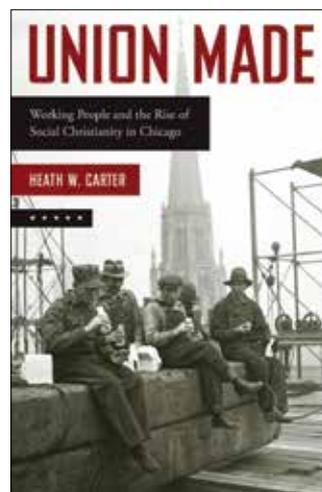
Carter’s important contribution,

however, involves turning the usual understanding of this dynamic movement, which died out in the early 20th century, on its head through examination of key roles of workers and unions in spite of the opposition and only occasional support of churches. Carter shows that ordinary believers fashioned the first social gospel: “But I do contend that working people played a much more essential role in this story than they have typically been accorded.” His telling of that story reads like a long character study, from the antebellum days of slavery to the tumultuous decades of the late 1800s, peppered by strikes, labor unrest, the Gilded Age of capitalism and the cozy relationships between mainline Protestant and Catholic leaders and the wealth lords of capital in Chicago.

Through extensive research (the notes alone cover 67 pages) of tracts, pamphlets, newspapers, labor magazines, church organs and published sermons, Carter is able to document the working-class origins of social Christianity. He fully explores “the docu-

mentary record” often ignored by others in their discussions of Protestant and Catholic leaders, noting that “the field [of labor and church histories] is in the midst of a major transition.” Carter’s short text is a key contribution to that transition.

As churches became more prosperous in the post-bellum period and into the Gilded Age (a term coined by Mark Twain to satirize the serious social problems “gilded” over by a thin layer of wealth), pastors and clergy were finding greater comfort in the arms and bosoms of the wealthy, with their sizable church donations. By the late 1870s and beyond, workers were forced in the spirit of a harden-



ing industrial capitalism to farm out their “labor” as “free laborers.” Indeed throughout this period the main objection of church leaders to labor unions was that every man should be free to sell his labor without interference according to a “contract” between the individual worker and industry.

At the same time, Carter’s research reveals the anxiety of church leaders. Workers were moving away from churches to that archenemy, socialism. Indeed socialist leaders such as Eugene Debs and Mother Jones saw the connection between Jesus’ simple words challenging the rich and the plight of labor in Chicago and in the rest of the country.

Carter ends his tale of church and labor with a statement, a challenge and a question. The statement is simply that “now, in the early decades of the twenty-first century, American capitalism appears once more poised to overwhelm American democracy”—possibly a reference to the decline of unions and their subjugation by corporations. The challenge involves the future: “It remains to be seen whether present-day believers will quietly abide this state of affairs”; or as the question is

put: “Whether it will at some point call forth a generation of prophets comparable to those that visited Gilded Age Chicago.”

Carter forges his history for both scholars and general readers through a fascinating historical journey of two characters struggling at odds and evens who eventually forged a strong but brief movement, a movement that played a role in the New Deal and later 20th-century struggles. One wishes he had listed the cast of characters involved—the particular churches, unions and corporations—in a preamble for easy reference. But importantly Carter shows in this brief, localized, historical setting how this possibility of social engagement emerged. In our current days of contract laborers, part-time employment, temp workers, loss of benefits, union decertification, growing income inequality and pushes for higher minimum wages, let the reader beware: This character study will challenge you, in any faith tradition, to take action.

GARY L. CHAMBERLAIN is professor emeritus of Christian ethics in the theology and religious studies department and environmental studies program of Seattle University, Seattle, Wash.

the pope’s role in the ‘Dirty War’ has increased. Father Jorge Bergoglio, SJ is occasionally mentioned in these pages, but this is not a book about him or his experience as Jesuit provincial in Argentina.”

Oh well.

I have spent 40 years working as a journalist, much of it as an editor, trying to convince writers that they should “show” what happened rather than “tell” it. It requires a keen appreciation of detail, a relentless curiosity and an unslakeable thirst for truth. It also helps to be gifted with an ability to imagine a scene after having interviewed enough sources to make sure what you are showing really happened. We want it to be true.

Journalistic truth is akin to scientific truth: It has to be able to be replicated. If these two chemicals are mixed, the scientist says, this will happen. If you talk to these people, look at these documents, study this testimony, this is what you’ll find, the journalist says. For that reason, anonymous sources are the bane of working journalists. I must confess to some bewilderment, then, when I read in *The Catholic Church and Argentina’s Dirty War*, “Some names have been changed to protect the identity of interviewees who requested it.”

Because he did a prodigious amount of research, however, the work by Gustavo Morello, S.J., should not be dismissed out of hand. Now a professor at Boston College, he has written a scholarly text examining the kidnapping, torture and release of a North American priest and five Latin American seminarians who were part of the Congregation of La Salette, a French order that had been working in Córdoba, Argentina, since the 1950s.

Morello seeks to understand how a country that was nominally 90 percent Catholic could “disappear” Catholic priests and seminarians. Fundamental to his analysis is the realization that the church in Argentina could be divided into three parts.

THOMAS CURRAN

A TIME OF DISAPPEARANCES

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND ARGENTINA’S DIRTY WAR

By Gustavo Morello, S.J.
Oxford University Press. 240p \$74

The book review editor at this magazine called with an assignment. I’d like you to review a book about the Catholic Church and Argentina’s dirty war, he said.

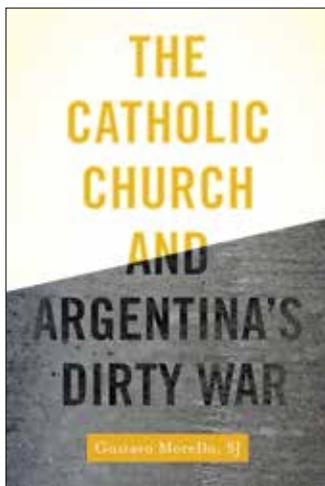
Sure, I replied.

I had read with interest the coverage of Jorge Mario Bergoglio’s election to

the papacy and was looking forward to a book, written by a Jesuit, about what had happened when Pope Francis was the Jesuit provincial in Buenos Aires. There had been some accusations, most of them disputed in the end by the priests involved, that their superior had been less than supportive when the junta’s men came for them.

Here, I thought, I would get the inside story from a person in a position to know the true inwardness of what went on in the mid-1970s in Argentina. Imagine my chagrin on reading in the book’s Preface: “Obviously, interest in

The anti-secular group of Catholics held the power and were behind the torture and disappearance of other Catholics. This group, Morello says, believed that Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI had betrayed their faith. These power brokers wanted nothing to do with the Second Vatican Council, nothing to do with encyclicals like “Populorum Progressio,” which said developing the poorest people was the work of the church, and nothing to do with the conference of Latin American bishops at Medellín, Colombia, in September 1968, that stated that the church should have “a preferential option for the poor.” This antisecular group believed any priest or religious who worked with the poor was a subversive. As proof, after they raided the house where the seminarians lived, the interrogators questioned why the seminarians had books by Karl Marx and Enrique Dussel. The fact that they asked about Dussel, an Argentine philosopher aligned with liberation theology, Morello finds telling. It shows, he says, an above-average familiarity with Latin American philosophy and theology.



The second group of Catholics he calls institutional. They were willing to keep quiet about the political violence. “They tried to keep an institutional space for the Church in the political field, autonomous from the government and its political agenda. At the same time, they sought a privileged position for the Church to gain access to the government.”

The third group, to which the La Salettes belonged, Morello calls “committed” Catholics, whose work and identification with the poor resulted in their victimization.

It is clear from Morello’s research that if the priest who lived with the seminarians, James “Santiago” Weeks, had not been a U.S. citizen, their disappearance could well have ended in a ditch, a fate suffered by more than 100 Catholic “religious workers.” On the August night in 1976 when the La Salettes were taken, a North American nun, Joan McCarthy, had been visiting. The soldiers did not quite know what to do with this woman and let her

go on the promise she would leave Córdoba within 48 hours. She made her way back to the United States and rallied support for the release of the kidnapped seminarians.

An editor at a conference of investigative reporters once said that too

many investigative articles could be summarized by saying, “There is a lot of bad stuff going on in the world and here are the names of some of the people doing it.”

The story of what happened to these people that night and for months after is laid out in scholarly fashion here. Every quotation taken from interviews with the people involved is printed in italic type. Every fact is cited in parentheses at the end of a sentence, interrupting the reader’s train of thought.

It is not journalism, and it was not written as such. I fear, though, that this book will sit on library shelves waiting for the next scholar to find an interest in one of the names mentioned. The story of these Catholics and their courage in the face of evil deserves an account that does more showing than telling.

THOMAS CURRAN is former associate editor of *The Newark Star Ledger*.

Experience SAT’s Summer Sabbatical: The Summer Spirituality Series 2016

COME FOR A WEEK, SEVERAL WEEKS, OR A MONTH!

WEEK ONE: June 1-3, *Christian Spirituality as Contemporary Discipleship*, with Anthony Gittins, CSSp, Ph.D.

WEEK TWO: June 6-8, *Justice, Mercy, and Joy*, with Megan McKenna

WEEK THREE: June 13-15, *‘Then I came to myself...’ (Lk. 15:27): an Exploration of Knowing Our Deep Longing and Making a Difference in the World*, with Nancy Schreck, OSF

WEEK FOUR: June 20-22, *Singing a New Church into Being: New Ecclesiologies for a New Evangelization*, with Msgr. Ray East



**School of
Applied
Theology**

The SAT Summer Sabbatical—
A holistic Sabbath experience in the San Francisco Bay Area for those seeking attentive rest, theological renewal, and spiritual transformation.

For more information please contact us at:
www.satgtu.org | admissions@satgtu.org | (510) 652-1651

CLASSIFIED

Positions

THE RELIGIOUS FORMATION CONFERENCE (R.F.C.) is seeking a full-time Program Director, who will work collaboratively with the Conference's national office staff, advisory and program teams, and others to develop, design, market, coordinate and implement programs for women and men religious engaged in the ministry of formation as well as programs for newer members in initial formation and for the lifelong formation of seasoned members.

Qualifications include a master's level degree in theology or an equivalent credential. The successful candidate will have experience in initial or lifelong formation ministry and/or faith formation as well as in program design implementation and evaluation and some proficiency in technology, in particular with its use in instruction and training. Please see www.relforcon.org for more detailed information.

To apply, please submit cover letter, résumé and three reference letters to Sister Ellen Dauwer, S.C., Executive Director, at rfc@relforcon.org. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, but preference will be given to applications received by April 22, 2016.

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR, Office of Pastoral Planning, San Bernardino, Calif. The Diocese of San Bernardino is a vibrant and diverse community of Roman Catholic believers committed to bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to all we encounter. We are guided by the core values of hospitality, collaboration, faith sharing and reconciliation. Through the impact of the Gospel, we seek to fill lives with hope.

The Department of Pastoral Planning serves the Diocese by assisting in planning efforts at the local and diocesan levels to facilitate networking and clustering by providing educational and in-service opportunities that enable fiscal, tactical and strategic planning. The Department also provides theoretical models, statistical data and planning resources to facilitate planning.

We are currently recruiting for a department director with experience to:

- Provide theoretical models, statistical data and planning resources to facilitate planning;
- Provide educational and in-service opportunities that enable fiscal, tactical and strategic planning for parish, school and local ministries;
- Serve as key advisor to the diocesan bishop, diocesan departments and vicars to facilitate and provide planning resources;
- Maintain

networking relations with the Conference for Pastoral Planning and Council Development.

Please visit our website at www.sbdioocese.org/employment.cfm for more details. Interested candidates, please forward your résumé to: Attention: Maria Harkin, Diocese of San Bernardino, 1201 E. Highland Ave., San Bernardino, CA 92404; or send email to: employment@sbdioocese.org; or fax to: (909) 475-5189.

Retreats

CELEBRATE Pope Francis' vision. Inspiring, dynamic parish missions, retreats: "Discipleship and the Francis Effect" and "Celebrating the Jubilee of Mercy." Website: www.sabbathretreats.org.

WANT YOUR AD HERE?

Visit americamagazine.org.

Email: ads@americamagazine.org.

Call 212-515-0102.

Ten-word minimum. Rates are per word per issue. 1-5 times: \$2; 6-11 times: \$1.75. For an additional \$30, your print ad will be posted on America's Web site for one week.



THE JESUIT POST



For
20's and 30's
Catholics

The Jesuit Post ("TJP") shows that faith is relevant and God is already at work in today's culture.

thejesuitpost.org

Essays | Blogs
Multi-Media Content

Produced by young Jesuits information, focused on sacred and secular issues, and everything in between. TJP speaks to young adult Catholics and spiritual seekers.

America | MEDIA
A JESUIT MINISTRY

The Jesuit Post is published by America Media, the publisher of America magazine. It uploads new content 46 weeks of the year.

Witnesses to the Resurrection

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER (C), APRIL 10, 2016

Readings: Acts 5:27-41; Ps 30:2-12; Rev 5:11-14; Jn 21:1-19

“This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead” (Jn 21:14)

The Gospel of John presents the apostles after Jesus’ resurrection as getting on with their lives, even after he had appeared to them, in as normal a way as one could expect. Peter and a number of the other disciples, including Thomas, James and John, were at the Sea of Tiberias when Peter decided to go fishing, which is what fishermen do. The rest of them said, “We will go with you.” They fished all night and caught nothing, and then Jesus appeared on the shore.

No one recognized Jesus initially, a common theme in stories of the post-resurrection appearances, until he told them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat; they received an abundant catch of fish, “153 of them.” Once the disciple whom Jesus loved identified the risen Lord, they went to shore, where Jesus was roasting fish over a charcoal fire. Jesus invited his disciples to “Come and have breakfast.”

It is such a normal scene—fishing, breakfast on the beach over a charcoal fire with friends—and so utterly astounding. After all, the man cooking them breakfast had been killed and was now alive. The oddity is transmitted by the Gospel, as we are told: “Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, ‘Who are you?’ because they knew it was the Lord.” The risen Jesus was still difficult to comprehend for the disciples, even

though it was the third time he had appeared to them. You can hear the silence in this scene as the men eat their breakfast quietly, stealing glances at Jesus as they sit in the early morning light on the seashore. What exactly do you say to the risen Messiah?

Jesus, in fact, begins the conversation with Peter, asking him if he loves Jesus. It is a powerful scene, in which Peter is challenged three times, the same number as his denials, to declare his love for his teacher. But the first two times Jesus asks Peter, “Do you love me,” he uses the verb *agapao*, denoting the self-sacrificial love of God for humanity and the love Christians are to show to God and neighbor. Peter responds that he indeed loves Jesus, using the verb *phileo*, which describes love between friends. On the third occasion it is Jesus who changes the verb, asking Peter “Do you love me?” using *phileo*. Peter responds, declaring his love, using *phileo* once again.

Jesus accepts the love that Peter can offer at this time and instructs him a third time to “Feed my sheep,” indicating that there will be a time in the future when Peter will show his *agapê* in his death. But Peter’s demonstration of his *agapê* begins long before his death. Leaving the comforts of his Galilean home and the fishing boat, Peter returns to Jerusalem to speak of the risen Jesus.

The fearful Peter who denied Jesus three times prior to his crucifixion is

gone, replaced by a Peter who has been arrested for speaking boldly of the new life to be found in Jesus’ name. Already told “not to teach in this name,” Peter and the others could only answer, “We must obey God rather than any human authority.” It was the experience of the witness of the risen Jesus that inspired Peter to speak with boldness.

Peter declared to the council that Jesus, who had been killed, was raised up by God, who “exalted him at his right hand as



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Imagine yourself sitting on the shore with the risen Lord and the disciples. What do you want to say to Jesus? How would you respond to his question about whether you love him? How would you share his resurrection with others?

leader and savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.” The word “leader” (*archêgos*) can be translated as “author,” as in “author [originator] of our salvation.” This is the point of Jesus’ resurrection appearances and Peter’s boldness: to speak to this new salvation offered through Christ.

Peter says, “We are witnesses to these things.” Yet the experiences of the risen Lord were not private events. They were given so that all could share in the risen life. God had acted in history out of *agapê* for humanity. When that love was made present to the first witnesses, it was essential that this same love would have to be shared with all.

JOHN W. MARTENS is a professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn. Twitter: @Biblejunkies.



The Lamb and the Sheep

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (C), APRIL 17, 2016

Readings: Acts 13:14-52; Ps 100:1-5; Rev 7:9-17; Jn 10:14-30

“I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me” (Jn 10:14)

The Revelation of John seems to shroud everything in mystery and mythic language, but it is, as its title proclaims, a revelation, an unveiling of that which was hidden. Sometimes an image in Revelation, a simple description of a mysterious scene, reveals more than we are initially aware of. The Lamb sits upon the throne of God in Revelation. So normal is this image that we forget that John is showing us that the Lamb is also God. The high Christology of Revelation is regularly overlooked, though it agrees with that of John’s Gospel, where in the Good Shepherd passage Jesus says, “The Father and I are one.”

And Revelation unveils even more—for instance, that “the lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd.” We are so used to the image of Jesus as the Lamb of God and the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd that we might not immediately attend to the incongruity of the two images together: A lamb is our shepherd.

The imagery of Jesus as lamb has profound theological and sacrificial implications, especially in Johannine literature, which presents Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. But the imagery of the Lamb offers us another image: the lamb is one of us, the sheep. In a homily in 2013 Pope Francis asked that priests “be shepherds with the smell of sheep.” Jesus literally embodied this principle in the Incarnation by becoming the shepherd who joins the flock.

This is why Jesus, the Good Shepherd, can say, “I know my own and my own know me,” for he became one of us and knows intimately who we are and our lives. Jesus also says, “My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.” But this statement is a provocation for some of us. If I am described as a sheep who follows, am I only a thoughtless follower?

The derogatory term *sheeple*, a combination of “sheep” and “people,” is used online today to describe people who are led mindlessly and easily controlled because they have no will or thoughts of their own. But the image of Jesus the Lamb tells us that our God came to be one of us, to walk in solidarity with us, to die for us, not to control us. The Good Shepherd knows who we are, cares for us, and has our best interests at stake. If we are willing to hear the Good Shepherd, we will know our true worth.

In fact, knowing that we belong to the Good Shepherd is the source of all of our value. God loved us enough to become one of us. To know God is to know ourselves and our worth; to love God is to love ourselves for who we are: sheep who know the shepherd, who hear his call and who respond to the voice of God.

Both Revelation and John’s Gospel indicate why God, the Good Shepherd, became the Lamb of God and where God is leading us. Jesus says in John’s Gospel that his reason for calling his

flock is because he gives “eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand.” The sheep are following the shepherd to paradise. Their care is eternal.

In Revelation, John receives an image of the flock, not a tiny, rump herd, but “a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands.” Though these members of the flock had suffered earthly loss, the Shepherd’s prom-

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Reflect on Jesus as Lamb of God and Good Shepherd. Which of these images resonates most with you? Do you feel comfortable with being a sheep? Do you sometimes ignore the call of the Good Shepherd? When are you most attentive to his call?

ise was true: “They will never perish.” In fact, it is not just life that the Shepherd gives but also the promise of abundant life: There will no longer be hunger or thirst or even the harshness of a scorching sun, “for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” The Good Shepherd, one of us, a sheep like us, is the very God who has prepared for us an eternal home and who leads us home to paradise.

JOHN W. MARTENS

America (ISSN 000-7049) is published weekly (except for 13 combined issues: Jan. 4-11, 18-25, April 4-11, May 23-30, June 6-13, 20-27, July 4-11, 18-25, Aug. 1-8, 15-22, Aug. 29-Sept. 5, Dec. 5-12, 19-26) by America Press Inc., 106 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019. Periodical postage is paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. Circulation: (800) 627-9533. Subscription: United States \$69 per year; add U.S. \$30 postage and GST (#131870719) for Canada; or add U.S. \$69 per year for international priority airmail. Postmaster: Send address changes to: America, P.O. Box 293159, Kettering, OH 45429.

JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE



MERCY IN MOTION

Education is a life-saving intervention. In Lebanon, Jesuit Refugee Service has launched an Accelerated Learning Program to help Syrian refugee children age nine to 17 who have been out of school to 'catch-up.'

Counseling is also provided to help ease trauma.

"To give a child a seat at school is the finest gift you can give."
Pope Francis

JRS is dedicated to doubling the number of refugees we educate by 2020.

Will you join us?

Put your mercy in motion and give a child a seat at school.

www.jrseducates.org



Jesuit Refugee Service/USA
www.jrsusa.org/mercy

Jesuit Refugee Service school in Lebanon

DIGITAL HIGHLIGHTS

America

THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC REVIEW

Join the conversation.



WEB EXCLUSIVE

The story of Leopold Mandić, a Capuchin saint who spent most of his ministry hearing confessions.



RADIO

Peter Quinn talks about the Easter rebellion of 1916 on "America This Week" on The Catholic Channel.



BOOKS

Praying with America: 100 Years of Encountering God in Prayer in America Magazine now available from Loyola Press, with an introduction by James Martin, S.J.

WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT:

"Women need to be allowed to preach at Mass because no one can lead without being able to speak publicly."
—LISA WEBER, "WOMEN KNOCKING ON THE DOOR OF THE CHURCH"

FROM OUR BLOGS

Hopes for Pro-life Feminism
Sidney Callahan

Supreme Service: Justice Sonia Sotomayor on the Value of Listening, Judith Valente

Donald 'Milhous' Trump Readies for the General Election
Robert David Sullivan

WHAT YOU'RE READING

Pope Says Nuns Killed in Yemen Are Victims of 'the Globalization of Indifference', Gerard O'Connell

Pope Francis and the Revolution of Normalcy, Thomas Rosica, C.S.B.

French Archbishop Christophe Pierre Expected to Be the New Nuncio to the United States, Gerard O'Connell

Who is to Judge? Anthony Giambrone
Lives of Christ, John Anderson



Wednesdays at 1 p.m. on The Catholic Channel 129



Follow us @americamag | Links to these stories can be found at www.americamagazine.org/webfeatures.

JAMES MARTIN OFFERS *an* INVITATION *to a* DEEPER FRIENDSHIP *with* JESUS

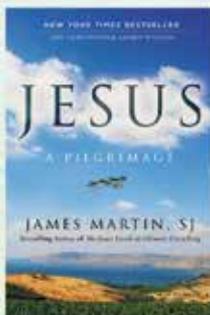
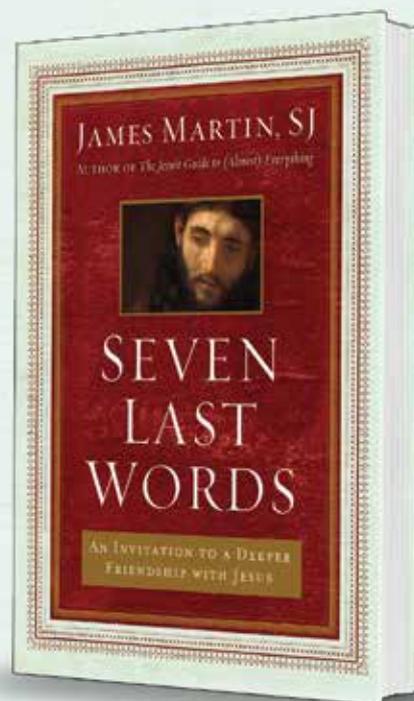
From the *New York Times* bestselling and award-winning author comes a series of meditations on the seven sayings of Jesus from the Cross, which reveal not only Jesus's love and forgiveness, but also how deeply he understands us—with our worries, our fears, and even our doubts.

"Spiritually rewarding and uplifting."

—Cardinal Timothy Dolan,
from the Foreword

"This insight alone makes this book worth reading: Jesus endured suffering, so he understands ours."

—Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ,
author of *Dead Man Walking*



NOW AVAILABLE *in* PAPERBACK

New York Times Bestseller and Christopher Award Winner

"One of the best books I've read in years—on any subject."

—Mary Karr, author of *Lit*

"Martin is one of our most popular spiritual writers—and for good reason."

—*Commonweal*

Learn more at JamesMartinSJ.com