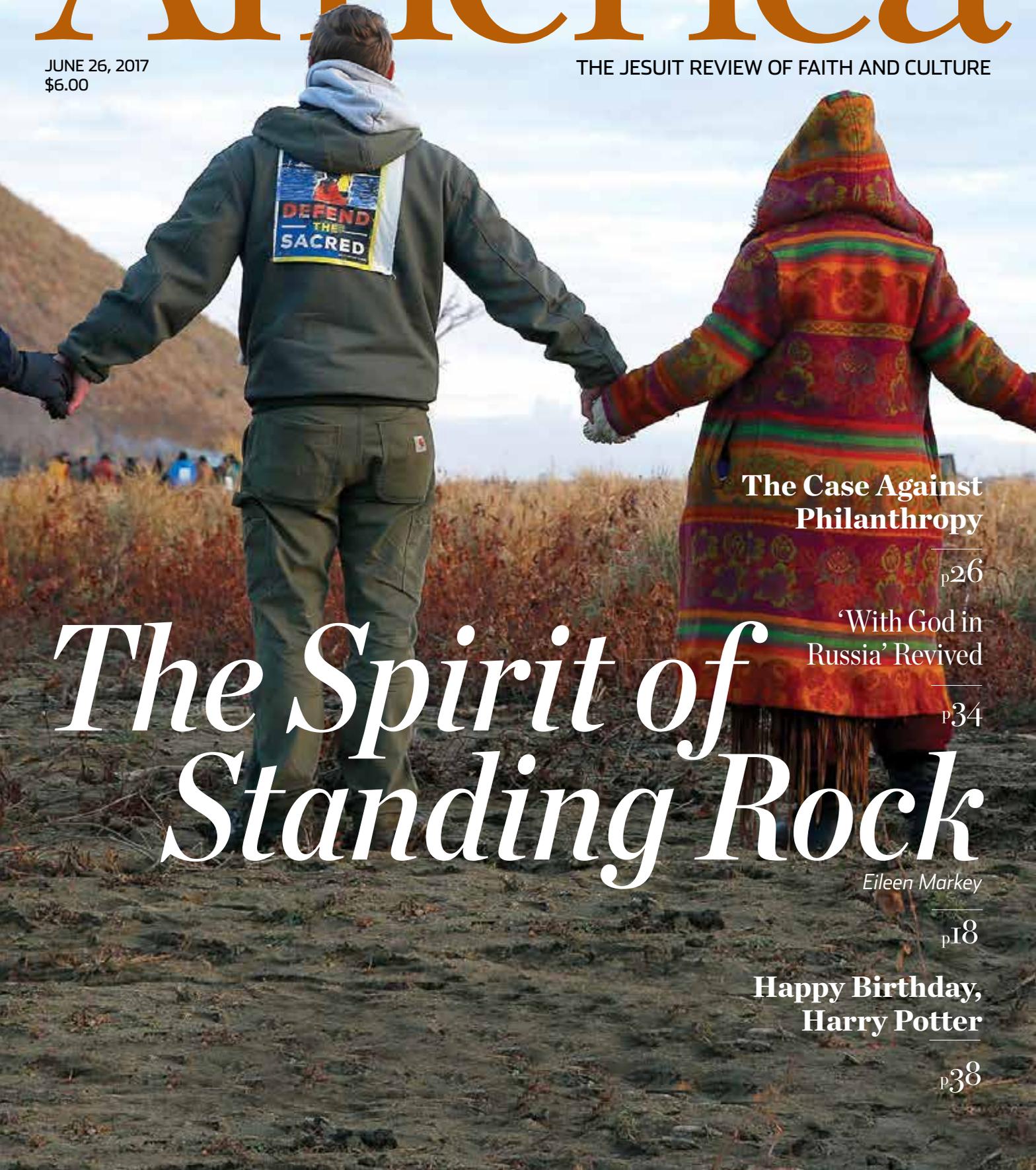


America

JUNE 26, 2017
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THE JESUIT REVIEW OF FAITH AND CULTURE



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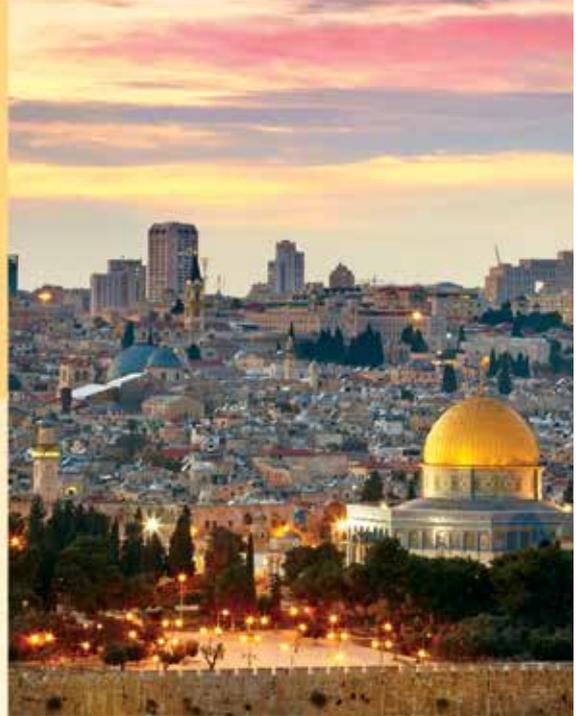
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America Journeys Presents

Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus in the Holy Land



UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF:

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Author of *Jesus: A Pilgrimage* (included for each pilgrim)

WITH

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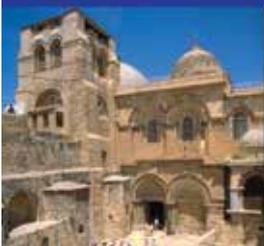
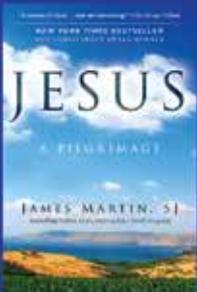
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The World Is Watching. And They're Worried.

Despite Donald J. Trump's claim that there has never been a president "who's passed more legislation, who's done more things than what we've done," the current administration increasingly resembles what Winston Churchill might call "a bull that travels with his own china shop." In fairness, Mr. Trump, in a rare public acknowledgement of his creaturely status, did concede that Franklin D. Roosevelt might have been a more effective president than he, but that's only because F.D.R. "had a major depression to handle."

The president, of course, is not the only politician who engages in self-serving hyperbole; it's standard operating procedure for members of both parties. But Mr. Trump seems to think that his words have a mysterious, efficacious power, that things will become true simply by announcing that they are true. Some commentators liken this to the behavior of autocrats. But rather than autocracy, the greater danger in the Trump era is instability.

To wit: The New York Times is reporting this morning that at a White House meeting with Republican senators on June 12, the president announced that the recent attempt by the U.S. House of Representatives to "repeal and replace" the Affordable Care Act was "mean." I happen to agree. But what the president said yesterday is the precise opposite of what he said when the House first passed the bill. "We want to brag about the plan," Mr. Trump told reporters then.

Now I don't believe that a politician should never change his mind. In fact, our anti-flip-flop culture, which will not countenance the slightest

shift in course by our political leaders, is one major cause of Washington's paralysis. The trouble with President Trump is that his shifts seem to occur weekly, which is causing a crisis of confidence in American leadership both at home and abroad. It is difficult to see how Mr. Trump can effectively govern the country and develop his domestic policy agenda if he continually changes his views.

But if the president's contradictions are a thorn in the side of U.S. domestic politics, they are a dagger in the heart of America's international standing. "The Trump administration's foreign policy has been a dizzying spectacle of mixed messages," David Ignatius recently wrote in *The Washington Post*. Tom Donilon, a national security official in the Obama administration, told *The Washington Post* in an interview that "there have been almost whiplash-like changes in policy."

For better or worse, the United States is in charge of the world at this moment in human history. It looks to us for leadership and world leaders are justifiably concerned, so much so that, in a thinly veiled reference to the United States, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany recently told her supporters that "the times when we could completely rely on others are, to an extent, over."

Of course, it is still very early in the life of this administration. Mr. Trump and his administration may yet stabilize as they gain experience. But this much is clear: The world can ill afford to have the United States abdicate its global position, either by choice or through carelessness. The world, after all, is a large and very crowded china shop.

•••

Some news from the home office: As-tute observers of the masthead on page 9 will notice that the name at the bottom of the list has changed because of a change at the top of the organization. Last week, William R. Kunkel retired as chair of the board of directors of America Media. Bill spent most of his legal career at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom L.L.P. in Chicago and is now general counsel to the Archdiocese of Chicago. Bill has served as chair of America Media since 2013, helping to lead this organization through one of the most transformative periods in its history. We are deeply grateful for his service. I am personally thankful for his generous friendship.

Susan S. Braddock succeeds Bill as chair. Susan has served on the board of directors of America Media since 2014. Previously, she served as chair of the board of Christo Rey New York and as the tenth president of the Metropolitan Opera Guild. We are thankful for her willingness to assume this responsibility, and I look forward to working more closely with one of the smartest and hardest-working people I know. I am also delighted to say that in Susan this venerable 108-year old Jesuit ministry now has its first female chair.

Boards of directors at non-profit corporations do not always get the recognition they deserve. For our part, you should know that America Media would not be where it is today if not for their generosity with both time and treasure. *Deo Gratias!*

Matt Malone, S.J., *editor in chief*;
Twitter: @Americaeditor.



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Manila, June 12: Protesters with a banner reading “Stop the killings” denounce the decision of President Rodrigo Duterte to declare martial law after Muslim militants attacked Marawi City in southern Philippines.

(AP Photo/Bullit Marquez)

(Cover: Cannonball, N.D., November 2016. Photo by Jessica Rinaldi/The Boston Globe via Getty Images)

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We need a citizenry that believes
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If you designed the U.S. national budget, what would it look like?

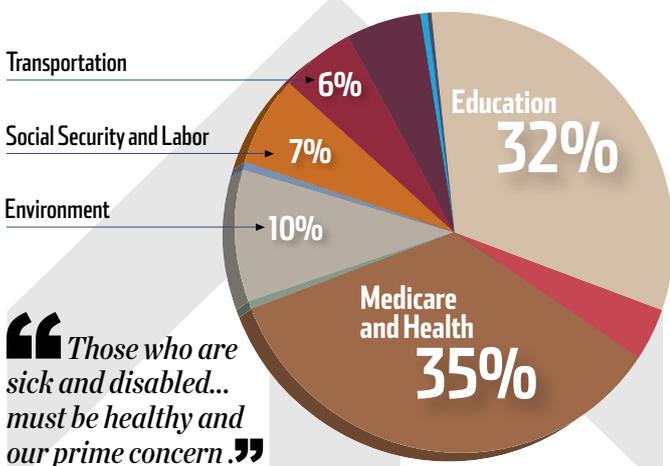
In light of President Trump’s recent proposal for the 2018 budget, we presented **America** readers with current federal spending levels and asked what changes they would make to the national budget. The majority of our readers argued for an increase in spending across a number of categories, including Medicare and health (71 percent of readers), education (79 percent), veterans benefits and spending (66 percent) and natural resources and the environment (72 percent).

Thirty-five percent of our reader sample told **America** that the category Medicare and health most deserves an increase in spending. Gabriel Morales from Roanoke, Va., explained his choice: “Access to affordable and quality health services allows people to maintain their health and quality of life.... There should not be a constant concern that a single medical bill from an accident or procedure could lead to bankruptcy.”

Following Medicare and health, 32 percent of readers selected education as the category most deserving of greater funding. From New Albany, Ind., Janice Pennington wrote that increased spending in this area would “have an excellent effect on those portions of the budget that are the most expensive.”

When asked which category is most deserving of cuts to spending, a striking 86 percent of readers chose national defense. Some readers expressed discomfort that so much money was being spent on instruments of war. Fabrice Henry from Paris, France, told **America**: “World peace will only be achieved if [the United States] contributes fewer weapons globally.” Chris Staysniak of Newton, Mass., spoke for many of his fellow readers when he wrote, “Whenever I hear of a multi-million or billion dollar defense outlay, I always think of those who could have been housed, fed or educated to much greater effect with those same funds.”

WHICH CATEGORY MOST DESERVES GREATER SPENDING?

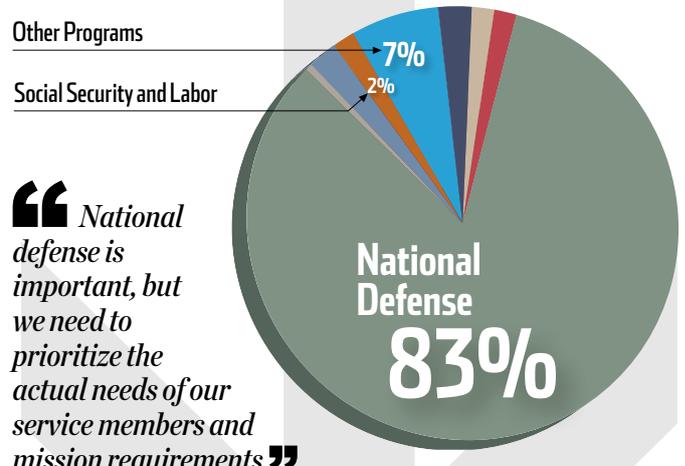


“Those who are sick and disabled... must be healthy and our prime concern.”

—Michael Evans, Anderson, Calif.

Administration of Justice	<1%	Natural Resources and Environment	10%
Education Training, Employment and Social Services	32%	Net interest	2%
General Science, Space and Technology	4%	Social Security and Labor	7%
Medicare and Health	35%	Transportation	6%
National Defense	<1%	Veterans Services	6%
		Other programs	<1%

WHICH CATEGORY MOST DESERVES SPENDING CUTS?



“National defense is important, but we need to prioritize the actual needs of our service members and mission requirements.”

—Mike Bono, Somerville, Mass.

Administration of Justice	3%	Natural Resources and Environment	<1%
Education Training, Employment and Social Services	2%	Net interest	3%
General Science, Space and Technology	2%	Social Security and Labor	2%
Medicare and Health	0%	Transportation	0%
National Defense	83%	Veterans Services	0%
		Other programs	7%

These results are based on reader responses to a poll promoted on Facebook, Twitter and in our email newsletter.

Love Chooses Life

Re “A.C.L.U. v. Catholic Health Care,” by Stephanie Slade (6/12): This is an excellently researched and informative article. As a Catholic, I find it disturbing that our religious liberties continue to be eroded. Catholics who work in health care because of their religious beliefs are now being asked to ignore the very core religious beliefs that compel them? This is poor reasoning. We believe first. What we practice comes from love, and that love chooses life.

Irene DiSanto

Online Comment

Accept, Not Tolerate

Re “An Anti-gay Campaign Turns Deadly in Chechnya, and Journalists Are Also in Danger,” by Rachel Denber (6/12): Thanks for covering this! I doubt the local Catholic newspaper of Namibia, where I live, would cover it, as L.G.B.T. issues are still taboo. But my fellow L.G.B.T. Catholics and I have begun a project to engage with church leaders in our country, where we may not have official persecution of gay and lesbian people, but parents still beat up their children for coming out. Contrary to popular belief in the church, our work is not funded by Westerners pushing an ideology of gender but from grants that we request. I want to join the faithful to pray for Russia and the whole world to finally accept and not just tolerate us.

Pancho Mulongeni

Online Comment

What Hope Is

Re “My Son’s Gift of Organ Donation Taught Me Death Is Not the Last Word,” by Eric Gregory (6/12): Eric Gregory and his wife, Grace, have taught me what hope is. I was their son Christopher’s high school principal, and in my 40 years of teaching in Catholic schools I have buried more young men and women than I could ever have imagined. Their families have all been a lesson to me. The Gregoryses have taken it to a new level. They have absorbed all of the goodness in the hearts of those who loved Chris that erupted after he died, and they have transformed other lives by spreading the message of the Gospel.

Barry Fitzpatrick

Online Comment

Books of My Childhood

Re “In a New Adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables*, Hope Is Replaced by Horror,” by Haley Stewart (6/12): These books were my childhood, and I loved the film adaptations, too, but to criticize the show like this seems overly harsh. I find it a stunning adaptation, perhaps because it is just that: an adaptation. This review does not do it justice, and I’m so glad I saw the show before reading this, else I might have missed the gem of a series.

Iseabail Shaw

Online Comment

Truth and Justice

Re “In ‘The Keepers,’ the Hopes of Vatican II Crumble Amid Sex Abuse and Murder,” by Nick Ripatrazone (6/12): I was relieved to see **America’s** coverage of “The Keepers,” the new Netflix true crime documentary. I did not realize what I was watching until I felt it was too late. I literally had stomach pain as I heard a woman share what had happened to her. Yet, I was also amazed by Jane Doe’s faith and that she remained a prayerful person. I am grateful to Mr. Ripatrazone for examining this documentary and shedding light on it.

May we all continue to pray for those hurt by members of the church and pray for continued guidance and strength to seek truth and justice wherever we serve.

Joyce Mennona

Queens, N.Y.

Healing and Vigilance

This is a profoundly beautiful review. It is respectful of the historical etiology of this case in such an analytical but always compassionate way. I pray that not only healing but understanding leads to positive forms of vigilance that can prevent such crimes.

Aminah Yaquin Carroll

Online Comment

Trump Withdraws From Paris. Now What?

President Trump's decision to pull the United States out of the Paris climate agreement was largely symbolic. The accords were nonbinding and American commitments could have been modified without rejecting the accords themselves. Much of what had been planned will continue anyway through market forces that continue to push the economy away from coal, or through decisions by states and cities to meet the goals of the Paris agreement at the local level.

But symbols matter, which is why, instead of modifying them, Mr. Trump "cancelled" the Paris accords, fulfilling a campaign promise. In his worldview, "making America great again" requires rejecting the international solidarity that Paris represents. And while no immediate damage is done to the climate as a result of a U.S. withdrawal, Mr. Trump has weakened the momentum behind this coalition—one that encouraged cooperation among nations in the fight against global warming.

The United States is already seeing a rise of public-private coalitions in support of the Paris agreement. Mayors, governors, university presidents and more than 100 businesses are submitting a plan to the United Nations, in which they pledge to meet the goals agreed to under the accords. The former mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, is spearheading this initiative. "We're going to do everything America would have done if it had stayed committed," Mr. Bloomberg vowed. Several U.S. states and cities have also committed themselves to the Paris agreement, including New York, Washington State and California. And on June 7, Hawaii be-

came the first state to pass legislation committing it to the Paris accords.

Civic engagement is not limited to voting. And while many might use Mr. Trump's actions as a reason to engage in apocalyptic rhetoric, we must instead devote our energies to maintaining the kind of practical solidarity that appears in the initiatives of Mr. Bloomberg, state and local governments, not public-private partnerships. As Pope Francis reminds us in "Laudato Si'," caring for the planet must begin with dialogue, one that "includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all."

U.S. Strategy in the Middle East Is Deeply Problematic

In his landmark speech last month in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, President Trump called on all "responsible nations" to "work together to end the humanitarian crisis in Syria, eradicate ISIS and restore stability to the region." While all three are desirable goals, the strategy for achieving them that Mr. Trump outlined in that same speech will achieve precisely the opposite. "Until the Iranian regime is willing to be a partner for peace," Mr. Trump said, "all nations of conscience must work together to isolate Iran." The president then called for a U.S.-backed pan-Arab coalition aligned against Iran, which, he says, is stoking "the fires of sectarian conflict and terror." While that is certainly true, the same could be said of several other states in the region, in-

cluding the one in which the president delivered his speech.

The president's proposal is deeply flawed. What is happening in the Middle East today is largely a regional power struggle between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The conflict in Syria is a proxy war, not between the United States and Russia, as some American commentators have suggested, but between the two major powers vying for regional hegemony. By taking sides in the struggle, the administration will only prolong the agony. What is required instead is a kind of *détente* between Saudi Arabia and Iran, one that would rob their proxies of their reasons to keep fighting. The timing may be right for such an effort. Jean-François Seznec, a Middle Eastern expert at the Atlantic Council, told Voice of America late last year: "Having low oil prices is making life much more difficult for Saudi Arabia and Iran.... If there were a major military conflagration, it would ruin both of them, and I think they realize that."

Does President Trump realize that? He says so, but his proposal says otherwise. President Obama recognized the need to reduce tensions between Tehran and Riyadh even if, ultimately, he lacked the courage of his convictions. But the current administration has conviction without understanding. Once again, in the never-ending Middle Eastern quagmire, the United States has taken careful aim and shot itself right in the foot.

No Catholics of the Left or Right

In the United States, toxic partisanship increasingly colors not only our choic-

es at the ballot box but where we shop, what news we read and even how we see the state of the economy. On Pentecost Sunday, Pope Francis reminded Catholics that such political loyalties have no place in the Catholic Church. When Christians “take sides and form parties,” the pope said, “[we] become Christians of the ‘right’ or the ‘left,’ before being on the side of Jesus.”

That is why you do not see the phrases “liberal Catholic” or “conservative Catholic” in the pages of **America**. This is not because Catholics must be apolitical or centrists or should retreat from the public square. But the church, as our editor in chief wrote in these pages, is not a *polis* but a communion (“Pursuing the Truth in Love,” 6/3/2013). And in this communion, we are not Democrats or Republicans, liberals or conservatives, citizens or foreigners. We are rather disciples of the one who is truth, the one for whom justice and love are the only standards of human action.

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What Pope Francis' apology would mean for Canada's indigenous people

As an indigenous person who works for the Catholic Church and lives on a reservation in Canada, I have pondered the value of an apology from Pope Francis to the former students of the residential schools for indigenous children, which operated from the late 19th century until only a few decades ago. Though my parents and older sister attended these boarding schools, they never told me about their experience. Friends had spoken to me about how strict teachers were at boarding schools in other parts of the world, but I was ignorant about the Indian residential schools in my own country—until I heard the horror stories.

For over a century, the federal government separated young native children from their families and placed them in schools where they were sexually abused, physically abused, spiritually abused and mentally abused, often by religious people. Instead of receiving love, the children were punished for being native. To be fair, not all teachers and administrators of these schools were cruel, and I know there were also good people who helped the students as much as they could. But it was to the advantage of the colonial government to use something like the Catholic rite of exorcism to take the “Indian” out of the child. In this way, Christian churches served as instruments of cultural genocide.

I have heard, read and watched many apologies to survivors of the Indian residential schools from church entities that were implicated in the system. These statements are rarely covered by the mainstream media. In 2008, when Prime Minister Ste-

phen Harper apologized on national television to former boarding school students for the harsh treatment they received, he seemed to be sincere. Afterward, there was talk about improving the lives of First Nations people, but this faded away along with the newscast, out of the minds of average Canadians who do not know the indigenous history of Canada and how colonization ruined so many native people's lives.

Would an apology from the pope be different? I believe it would be.

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada included among its 94 “calls to action” an apology from the Catholic Church—delivered by the pope in Canada. There is a logic behind this request. A sincere and heartfelt apology from the Holy Father to the First Nations people would carry a great deal of significance for the former residential school students who were hurt by members of the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations.

It may also be the spark needed to move Canadians to learn about indigenous history and to do the hard work that is needed to bring about reconciliation in Canada. The commission's final report calls on churches “to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential school students, their families, and communities were necessary.” An apology from Pope Francis could inspire Catholics and Christians to

listen to this call and to act on it.

I would accept this apology on behalf of my deceased parents and sister, who passed away before the conclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Though I will never know exactly what they experienced in the residential schools, I believe an acknowledgment by Pope Francis of wrongdoing by the church would give peace to their souls. I pray it would move all Canadians to work for the justice and reconciliation so sorely needed by the indigenous people of Canada.

Rennie Nahanee is an ordained deacon at St. Paul's Catholic Church in North Vancouver and a member of the Squamish Nation.

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PARIS AGREEMENT OR NOT, 'LAUDATO SI' INSPIRES CHANGES IN MONTEREY

By Jim McDermott

A world map tracks climate anomalies during the World Climate Change Conference at Le Bourge, France, in December 2015.

It has been two years since Pope Francis released his encyclical “Laudato Si’: On Care for Our Common Home,” and the response among U.S. Catholics, while generally supportive, has not been unambiguously so. In November over 50 percent of non-Hispanic white Catholics voted for Donald J. Trump, a climate change skeptic. On June 1 President Trump announced the United States would withdraw from the Paris climate agreement, an accord adopted in 2015 by a remarkable 195 of the world’s 197 countries.

America’s Vatican correspondent, Gerard O’Connell, reported that Archbishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, chancellor of the Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences, did not hide his disappointment at the president’s decision. Archbishop Sorondo criticized it as “a disaster for the whole world because the United States has such importance today and is a country that many follow.”

Mr. Trump may wish to walk back the climate change commitments begun by his predecessor, but in parts of the U.S. church the pope’s encyclical has sparked creativity and innovation with impacts not so easily set aside. One such experiment in California is the Diocese of Monterey’s advocacy of Community Choice Energy.

In 2002, after a multiyear crisis of rolling blackouts that led then-Gov. Gray Davis to declare a state of emergency, the California Legislature passed a bill allowing cities and counties to contract independently with energy providers of their own choosing at rates and with mixes of renewable and nonrenewable energy sources that they set themselves. Over the last 15 years, seven such Community Choice agencies have formed.

In the Diocese of Monterey, where some 200,000 Catholics live in four different counties, Bishop Richard J. Garcia instituted a diocese-wide climate campaign to consider concrete actions the diocese could take in response to “Laudato Si’.” He was inspired by the pope’s words and also by the realities of his diocese; five years of heat and drought had been brutal for farmers and farmworkers, most of whom are Mexican. (Recent months have seen three years’ worth of rainfall, causing floods, mudslides and the loss of homes and threatening the viability of the area’s drinking water.)

Deacon Warren Hoy, who oversees the diocese’s environmental portfolio, explained, “People [here] were feeling climate change in their day-to-day lives; the weather was affecting the way they live. So ‘Laudato Si’ was not some weird thing that the pope wanted to talk about; it was an actual, physical, right-here-in-my-world issue.”

In nearby Santa Cruz, the Romero Institute, an advocacy organization named after Archbishop Óscar Romero of El Salvador and dedicated to serving underprivileged

communities in California, had decided in light of “Laudato Si’” to pivot toward advocacy for Community Choice Energy. The nonprofit Monterey Bay Community Power had a proposal on the books. It represented the first multicounty effort in the state—one that could benefit 285,000 people both economically and environmentally by allowing them to direct more of their energy consumption to clean renewables.

In the diocese the institute found an unexpectedly eager partner. Bishop Garcia publicly endorsed the M.B.C.P. proposal and called on his priests and pastors to get their parishioners involved. He also allowed representatives of the Romero Institute to speak after Masses, an action that the institute’s deputy director, Daniel Paul Nelson, believes allowed them to reach some 30,000 of the 40,000 Catholics attending Masses in Monterey.

Almost 6,000 Catholics ended up signing individual letters of support for the M.B.C.P., which were then presented to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors by Mr. Hoy at a public hearing. The county went on to accept the proposal, as did almost every other local jurisdiction. Of the 270,000 ratepayers now in the M.B.C.P., Mr. Nelson estimated that 120,000 to 145,000 came on board as a result of the action of motivated Catholics.

A major takeaway for the diocese has been the value of giving people in the pews the opportunity to get involved. “When this came along, our parishioners said, ‘Yes, this is what I’ve been waiting for,’” Mr. Hoy said. “They had this desire to respond to Pope Francis; they saw that he was speaking the truth.”

Working with the Romero Institute has brought other benefits as well, including a relationship with the energy efficiency firm Mynt Systems. Building by building, Mynt has evaluated the energy use of the diocese and made recommendations that the diocese has been quick to implement. Parishes are also beginning to install solar panels. Bishop Garcia’s hope is that eventually every diocesan building will be solar-powered, a move that could save the diocese millions of dollars.

The biggest takeaway of all might be that Catholic dioceses can make a huge difference in their local communities on issues beyond the standard topics of religious freedom, sexual ethics or the sanctity of life.

Bishop Garcia suggested a slight recasting of that characterization. “This *is* a life issue,” he said. “It’s our life. We want to survive here.”

Jim McDermott, S.J., *Los Angeles correspondent.*
Twitter: @PopCulturPriest.

New cardinals express church universality

Pope Francis will create five new cardinals at a consistory in Rome scheduled for June 28. Only two are from Europe, and four are from nations that have never before had a cardinal. The pope has said, “Their belonging to different parts of the world shows the Catholicity of the church across all the earth.” This will be the fourth consistory since the pope was elected in March 2013. His nomina-

tions reaffirm his wish for universality, seeking church leaders from the so-called peripheries where the church is growing and diminishing the dominance of Europe in the College of Cardinals. With these latest nominations, Pope Francis will have created 49 of the 121 cardinals who may be called upon to elect the next pope.



Cardinal-designate Juan José Omella, 71, of Barcelona, Spain, believes the church must continue to be “a path of hope and brotherhood,” especially for those

living on the margins of society. The church must work to “unite institutions for the common good, so that no one feels cast aside—as the pope says—and that we care for the poorest,” he told Vatican Radio. “I believe that it is a job that we all must do at all levels.”



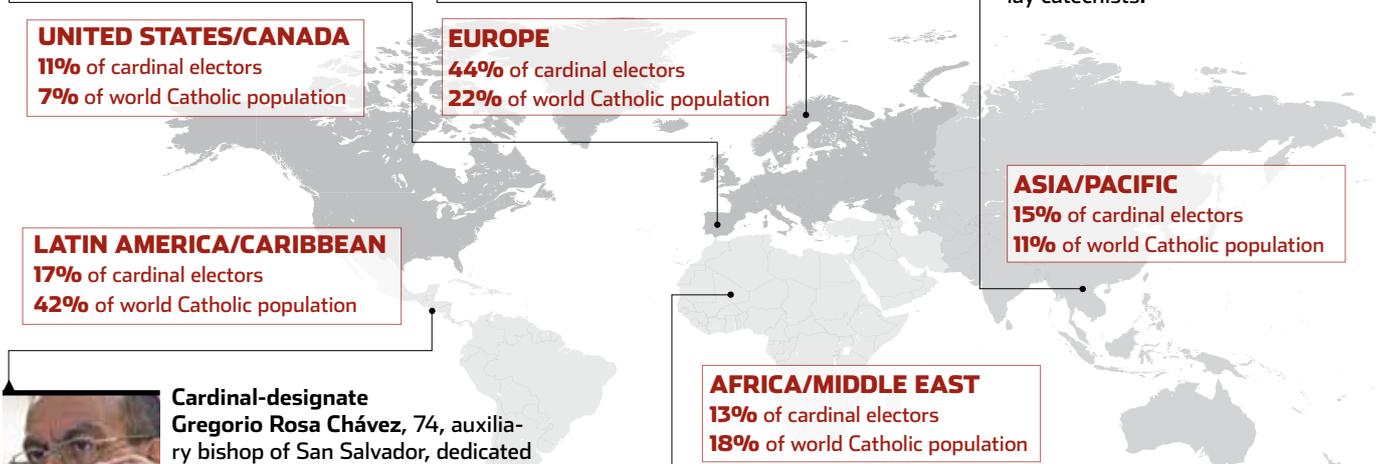
Cardinal-designate Anders Arborelius, 67, of Stockholm, is Sweden’s only Catholic bishop and became the first Swede to be named a bishop in more than 400 years when he was chosen by St. John Paul II in 1998 to head the country’s lone diocese. Now

Pope Francis will make him the first cardinal in Sweden’s history. The Catholic Church in Sweden has had an important role in helping “integrate many refugees, and we know that this is a very important issue for the pope, and we also have a very broad ecumenical dialogue with all the Christian churches,” the cardinal-designate told Vatican Radio on May 22.



Cardinal-designate Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhaneh, 73, will become the first cardinal from Laos. He is an ethnic Khmu, a hill tribe from northern Laos and southern China. He

has had a keen interest in environmental issues, opposing deforestation by well-connected companies that pushed villagers from their land. In a country with only about 45,000 Catholics, Cardinal-designate Ling has developed a method of seminary education based on instruction from lay catechists.



Cardinal-designate Gregorio Rosa Chávez, 74, auxiliary bishop of San Salvador, dedicated his appointment as El Salvador’s first cardinal to his longtime friend and mentor, Blessed Óscar Romero. “I believe that he would have been called for this,” the cardinal-designate told local media, “but he

will have to receive it in heaven due to his martyrdom.” On May 18, a Salvadoran judge reopened the investigation into the 1980 killing. In one of the most violent countries in the world, largely because of gang violence, Cardinal-designate Rosa Chávez has focused his work on the poor and disenfranchised.



Cardinal-designate Jean Zerbo, 74, of Bamako, Mali, will be the first from that nation in western Africa. He will use his position to ease the multiple crises facing sub-Saharan regions, an aide said. The celebration of his appointment was marred on May 31 by reports in French media linking the cardinal-designate to the creation of secret bank accounts in Switzerland. Claims that Mali church leaders had “diverted funds from the Catholic faithful” were rejected by the Malian bishops’ conference on June 1, which insisted that the money was controlled by an interdiocesan commission and was used “with total transparency.”

Sources: Membership of College of Cardinals from Vatican website; only cardinals eligible to elect a pope (i.e., those under age 80) are counted in this infographic. Data on Catholic population (2015) from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate. Photo credits: Cardinal-designate Juan José Omella (CNS photo/Marta Perez, EPA), Cardinal-designate Anders Arborelius (CNS photo/Johan Nilsson, TT News Agency via Reuters), Cardinal-designate Louis-Marie Ling Mangkhaneh (CNS photo/UCAN handout via EPA), Cardinal-designate Gregorio Rosa Chávez, (CNS photo/Octavio Duran), Cardinal-designate Jean Zerbo of Bamako (CNS photo/Nicolas Remene, EPA).

Editor’s Note: In the May 29 issue, a bar chart on views toward religious exemption laws and same-sex marriage had correct data, but some of the bars had incorrect lengths. The chart has been corrected on americamagazine.org.

In Canada, waiting for an apology from Pope Francis

Former Northwest Territories premier Stephen Kakfwi, a residential school survivor, holds his granddaughter Sadeya Kakfwi-Scott at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Ottawa in June 2015.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada says that during his meeting with Pope Francis on May 29 he urged the pope to formally apologize for the Catholic Church's role in the mistreatment of Canada's indigenous communities. Mr. Trudeau's request comes after a variety of attempts on the part of Catholics in Canada and the Vatican to address the legacy of residential schools, where indigenous children who had been removed from their communities were subjected to heavy-handed assimilation efforts and, in many cases, sexual, physical and emotional abuse. While the schools were financed by the government, most were administered by churches.

Romeo Saganash, a Cree member of Canada's Parliament who as a child spent 10 years in a residential school in Quebec, criticized Mr. Trudeau's request, telling the CBC, "What the prime minister needs to do is act on the things he needs to act on here in Canada rather than begging the pope to apologize." Indigenous groups have criticized Mr. Trudeau for being slow to live up to campaign commitments to address problems in their communities, like high suicide rates and toxic water.

Several religious communities and Catholic organizations, including the Jesuits, have issued their own apologies and statements of reconciliation. While the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has expressed solidarity with indigenous people in Canada, it has not issued a direct apology.

On its website, the conference says each "diocese and religious community is legally responsible for its own actions. The Catholic Church as a whole was not associated with the Residential Schools, nor was the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops."

"Even though there have been other statements and meetings, [a papal] apology here, in Canada, to survivors of residential schools would mean a great deal," said John

Meehan, S.J., president of Campion College in Regina, an institution that has tried to cultivate a relationship with indigenous peoples. Given the spirit of dialogue encouraged by Pope Francis, Father Meehan says, it would be particularly meaningful "for the pope to come and embody that spirit on Canadian soil." A possible papal visit to Canada as early as 2018 or 2019 was discussed during a recent *ad limina* visit to the Vatican by bishops of western Canada.

Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which reviewed the treatment of Canada's indigenous people, ended a five-year mandate in 2015 with a 94-point document titled "Calls to Action." Because Catholic orders ran many of the schools—which separated indigenous children from their families and were designed to strip them of their languages and cultural traditions—many of the recommendations are addressed specifically to the church.

Among them is a call for an apology from the pope to be delivered in Canada, noting an apology made by Pope Benedict XVI in 2010 to Irish victims of abuse as an example. The commission suggested the apology should be made within a year of the release of "Calls to Action."

That deadline having passed, indigenous, ecclesial and political leaders are still looking for a formal apology in Canada. But there have already been some papal statements approximating the apology sought by the commission.

In a private meeting with an indigenous delegation from Canada in 2009 at the Vatican, Pope Benedict XVI expressed "sorrow" for the abuse that occurred in the residential schools but did not offer a formal apology. And Pope Francis, during a visit to Bolivia in the summer of 2015, offered an apology and asked forgiveness for the more general actions of the Catholic Church against indigenous peoples during the European colonization of the Americas.

Dean Dettloff, *Toronto correspondent*. *Twitter: @DeanDettloff*.

Illinois budget stalemate puts state's vulnerable at risk—for third year straight

For more than 60 years, The Baby Fold in Normal, Ill., has provided residential care for children and teens with severe emotional problems due to abuse and neglect. But on June 30, The Baby Fold's residential treatment center will close its doors—a casualty of Illinois's three-year-long budget impasse. Because of the state's current budget crisis, the child care provider has used \$1.6 million from its cash reserves over the past two years to keep the center open.

"There comes a point where we can't support a program any longer," Baby Fold's vice president for development, Aimee Beam, said.

The Illinois General Assembly ended its regular session on May 31 without passing a budget for the third year in a row. The length of the stalemate is unprecedented—the state's fiscal policy remains hostage to a Democratic legislature that refuses to make major budget cuts and a Republican governor who will not agree to raising taxes.

Fallout from the impasse has affected mainly the most vulnerable in Illinois: children, the poor, the elderly and the disabled. The Unit 5 School District in central Illinois reports that it has less than 60 days' worth of operating funds on hand. The Chicago Public Schools system says it will need to borrow \$389 million to keep operating through the rest of 2017.

In all, about a million people across the state, from homebound senior citizens to domestic abuse victims, have been affected by Illinois's failure to pay for services that in many cases the state itself mandates.

To date, the governor and legislators have reacted to the crisis mainly by trading barbs and point-

ing fingers. Gov. Bruce Rauner has called Democratic proposals to raise taxes a "phony" and "sham" effort to balance the budget. He wants to cut spending and taxes, restructure the state's pension system and roll back business regulations to spur economic growth.

Illinois's \$6 billion budget deficit and \$130 billion in unfunded pension liabilities compelled Standard & Poor's to downgrade the state's credit rating to one notch above "junk" status. It means taxpayers will pay more whenever the state borrows money—which it does often.

Several thousand protesters marched last month from Chicago to Springfield, a distance of 200 miles, to draw attention to the urgency of the crisis. Social service representatives, meanwhile, sit outside legislators' offices hoping for a chance to plead their case.

Tom Cullen, a college professor, was one of the protesters who marched to Springfield. His faith-based group, Illinois People's Action, argues that neither Democratic nor Republican leaders are addressing two of the state's most pressing issues: the fact that about two-thirds of Illinois corporations pay no taxes and the need to replace the state's current flat tax of 3.75 percent with a progressive income tax.

"It is morally wrong to balance the budget on the backs of the working class and the poor," Mr. Cullen said.

"At the heart of the debate on the Illinois budget is the clear division between liberal and conservative philosophies on the role of government. How much should government provide and to whom—questions that politicians on both sides of the aisle have long grappled with,"

said Meghan Leonard, a politics and government professor at Illinois State University.

That may be the heart of the debate, but what seems to be preventing the process from going forward is an unwillingness to compromise on either side. It is what Ms. Leonard calls "political tribalism."

"Seemingly, what is difficult or maybe even impossible to sell is that working with the other side can be helpful," she said, "that compromise is good."

Judith Valente, *Chicago correspondent.*
Twitter: @JudithValente.



Activists fighting social service cuts protest outside the governor's office in Springfield, Ill., on May 30.

A vaccine is put to emergency use to combat Ebola in Congo

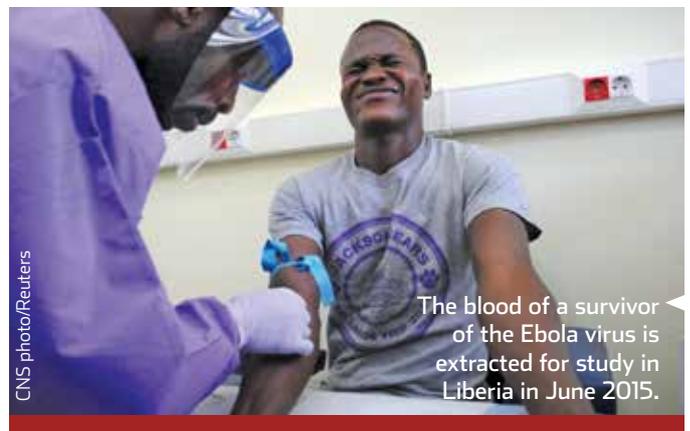
An Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo near the border with the Central African Republic is the eighth in the D.R.C. since 1976. “We cannot underestimate the logistical and practical challenges associated with this response in a very remote, insecure part of the country,” said Dr. Peter Salama, executive director of World Health Organization’s health emergencies program. “We’ve also learned never, ever to underestimate the Ebola virus.”

In this case at least there is some new reason to hope for the outbreak’s victims. The D.R.C.’s Ministry of Health has approved the use of an experimental anti-Ebola vaccine, rVSV-ZEBOV—a radical step, but one the World Health Organization approves. Global health ethics strongly oppose the use of any medication or treatment that has not been thoroughly tested, and there is a painful history of unethical clinical trials in developing nations. In this case, however, the vaccine has been approved—or at least condoned—given the urgency of the situation.

There is a historical precedent for accepting such risk. In 2013-15 a major Ebola outbreak occurred in West Africa. Global health experts converged on the region, working in countries where public health services were very weak. In an impossible situation, it was decided to do what is normally unthinkable: administer experimental treatments on Ebola patients. By December 2016, a study based on the emergency use of rVSV-ZEBOV suggested that it was 70 to 100 percent effective.

If it is applied successfully now in the Congo (and in continuing outbreaks in Central and West Africa), its approval may be speeded up. Medical ethicists, however, should still insist that this case is not the exception that justifies changing the rules on clinical trials.

Anthony Egan, S.J., *Johannesburg correspondent.*



CNS photo/Reuters

The blood of a survivor of the Ebola virus is extracted for study in Liberia in June 2015.

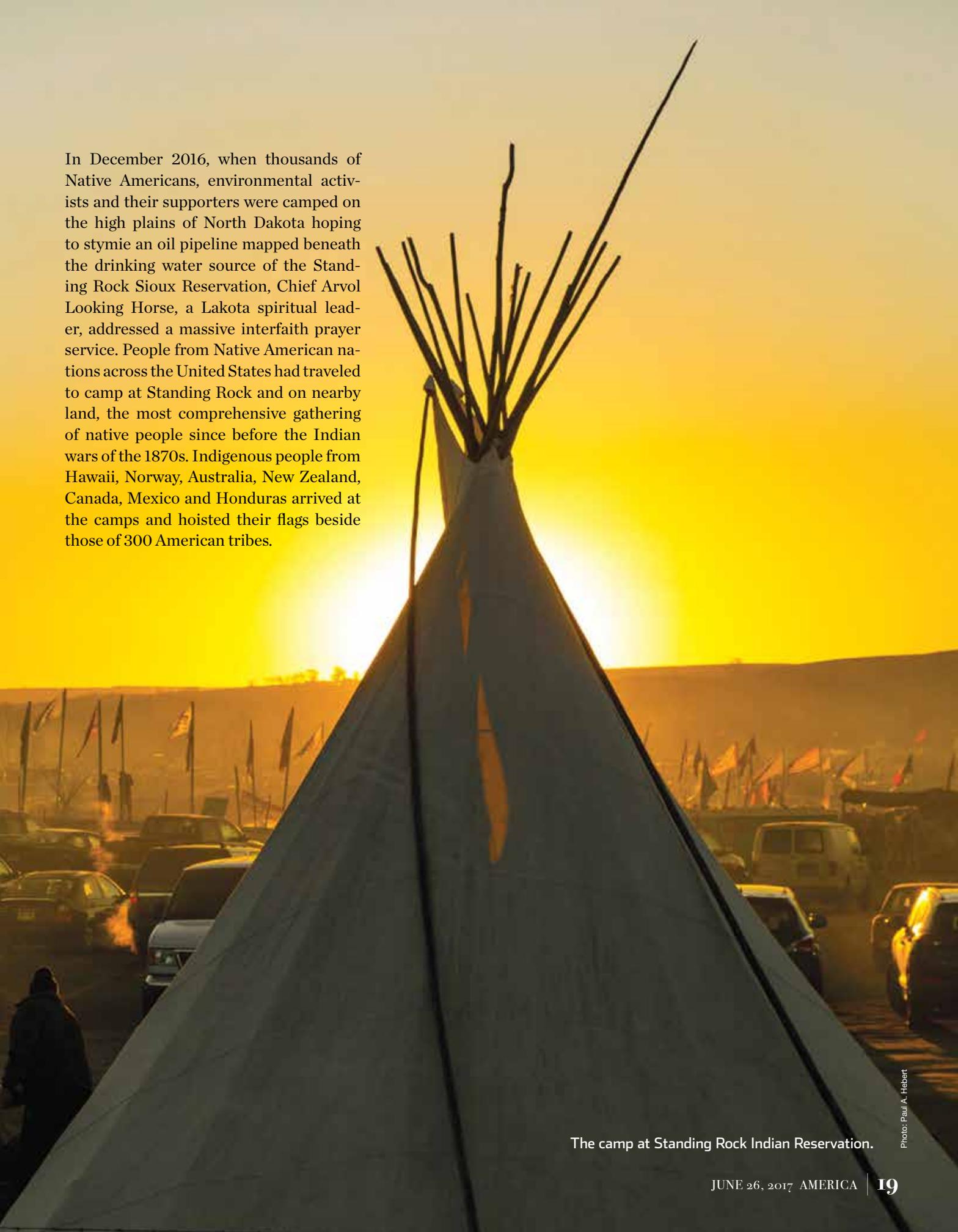
THE SPIRITUALITY OF STANDING ROCK

*Activists see a moral imperative
for protecting our water.*

By Eileen Markey

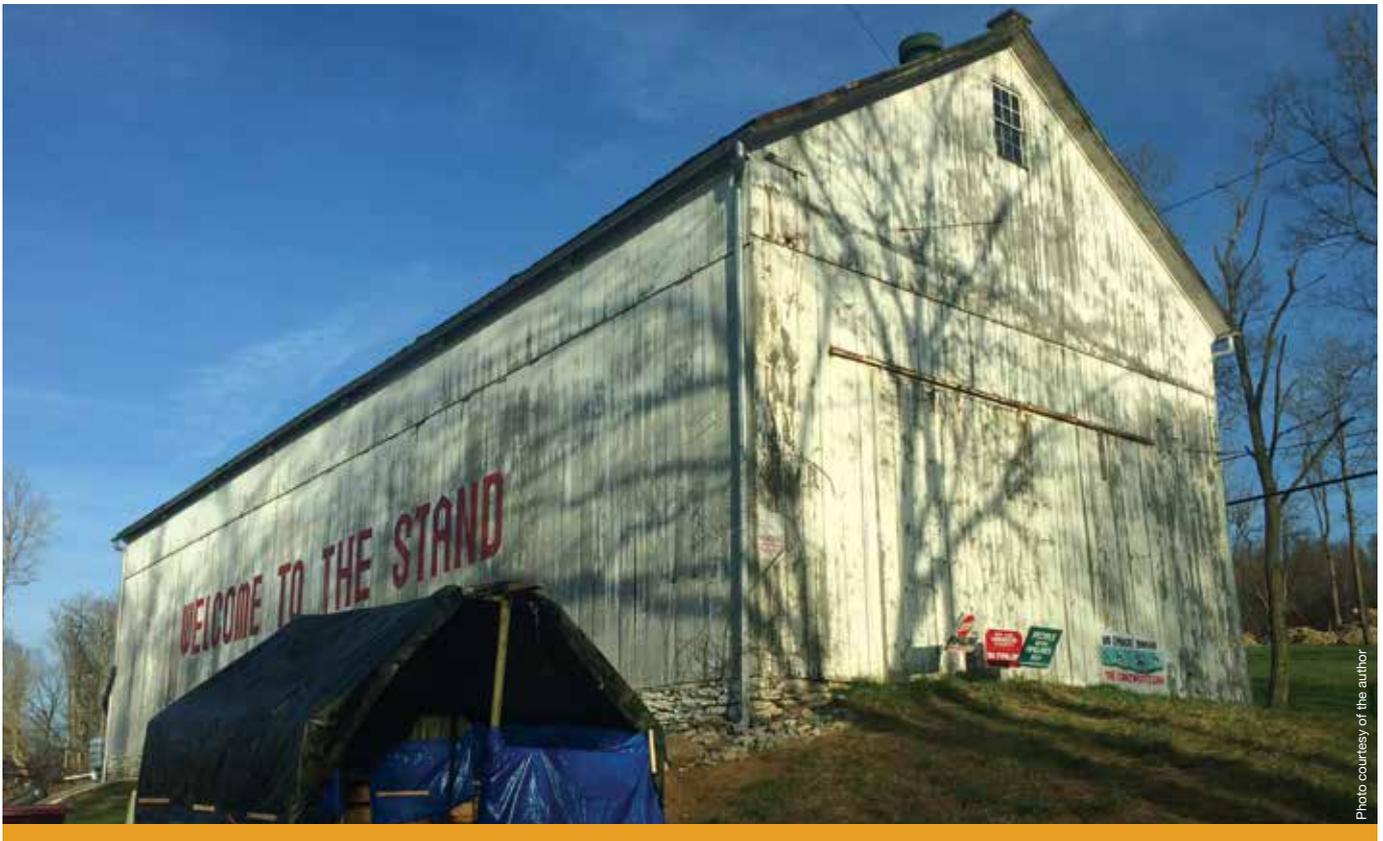


In December 2016, when thousands of Native Americans, environmental activists and their supporters were camped on the high plains of North Dakota hoping to stymie an oil pipeline mapped beneath the drinking water source of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, Chief Arvol Looking Horse, a Lakota spiritual leader, addressed a massive interfaith prayer service. People from Native American nations across the United States had traveled to camp at Standing Rock and on nearby land, the most comprehensive gathering of native people since before the Indian wars of the 1870s. Indigenous people from Hawaii, Norway, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Mexico and Honduras arrived at the camps and hoisted their flags beside those of 300 American tribes.



The camp at Standing Rock Indian Reservation.

Photo: Paul A. Hebert



Brayton Shanley, a Catholic peace and environmental activist who lives in an intentional community in rural Massachusetts, has a shock of white hair and the robust energy of someone who spends a great deal of time outdoors. At the end of November, he drove to North Dakota in a truck filled with straw bales, offered as insulation on the windswept, winter prairie. Joe Fortier, S.J., a former entomology professor at St. Louis University, who for the past 15 years has lived and ministered on the Colville Indian Reservation in Washington State, arrived the day before, changing out of his usual clothes and into a clerical collar, so people would know a Catholic priest was supporting the protest. Father Fortier, a self-effacing man whose gentleness belies the depth of his convictions, felt compelled to align himself with the people gathered at Standing Rock.

The camps had become a place to take a stand for the right to clean water and against its privatization, contamination and degradation. But they were also a site of pilgrimage, a place of profound prayer where Lakota women walked to the Cannonball River each morning to enact a water ceremony and where chants in the Lakota language, called to the rhythm of round drums, rose from the camp at dawn and Lakota elders tended a sacred fire all day and night. "Water is life," they said. "Defend the sacred."

On this biting cold December day, when fingers went

numb if exposed to the air for more than a few minutes, more than 1,000 people gathered for a three-hour prayer service in which a rabbi, a Buddhist monk, various Protestant clergy and Father Fortier each offered prayers before the fire that Lakota elders had been tending throughout the protest. They spoke of their faiths' common commitment to caring for the earth and their common belief in the sacredness of the physical world. Looking Horse spoke of the threat to clean water at Standing Rock as only one of millions of attacks on the integrity of the earth's elements. Fighting back would take a particular kind of power, he said. "We will be victorious through tireless, prayer-filled and fearless nonviolent struggle. Standing Rock is everywhere."

A few months into the Trump administration, oil is flowing through the pipeline and the historic encampment has been dispersed. The oil industry won. But Looking Horse may yet have been correct. The explicitly religious and imagination-grabbing protest at Standing Rock has inspired similar encampments and other forms of protest in defense of clean water across the country and beyond. From Pennsylvania to Texas, Florida to New Jersey and in South Dakota, Ohio, Massachusetts and Canada, newly emboldened "water protectors" have taken to the land in hopes of disrupting oil and natural gas pipelines they consider dangerous. For many of these protectors, defending

◀ Lancaster Against Pipelines, an association of local citizens, launched the Lancaster Stand to protest a proposed natural gas pipeline through a field in Conestoga, Pa.

access to clean water is a project rich in religious and spiritual meaning. They draw inspiration from “Laudato Si” as well as indigenous religious practice.

The tribal leadership of the Lakota Sioux is pursuing lawsuits against Energy Transfer Partners, the Texas-based company behind the Dakota Access pipeline. Some of the Lakota and other indigenous people who were part of the Standing Rock protests have reconvened at a prayer camp on the Cheyenne River Reservation downriver in South Dakota.

A COORDINATED CAMPAIGN

On May 9, the Treaty Alliance Against Tar Sands Expansion, a coalition of 121 indigenous groups from the United States and Canada, launched a coordinated divestment campaign against the banks funding the Dakota Access pipeline and crude oil pipelines snaking from Canada to Mexico. Religious congregations organized under the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility are engaged in shareholder activism, urging major banks to withdraw from financing the Dakota Access pipeline and demanding that corporations from Coca-Cola to Campbell Soup adopt specific policies respecting water and the rights of local communities to consultation.

The Sisters of Charity of Halifax presented a shareholder resolution at the May 11 general shareholder meeting of Enbridge, an energy transportation company with a 27.5 percent share in the Dakota Access pipeline. The resolution called for the company to address social and environmental risks in its acquisition deals, particularly those involving indigenous people. The resolution was rejected by shareholders, but the company committed to broader disclosure in the sustainability report it produces each year. The Jesuit Committee on Investment Responsibility has been working with large agribusiness companies that trade on the New York Stock Exchange to persuade them to adopt sustainable water management practices and join the United Nations’ CEO Water Mandate, an initiative to engage businesses in water stewardship and sustainable development goals.

Cities, counties, public employee pension funds and individuals have withdrawn \$5 billion from companies invested in the Dakota Access pipeline in an echo of the divestment movement against South African apartheid in the 1980s. Major investment banks in Norway, the Netherlands and France have sold their shares of loans to Energy

Transfer Partners. The Jesuits, women religious, Catholic Workers and others have joined or deepened their involvement in water protection efforts. They draw links between the environmental battles of indigenous people in the United States and those elsewhere—notably in Honduras and in the Amazon region, where several environmentalists have been killed by corporate security forces and assassins linked to the national military forces.

WE ARE HERE

In Conestoga, Pa., a farm field along the route of a natural gas pipeline has been transformed into a quiet protest site. On weekends, area residents gather to sing, pray and make art. They have been pushing for three years for their municipal governments to ban the proposed pipeline, citing instances of natural gas explosions and tainted drinking water. They attempted legal maneuvers to escape eminent domain to no avail, explained Mark Clatterbuck, a Conestoga resident and professor of religion at Montclair State University. He and his wife, Melinda, a Mennonite pastor, have been central actors in the pipeline opposition. Out of options, Lancaster Against Pipelines, an association of local citizens, in February launched the Lancaster Stand in this placid corner of the county famous for its gently undulating farmland and its Amish community. “If we’re not careful we could lose the countryside and then what would we have? That’s what’s at risk,” said Tim Spiese, the Lancaster Against Pipelines board president, as he stood in the unplanted corn field before a large whitewashed barn with the words “Welcome to the Stand” painted in block letters on its side.

On a Saturday in early April, two dozen people, most in their 50s and 60s, are gathered inside a large army tent. Seated on low benches made from cement blocks and long 2-by-8 boards, they are shaking painted maracas and beating rhythm sticks as two women with guitars lead the group: “We are here standing strong in a ripe old place/ Solid as a tree/ silent as a rock/ We are here in a ripe old place.” The back wall of the tent is rolled up, open to the breeze, framing the Lancaster County hills in spring: budding trees and green fields. More than 300 people have completed training in nonviolent protest at the camp. Committees meet to plan civil disobedience, to sort food donations and devise a rainwater collection system.

In May, Regina Braveheart, a Lakota woman who survived the incident at Wounded Knee in 1973 and was part of the prayer at Standing Rock, visited the Lancaster Stand

to urge the activists on and share stories. For Kathleen Meade, a case manager in a brain trauma rehabilitation center, who, like many of her neighbors, relies on well water, participating in the Lancaster Stand has meant forming deep friendships and standing up for what she values. “We just so pride ourselves on the land here. It’s horse people and dairy farmers, outdoors people and Amish. What’s unique is that Lancaster County is Republican, and this unites a lot of us, the idea that the government can’t just come and take your land,” she said as she stood in the afternoon sun in the breezy field, gazing across the round hills. “It’s just amazing how the existing structure is set up for the corporations, not the people.... We realize that we’re up a creek and if we don’t do something soon, we’re out of luck.”

Mr. Clatterbuck and other Lancaster people visited the camps at Standing Rock in the fall and were struck by the prayerful attitude, the deeply spiritual stance of the Lakota leaders. They noticed how it affected other activists. “The language that’s used is the language of the sacred,” said Mr. Clatterbuck, who edited a volume on Native American and Christian interaction this year called *Crow Jesus: Personal Stories of Native Religious Belonging*, published by the University of Oklahoma Press. “All of these kinds of religious streams are feeding in together. The way religious language is fueling the resistance right now, religion becomes relevant again.”

So many people in conservative and bucolic Lancaster County, hardly a hotbed of protest, have been drawn to the Stand because it represents something deeper than the defense of property values or landowner rights (important as those might be), Mr. Clatterbuck said. Instead, they see a moral imperative to protect the place they call home, to care for the their corner of creation. Pope Francis taught the same embrace of the integrity of creation in “Laudato Si’,” writing that access to clean drinking water is a fundamental human right and that humans need to live in concert with the earth.

SAVING A FRAGILE SYSTEM

Cherri Foytlin is not Catholic, but she takes Pope Francis’ words to heart. “I couldn’t understand how people can pray to God, praising his creation, and then not do everything they can to care for it. It’s like saying Picasso is a great artist and then ripping up his paintings,” she said. The oil that moves through the Dakota Access pipeline will eventually finish its journey in Louisiana, where Ms. Foytlin lives. A

former newspaper writer, she has been working for environmental justice in the Louisiana wetlands since BP’s Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010. While reporting on the spill, she saw that many bayou crawfishermen, who have made their living in the swamps of Louisiana since their ancestors were expelled from French Acadia, had their livelihoods destroyed, and she saw how the oil company lied about and covered up the extent of the damage. The miasmic grandeur of the sleepy bayou, with its ancient cypress trees, which began growing when Christ walked beside the Jordan, and its drooping moss, in whose humid tangle migrating birds seek rest, were under grave threat, she realized.

“These systems are quite fragile, really. I think how quickly we can lose that,” she said. Pipelines have crisscrossed the bayou country for a generation, ferrying oil and natural gas to refineries on the coast, a significant component of Louisiana’s economy. But Ms. Foytlin believes this latest one, the Bayou Bridge Pipeline, is too dangerous. And it anticipates only 12 permanent jobs. The proposed pipeline channels through bayous already damaged by previous infrastructure, which has chewed away at the swampland and degraded its ability to absorb storms. The loss of Louisiana wetlands was one of the reasons Hurricane Katrina and more recent flooding elsewhere in the state have been so devastating. The company constructing the Bayou Bridge Pipeline was fined in early May by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for spilling several million gallons of thick chemical-laced mud into Ohio wetlands during drilling for a separate pipeline there. The slurry, which is used to make underground space for laying pipes, suffocated plants and aquatic life in the wetland that helps filter water for nearby farmland. Ohio’s environmental protection agency expects it will take years to restore the wetland.

With Bold Louisiana, a community organizing group she directs, and a network of environmental, homeowner, crawfishermen and indigenous groups, Ms. Foytlin is trying to inform Louisianans of the threat to their water and their wetlands. The groups are leafleting at the New Orleans Jazzfest and protesting at the state capital. They are sending postcards to their elected officials and raising money through bake sales. Ms. Foytlin, who is a member of the Cherokee Nation and originally from Oklahoma, visited Standing Rock to show her support and be part of the historic gathering of indigenous people. More recently she traveled to the Two Rivers camp near Marfa, Tex., where protesters were trying to stop a pipeline that is to flow under the Rio Grande, carrying U.S. natural gas for export. That



Photo courtesy of the author

In Conestoga, Pa., area residents gather to sing, pray and make art as a form of protest against their municipal government's proposed natural gas pipeline, citing instances of natural gas explosions and tainted drinking water.

Indian School. At the height of the protests, the girls' basketball team at Red Cloud wore "Water Is Life" slogans on their jerseys. Lakota people from Pine Ridge joined the encampment and some took central roles in promoting the divestment campaign. "What we need to continue to nurture is: How are we going to care for our common home, Mother Earth? I'm not sure we can close our eyes to what we are doing on a daily basis," Father Klink said. A consumerist, acquisitive culture is ultimately driving the environmental crisis, he believes. "If we don't check that machine, that sense that what we have is never enough, that becomes the motor of destruction of our common home."

During the Standing Rock encampment, the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States issued a statement in support of the Lakota people's right to sovereignty and clean water. Tashina Rama, who is executive director of development at the Red Cloud Indian School and daughter of Dennis Banks, co-founder of the American Indian Movement, testified on the Dakota Access pipeline threats to water at a February briefing for members of Congress organized by the Jesuit Conference. Rama walked to a microphone in the briefing room and placed a few printed pages on the podium, then addressed the crowd in the Lakota language, identifying herself by way of her lineage and her ancestors. She named her parents, her grandmothers, her grandfathers. Switching to English, she spoke of the central need for access to clean water, invoking the sentiment found in "Laudato Si" that indigenous people must be consulted on projects that affect them, and she mourned the destruction of the Standing Rock camps, including one she stayed in with the female members of her family.

Ms. Rama underscored the value of water by invoking the Sun Dance, a Lakota ceremony that spans four days in June, when select members of the community dance all day in the blazing Badlands of South Dakota. "There is little relief with no clouds or breeze. Our lips are cracked and our mouths dry because whatever water we had in our bodies was gone by the second day of dancing," she told the congressional staff. "Our ancestors prayed in this way and they passed it down to us; we are taught that through this sacrifice the Great Spirit will hear our prayers. For four sacred days we give ourselves to the Sun. Our bodies are dying and we know that with that first drink of water when the Sun Dance is over, that water is life. I was raised to pray in this way, and I find it to be a humbling way to connect with the Great Spirit, our Creator God and to give of myself

camp was broken up in April and that arm of the pipeline, another Energy Transfer Partners project, was completed.

"I wanted to let them know that what they were doing was important," Ms. Foytlin said, adding that the power of the Standing Rock prayer camps continues to reverberate. "People felt activated and connected spiritually in the water and the land," she said. "Standing Rock continues. People are eager to put it to bed, but it's not over. These little people are still together and that has power." An amalgam of groups, Ms. Foytlin's among them, plans to launch a protest camp deep in the bayous in late June, when they expect the state to give Energy Transfer Partners final approval permits for the pipeline. On rafts built from repurposed plastic bottles and water barrels, with art and music and a deep love for their unique southern Louisiana waterways, they'll make a watery stand. The camp is called L'eau Est La Vie, or Water Is Life.

OUR COMMON HOME

On the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, people are still digesting the experience of Standing Rock—and carrying on the work, said Peter Klink, S.J., vice president for mission and identity and former president of the Red Cloud



Lakota women walked to the Cannonball River each morning to enact a water ceremony on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation.

so my children and my family can be healthy. We owe it to ourselves and our descendants to protect what remaining lands we have, the lands where our ancestors roamed and the sacred sites where they are buried so they can have these ceremonies to pass on to their children and so on.”

FORMING RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS

The Jesuits of Canada and the United States see a link between protecting water and the defense of human and cultural rights. “We see common environmental and human rights challenges from extractive industries facing indigenous people around the world,” explained Cecilia Calvo, the senior adviser on environmental justice to the Jesuit Conference. “And a common thread really is water.” Of particular concern is what Ms. Calvo terms the criminalization of environmental and human rights activists who stand up for their rights. In Honduras, 123 environmental activists, most of whom protested against energy or mining companies, have been killed since a U.S.-supported coup in 2009, according to Global Witness. Similarly, environmental activists in the Amazon region face death threats. The worldwide association of Jesuits has taken on the defense of the Amazon region as a congregation-wide priority, calling it the lungs of the planet.

On March 17, Zebelio Kayap Jempekit, a member of the Awajun Wampi indigenous people of Peru, walked into the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in Washington, D.C., carrying with him the pleas and alarm of thousands of Amazonian people. Part of a team representing a coalition of indigenous and church groups across nine

Amazon countries, called Red Eclesial Panamazonia, Mr. Jempekit urged the commission to take action to preserve the rights of indigenous people to protect their ancestral lands and water. The delegation, which included Archbishop Pedro Ricardo Jimeno, S.J., of Huancayo, Peru, was hosted by the Jesuits, the Sisters of Mercy, Maryknoll and other U.S. Catholic groups, and visited Georgetown University and Catholic University. Mr. Jempekit, speaking in Spanish and wearing a traditional headband of deep red and brilliant yellow flowers, told the commission that oil extraction had destroyed the drinking water and fishing in his home and spoke of a mining project that made water undrinkable and killed the fish in the river his people relied on. He has received death threats because of his work.

“We see that not only in our own backyard are people facing environmental degradation and struggling for access to clean water, but around the world this is multiplied,” said Ms. Calvo, who in early May attended the Pan-Amazonian Social Forum in Peru, which brought together people working on water and other environmental and social issues across the region. The threats to water “are a call to examine our own economy, our lifestyle and what path do we want to be on,” Ms. Calvo said. Those issues animate the Jesuit Conference’s work in the United States as well. In the past few months, they have signed on to letters urging the Trump administration not to weaken elements of the Clean Water Act that regulate surface mining rules, to commit to the Paris climate agreement and to continue the Green Climate Fund, which helps the developing countries most affected by climate change. “We recognize that water is a fundamental component of all



life and that stewardship of water is part of our call to care for God's creation," they wrote in a letter opposing an executive order that directed the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to withdraw from an aspect of the Clean Water Act which protects waterways and fish habitats.

Religious work on water moves in many streams, from the Religious Organizations Along the River, a coalition of groups in New York's Hudson Valley advocating against fracking and for Hudson River cleanup, to WaterSpirit, a retreat center on a bluff overlooking the Atlantic run by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace on the New Jersey shore. There, laypeople, Catholic and not, visit to deepen their connection to the most basic of elements, the water that flows through their bodies, washes the shore, bathes them in baptism and made possible the emergence of their earliest single-celled ancestors. WaterSpirit endeavors to link the spiritual aspect of water with the practical, corporeal concerns of caring for creation. The center has led group study workshops on "Laudato Si" and brought high school students to the shore to pray and catalog the plastic debris they find on the beach. The message is a mystical one, with its feet planted in the sand: You are part of this water of life.

In Pennsylvania, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, an order of sisters, have for several years been resisting the efforts of Williams Transco, a natural gas company that plans to drill through their land in West Hempfield Township in Lancaster County. In February, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission gave the company final approval to build on private land, including that of the Adorers. The sisters "vehemently denounce" the decision,

said Sister Janet McCann, the U.S. regional councilor for the order. The pipeline would be a violation of the congregation's land ethic, explained Sister Sara Dwyer, peace and justice coordinator for the community. The land ethic, a statement of the sisters' theological and ecological beliefs adopted several years ago after contemplation of the religious dimensions of environmental crisis, commits them to "respect the Earth as a sanctuary where all life is protected" and to "establish justice and right relationships so all creation might thrive," explained Sister Dwyer. In the land ethic statement, the sisters vow to "seek collaborators to help implement land use policies and practices that are in harmony with our bioregions and ecosystems."

It is in fealty to that statement that the Adorers have decided to put their prayers where their feet stand. Their neighbors at Lancaster Against Pipelines, the people praying and building community in Conestoga, asked to erect an open-air chapel on the Adorers' field that the gas company covets. It will serve as a place of prayer for people of any faith, a physical mark linking spiritual and physical resistance to industry that threatens water and earth. The chapel will be dedicated at a ceremony on July 9, attended by leadership of the Adorers, Lancaster Against Pipelines and supporters. It may not stand for long—the laws favor the energy company's right to take what land it wants—but for Sister Dwyer and others, "tireless, prayer-filled and fearless nonviolent struggle" is worth standing for.

Eileen Markey is an independent reporter and the author of *A Radical Faith: The Assassination of Sr. Maura* (Nation Books). She lives in the Bronx.

There was a time when I felt warmly toward the Frick Collection. I was a teenager when I first visited the mansion-turned-art-museum on New York's Upper East Side. Around every corner was a painting that I had seen before in school or books—Hans Holbein the Younger's 16th-century portraits of Thomas More and Thomas Cromwell, El Greco's St. Jerome, the Vermeers. I did not know much about the paintings, or what they had to do with each other, except that they were all so important. And there they were, all together in this benefactor's home, arranged (except for the gift shop and ticket desk) as if he still lived there.

What a guy.

Lords of Charity

By Nathan Schneider

*Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg
and the case against
philanthropy as we know it*





Last time I visited, I experienced the place quite differently. I had spent some of the intervening years reporting on social movements for a living, witnessing the violence and other forms of repression frequently wielded against those who take stands for their own dignity—as workers, as students, as migrants, as neighbors. I had learned that the history of my subject included Henry Clay Frick. During much his life, the public imagination associated his name not with famous art but with the breaking of the Homestead Steel Strike in Pennsylvania in 1892, a deadly operation that involved the use of Pinkerton mercenaries and the state militia. Frick spent most of his life organizing the production and sale of steel and other industrial products. Fine art was, in comparison, a hobby. Yet now, nearly a century after his death, certain masterworks can be viewed only by paying a visit to his home, frozen in time, where they are indefinitely imprisoned.

Frick-like behavior is such a familiar feature of cultural and economic practice in the United States that we rarely pause to question it. Frick was not alone. His contemporaries, like Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan and Leland Stanford, had philanthropic hobbies of their own, in some cases to greater effect. Each found ways of wiping away spotty business reputations with unrelated beneficence, supplanting the public ambivalence or notoriety they had accumulated in life with enduring gratitude in death. Like feudal lords endowing monasteries, they bought themselves a measure of salvation in the afterlife—and we continue to let them do it.

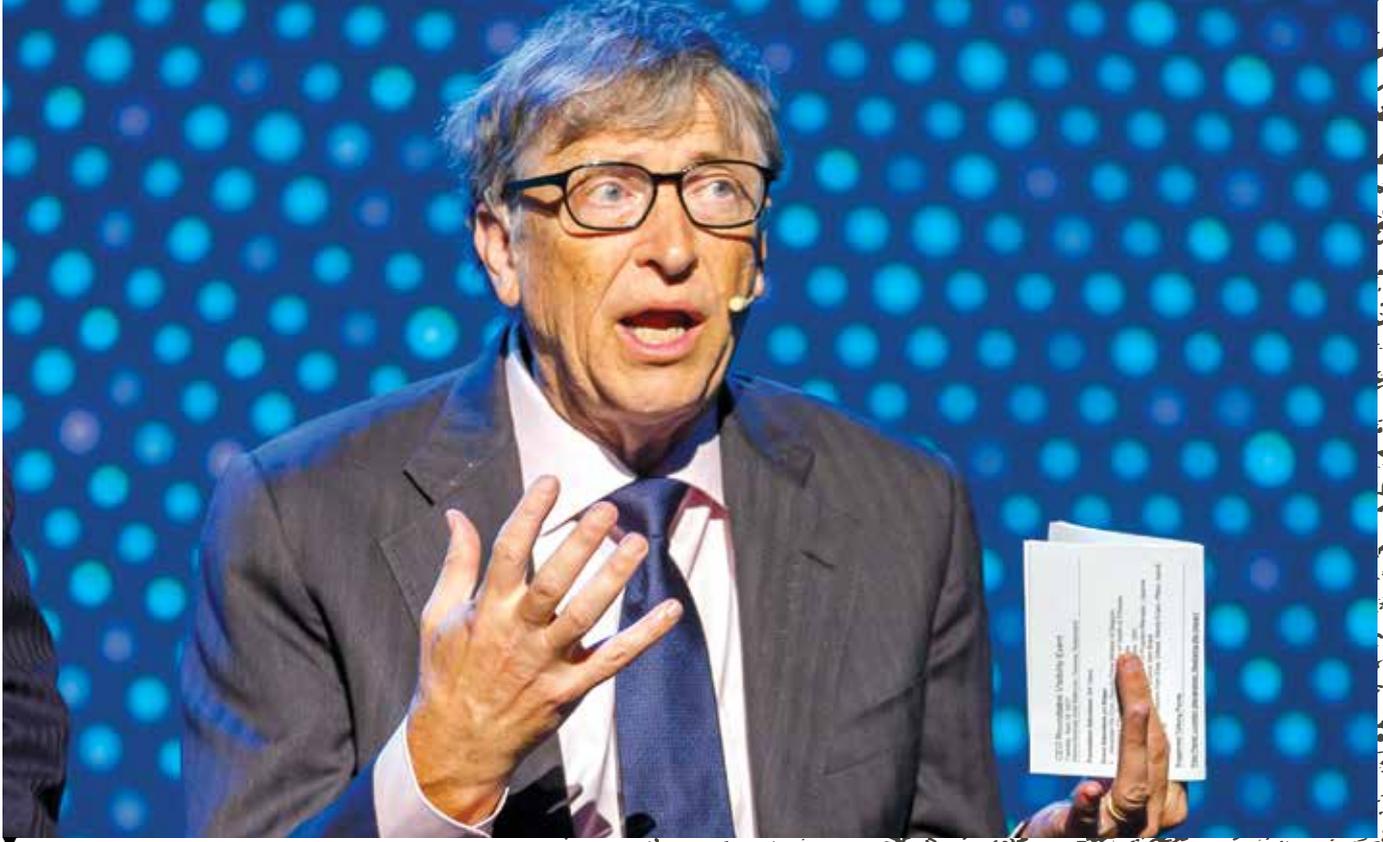
We like to think that the selling of indulgences was an error of the past, yet the practice has passed into secular forms, and there are few Martin Luthers complaining of it. What goes by the name of philanthropy—literally, the love of people—and what the tax code regards as giving, can rival the cynicism of the feudal indulgence business.

Microsoft Windows remains the world's most widely used desktop operating system, but its chief salesman, Bill Gates, is now best known in relation to matters like health care, combatting disease in Africa and school reform. There is no question that Mr. Gates has proved his skill in turning buggy, insecure software into a global near-monopoly. Less clear is the meritocratic rationale for why this man's foundation should rival the power of the World Health Organization, which is at least partly accountable to elected governments. One might also ask why a private-school-educated college dropout skilled at selling software holds singular influence over the future of the U.S. public school

system—which his foundation consistently steers in the direction of Microsoft products. Yet long after anyone remembers the misfortune of running Windows Vista, Mr. Gates can expect enduring praise for pouring money into humanitarian pursuits. Just as I took Frick's collection for granted as a teenager, we may even forget that there were choices to be made about public health and public education, and that Mr. Gates had an outsized role in making them. When most of us donate from our small excess, we express a concern and entrust the money to those with expertise; when Gates donates, he sets the agenda.

Now a new generation may out-Gates Mr. Gates. In December 2015, Mark Zuckerberg, the chief executive officer of Facebook, announced plans to transfer nearly all his Facebook stock to a vehicle for unrelated activities. He chose to do this through a limited liability company rather than a foundation, forgoing even the tax code's spacious definition of philanthropy. The intended targets for this wealth, as for the Gates fortune, are health and public education. (Mr. Zuckerberg's wife, Priscilla Chan, at least, received a medical degree in 2012; both attended public high schools.) Mr. Zuckerberg has demonstrated expertise in turning surveillance of people's interpersonal activities into a profitable revenue stream through micro-targeted advertising. But there is as yet little reason he and his wife should be entrusted with the sway over our systems of health and public education that they are in the process of claiming. If we are to go on tolerating the self-canonization and attempted do-gooding of wealthy donors, we should expect them to actually be engaged in donating—not in the buying of indulgences, not in a vast privatization scheme to replace what could be public decision-making. This is advocacy; advocacy is fine, but we should call it what it is. If philanthropy means love of others, it must prove itself by entrusting the material of that love to the intended recipients. To believe in the dignity of other human beings is to honor their capacity to choose.

Philanthropy, that is, should be regarded as a subdomain of democracy, not an exception to it. We live in a time when economic stagnation and an authoritarian mood have put political democracy on the run around the world. Yet we also have more ways of hearing each other's voices and making decisions together than ever before. Philanthropy could be a means for diverse, creative, collaborative acts of democracy—just what we need to regain the capacity to trust ourselves again, to remember the essential dignity that is our birthright. But only if it is real philan-



Long after the misfortune of running Windows Vista is forgotten, Bill Gates can expect enduring praise for pouring money into humanitarian pursuits.

thropy. Giving should mean really giving, or giving back.

NATURAL LAW AND THE TAX CODE

The reigning *Catechism of the Catholic Church* contains, among its many now-peculiar-sounding phrases, a doctrine called the “universal destination of goods.” Says the catechism: “In the beginning God entrusted the earth and its resources to the common stewardship of mankind to take care of them, master them by labor, and enjoy their fruits. The goods of creation are destined for the whole human race.” To the eye of God, as among the earliest Christians in Acts, all things are common to all people. Nothing is mine or yours, but it is ours because we are part of the same divine communism.

There is, of course, a very big *but*.

The catechism goes on, “However, the earth is divided up among men to assure the security of their lives, endangered by poverty and threatened by violence.” Our flawed and fallen nature makes God’s communism impracticable. Therefore “the appropriation of property is legitimate for guaranteeing the freedom and dignity of persons and for helping each of them to meet his basic needs and the needs of those in his charge.”

So, there is a pass for possessions. Property of some

kind is needed and useful. It can even be good, since it can be a means of serving others. The ample theory and practice of Catholic capitalism, from the Medicis to Domino’s Pizza, depends on this exception to the underlying, communist rule. But then there’s another *but*; the exception goes only so far.

“The ownership of any property makes its holder a steward of Providence,” says the catechism. Property is not fully ours; it must be stewarded, and taken care of, and shared. “The universal destination of goods remains primordial,” the catechism insists. Thomas Aquinas put the matter this way in the *Summa Theologica*: “Man ought to possess external things, not as his own, but as common, so that, to wit, he is ready to communicate them to others in their need.” We hold property, yes, but we should hold it as if it is not completely ours. We should dispense with it that way, too.

The tax code has a way of confounding useful distinctions, including among kinds of giving. U.S. law may give us the impression, for instance, that any contribution to a 501c3 or similarly tax-exempt organization equals a gift. But many such gifts are simply acts of either obligation, preference or reciprocity—like tithing at one’s church, or supporting organizations that promote one’s social opinions, or underwriting a public radio station to which one listens. That is a normal part of being a good community

member, and it's praiseworthy, but it is not really giving. It is more a matter of responsibility than philanthropy. Actual philanthropy, the love of other people, the stewarding of Providence—these expect a fuller kind of gift.

Such gifts can come in different forms. They might be in the form of sacrifice—giving what it seems one cannot afford, expecting no worldly reward. They might alternatively be a matter of forfeiting excess—the wealth beyond one's own needs, which the world's imperfect property arrangements have delivered into one's hands. In either case the gift, once given, is no longer one's own. It never really was.

Pope Francis has made a point of challenging the common habit of mind in contemporary philanthropy that second-guesses the person in need, that presumes to know better. Will the food-stamp recipient spend it on junk food? Will that man on the street use your dollar for drugs or alcohol or a doomed lottery ticket? Francis denies us these questions, together with their presumptions. He reminded an interviewer just before Lent this year that, for the homeless man, maybe “a glass of wine is his only happiness in life!”

Giving to those who ask, said Francis, “is always right.” Before trying to instruct the asker, the giver should listen and learn. “In the shoes of the other,” the pope added, “we learn to have a great capacity for understanding, for getting to know difficult situations.”

Catholic Relief Services has adopted a framework known as “integral human development” to guide its work of giving around the world, drawing on statements from Pope Paul VI and St. John Paul II. It is an attempt to give in a way that presumes the dignity and autonomy of the recipient, that seeks conditions under which people can become more fully themselves through choices and relationships. It is also an attempt to back away from the presumption that a philanthropist is typically entitled to, the presumption of knowing what other people need better than the people in need do.

Another framework for dispatching such presumptions is democracy. Democracy can be a tool, or a family of tools, for achieving the humility that wealth can otherwise lift beyond reach. We tend to think of democracy as the purview of government, but it can also be a means of real giving. It can be a vehicle of Providence.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETS

Mr. Zuckerberg, in a lengthy manifesto he published last February on “Building Global Community,” turned to a

sort of democracy out of necessity. He admitted that Facebook's employees, whether in Silicon Valley or satellite offices around the world, cannot fully predict the cultural sensitivities and local anxieties of its nearly 2 billion users. Combined with artificial intelligence, the platform would be relying on a kind of “community governance,” he wrote, and that users should expect to see experiments in “how collective decision-making might work at scale.”

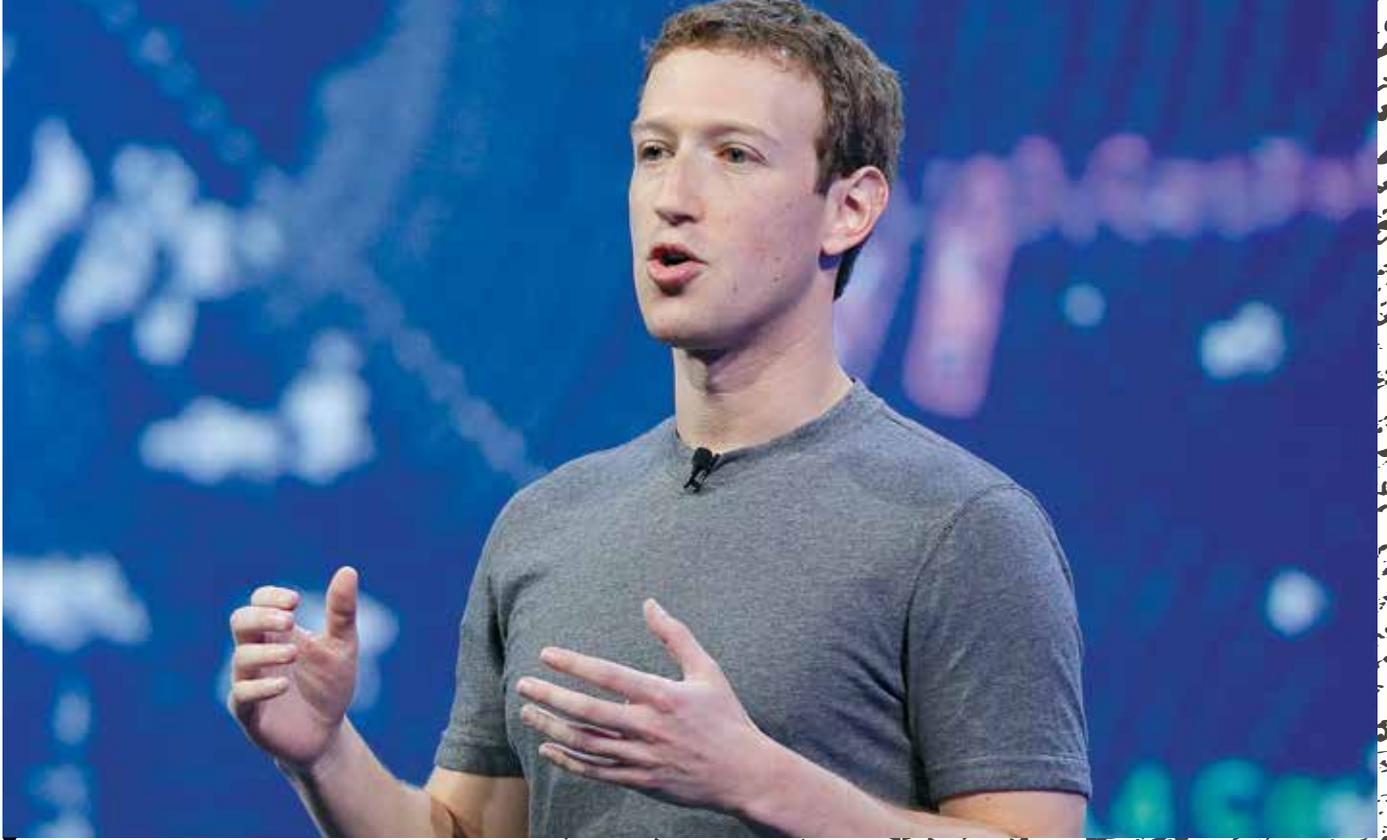
The kind of governance Mr. Zuckerberg describes strikes me more like disguised focus groups than a truly accountable democracy; the company's structure would remain chiefly accountable to profit-seeking investors. But his nod to collective, digital decision-making is instructive. Democracy often gets blamed for the bureaucratic outgrowths of government, so we forget its efficiencies; spreading decision-making processes widely across a large and diverse society is, in principle, a far better way to meet people's needs than trying to anticipate them through central planning. To degree that markets work, this is why. But the trick is choosing the right processes for the right situations.

Mr. Zuckerberg comes by his techno-utopianist enthusiasm for the challenge honestly. Alongside the present authoritarian revival in global politics, we are living through what could be a renaissance in techniques for doing democracy—and, potentially, for doing philanthropy. There has never been less reason for tolerating feudal, unaccountable pretenders to generosity.

Private markets have generated a proliferation of decision-making software—from tools designed for running a private company's board elections to project management platforms for teams scattered around the world. Some tools require more tech-savvy users than others, and they rely on varied means of encryption and authentication. Old-fashioned elections can be organized more cheaply and securely than ever.

But some of the most important experiments enable new forms of participation altogether. Liquid democracy, for instance, is a system used by some of the new internet-based political parties spreading across Europe and South America. One of the leading implementations, DemocracyOS, comes from Argentina; there, the candidates for a political party agreed to vote however the users of the DemocracyOS platform directed them.

It is a system of cascading proxies, a blend between direct democracy and deference to expertise. Rather than electing a representative to make every decision on my behalf for a fixed period of time, under liquid democracy I



In December 2015, Mark Zuckerberg announced plans to transfer nearly all his Facebook stock to a limited liability corporation for unrelated activities.

can decide on every proposal for myself. But in most cases I will have neither the time nor knowledge to do so. I can therefore designate a proxy to vote on health-related matters, and another to vote on education. Maybe those proxies choose other proxies in turn. I can change my proxy at any time or opt to vote for myself. I choose my own level of involvement and step back responsibly.

Loomio, developed by a worker-owned cooperative in New Zealand, has become a popular platform for discussion and decision-making for online groups. An allied project, Cobudget, enables groups to pool donations and allocate them collaboratively. More examples are emerging from the “blockchain” technology that underlies the Bitcoin digital currency—enabling secure, transparent governance without need for a certifying authority. But not all of these democratic developments depend on boutique software; to reach people most in need, they must not. Participatory budgeting, for instance, is a technique developed in Porto Alegre, Brazil, that has spread to U.S. cities like Chicago and New York. There, largely through in-person meetings, neighborhood residents work together to determine how funds should be spent in their communities.

Democratic tactics such as these might be aids in a kind of philanthropy that gives more than it directs, that entrusts gifts more fully to recipients. But they are just tactics. What

matters most is how they are deployed. I conclude with three possible strategies for a more democratic philanthropy.

GIVING DIRECTLY

Maybe the most obvious thing to do when wealth accumulates excessively should be to return it back, recycling it to those from which it came. For instance, John Lewis Partnership is a large retail chain in Britain. When one of the founder’s sons took over, starting in 1929, he began transferring ownership of the company into a trust, which would become owned jointly by its employees. This was not an outright gift; the employees gradually paid the family back. But the choice ensured that, from there on out, the company’s profits would go toward the many who produced them, not just the founding family or outside investors. It prevented further excess accumulation.

Mark Zuckerberg might consider doing something similar. Rather than transferring his Facebook stock into his own pet projects, he could put it in a trust owned and governed by Facebook users—say, through some of those “community governance” mechanisms he wrote about. Then users could benefit from and help to steward the valuable, personal data they post and share. Mr. Zuckerberg himself might find his own skills put to better use that way. Instead

of seeking to transform fields in which he has little expertise, he could help guide the user community to being effective stewards of the company he did so much to build.

A vast number of businesses face impending transition as their Baby Boomer owners depart without succession plans. Some are large factories, others are small stores and offices. It is a historic opportunity to share that wealth, through forms of cooperative ownership, with the very workers and customers who make those businesses work. This is a kind of philanthropy that honors the human beings in an enterprise, the people who might otherwise take a back seat to the imperative of profits.

Cooperative conversion, however, is not an option for many who are in a position to give. A second kind of philanthropy more closely resembles the forms we are used to: delivering a set of resources to a community or cause.

When donors discern the need to direct funds toward some particular purpose, they can at least step aside after the gift has been made. Conventionally, philanthropic foundations remain, after the original donor's death, under the control of family members or the donor's stringent directives. Givers seem unable to allow themselves to fully give. We should expect better; even when the donor frames an original purpose, a more appropriate set of stakeholders can steer the gift afterward.

For instance, if a donor wants to set up a foundation for education in a given city, it could ensure that a significant portion of the decision-making process includes ordinary students and parents there. Rather than imposing elections, the foundation could assign rotating oversight positions through random sortition, just as juries are chosen. Or it could hold open meetings for a participatory budgeting process. If the recipients of the gift are more widespread, such as patients with a rare disease, online tools like liquid democracy or Cobudget may be more appropriate. One way or another, in order for a gift to be regarded as truly a gift, it should be given in a way that is accountable to its recipients, rather than as an imposition on them.

A third strategy for democratic philanthropy relinquishes donor control even further, and it is already starting to become popular: direct cash transfers. Just give people money and trust them to decide how best to use it.

GiveDirectly, a Silicon Valley darling, is a charity that uses mobile payment technology to deliver money into the accounts of poor people in Kenya and Uganda. The Taiwanese Buddhist charity Tzu Chi has also made low-tech cash transfers integral to its disaster relief pro-

grams. This kind of giving includes no stipulation about how people use the money, but evidence appears to support positive outcomes; when people receive money with no strings attached, they tend to use it well. GiveDirectly has also become involved in research around universal basic income—a system by which every person (or adult) in a society would receive a livable income just for being alive. Advocates believe that, rather than disincentivizing work, a basic income would free people to make more valuable contributions to society than dead-end jobs by freeing time for education, family life and innovation. Some even contend that, as more jobs become automated by technology, basic income could turn into a necessity.

Something like a basic income would require more resources than philanthropy is likely to provide (even though eight men hold as much wealth as half the planetary population); full implementation needs public policy. But some philanthropists—including Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes, now co-chair of the Economic Security Project—are putting the idea in motion by funding local experiments in cash distributions that could later lead to policy shifts. It is hard to imagine a way of giving more in tune with the universal destination of goods than this—recycling wealth among as many people as possible, with no stipulations whatsoever about how they use it.

These proposals, I realize, run the risk of inhibiting the philanthropic supply. If philanthropy cannot be a means of buying glory and immortality, one might ask, who would do it? Useful things have been done in the world by well-meaning but self-serving philanthropy. Are we ready to lose that by raising expectations?

Michael Edwards, a former Ford Foundation grantmaker, contends that the current system is not worth protecting. “Philanthropy is supposed to be private funding for the public good,” he has written, “but increasingly it’s become a playground for private interests.” However much the Zuckerbergs and the Gateses of the world succeed in their mighty ambitions, their chief achievement will be the cultivation of dependence on people like them.

“The more you try to control social change,” Mr. Edwards warns, “the less you succeed.”

Providence might do better.

*Nathan Schneider is a reporter and professor of media studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder, as well as a contributing writer for **America**.*

My Sister, I Wish You

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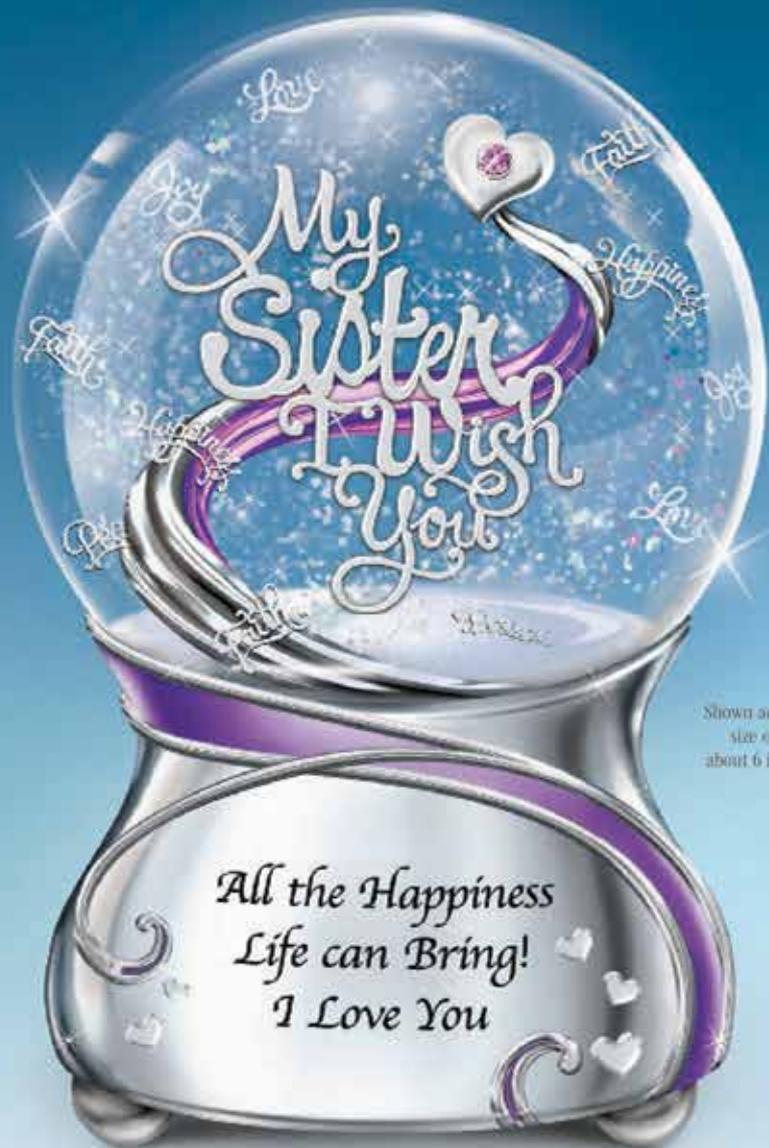
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THE UNLIKELY STORY BEHIND 'WITH GOD IN RUSSIA'

By Daniel L. Flaherty

I was assigned to serve as the book editor of *America* magazine in June 1962, the year I finished my tertianship, the final stage of Jesuit training. Four months later, Walter J. Cizek, S.J., returned to the United States after some 23 years in the Soviet Union—18 of which he spent as a prisoner, 15 of them in the labor camps of Siberia. Father Cizek had been presumed dead, since no one (neither his family nor the Jesuits) had heard from him since 1945.

The story of his return was a sensation, picked up by the press. When his flight arrived at New York's Idlewild Airport (now John F. Kennedy International Airport) in October, television cameras were on hand along with Father Ciszek's sisters and Thurston N. Davis, S.J., and Eugene Culhane, S.J., representing the Jesuit superiors of the New York and Maryland provinces.

No one knew for certain whether it would actually be Father Ciszek getting off the plane or some Soviet imposter. Fathers Davis and Culhane had been Jesuit classmates of Walter's in the 1930s before he went to Rome to study, was ordained there and was then assigned to the Jesuit mission in Albertyn, Poland, to minister to Byzantine-rite Catholics. Russian troops overran Albertyn in 1939, and that was the last anyone heard from Father Ciszek until his sisters received a letter in 1961, purportedly from him, mailed from Siberia.

Other letters followed, but his sisters could not believe it was actually Walter until he began writing about family incidents as a boy and asking about other family members. Then, with the help of friends, they got in touch with the State Department to plan a trip to visit him in Russia. Instead, the State Department arranged for Father Ciszek to be "exchanged" for a minor Soviet "operative" who had been arrested in Washington. No one, however, knew for sure if it would actually be Walter Ciszek who got off the plane.

But it was. Following the media circus at Idlewild, he returned with Fathers Davis and Culhane and his sisters to America House, in Midtown Manhattan, where I first met him. That very same afternoon he went to the Jesuit novitiate in Wernersville, Pa., where he would be close to his family in Shenandoah and away from the media frenzy. Everyone wanted to know his story, and Father Davis arranged with the New York and Maryland provincial superiors to have *America* magazine tell the story. To this day I have no idea why he asked me, the youngest and newest member of the staff, to write the story that was ultimately published as *With God in Russia*.

The very next week, on Thursday afternoon, I went to Newark for an afternoon flight to Wernersville, where I was met at the airport and taken to the novitiate to meet Father Ciszek. "Hi," I said, "I'm here to help you write your book." He looked at me with a blank stare. So I introduced myself and asked if he remembered meeting me at America House. He did not. Nor did he know anything about a book to be written; no one had said anything to him about it. We went



Walter Ciszek, S.J., was brought by cab to America House after returning home from Russia.

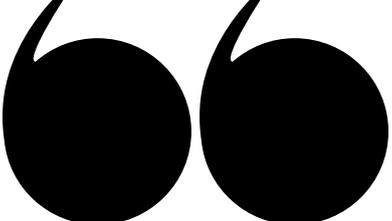
for a short stroll about the grounds while I explained that I had been appointed by the editor of *America* to help him write his story because everyone wanted to know about his years in Russia and the labor camps. He was polite but hardly forthcoming. He said very little himself and answered most questions with one or two words. I finally just gave up and flew back to New York on Friday morning. I told Father Davis what happened and said if there was a story to be told it was not going to be told by me; I might just as well have been one of Father Ciszek's N.K.V.D. interrogators.

Father Davis telephoned the Maryland provincial. No doubt he in turn telephoned Walter. At any rate, Father Davis told me to go back to Wernersville the following Thursday and meet with Father Ciszek again. It was an entirely different situation when I arrived at Wernersville that afternoon. Walter was waiting for me at the door with a big smile and an apology and then said, "When do we start?"

Walter began by telling me about his childhood in Shenandoah "because," he said, "you'll never understand the things I did unless you understand why I did them." Fair enough. So he talked and I took notes. Sometimes I asked simple questions to better understand what he was telling me, but mostly I just listened and wrote furiously. We met again Friday morning and Friday afternoon and Friday evening. And again on Saturday morning—until I said, "Enough, Walter, I can't do any more this week."

I flew back to New York on Sunday. Of course, we had our usual weekly editorial meeting on Monday morning, and I had my usual editorial jobs to do as book editor during the week. But I was determined to finish dictating my Father Ciszek notes before I returned to Wernersville on Thursday afternoon, so I worked well into the night on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday recording the Ciszek story.

Photo from America archives



Walter became concerned about using other people's real names in the story for fear the N.K.V.D. would track down those who were still alive for questioning (or something worse). ●●

That was the schedule we kept, with some exceptions, for the next six months. By Easter 1964 we had pretty much completed the story that ultimately became *With God in Russia*.

It was not a hard story to write. Walter had a fantastic memory, and my only job was to get it down on paper. I would occasionally ask some specific questions: “What did he look like?” or “How long did that take?” or “Why did you do that?” or “What did he/you do next?” and things like that to keep the story on track and the chronology straight. But my main problem was to take good notes and then dictate the text while it was still fresh in my mind.

One of the secretaries at America Press typed up every week the material I dictated, but I didn't bother to read the typescript myself or discuss it with Walter until we had “finished” the story. After the Easter holidays, we began to review the “chapters” serially on my weekly visits to Wernersville. At the time, Walter became concerned about using other people's real names in the story for fear the N.K.V.D. would track down those who were still alive for questioning (or something worse). So I kept a list, to help me keep things straight, of the names we assigned to people. Walter had many corrections and additions—as the narration triggered associated memories—until the “finished” manuscript was over 1,500 pages.

William Holub, *America's* business manager, had chosen McGraw-Hill to be the publisher of the Ciszek story after receiving proposals from a number of publishers. When I told Harold McGraw the size of the manuscript, he gasped and said we'd have to cut it to something more like 500 pages.

So Walter and I went through the manuscript again with a hatchet. We had a lot of laughs (and a few serious

arguments) over what to cut and what to leave, but we finally did get the manuscript down to something close to 500 pages. The original 1,500-page manuscript, however, is preserved—as far as I know—in the Maryland Province archives.

Finally, as spring turned to summer in 1964, Walter came with me to America House in New York to meet with Harold McGraw and put the finishing touches on the manuscript. By July 31, the feast of St. Ignatius Loyola, the book was sent to press.

Daniel L. Flaherty, S.J., served as executive editor of *America*, then as director of Loyola Press in Chicago. He was the first publisher of *National Jesuit News* and was superior of the Chicago Province of the Society of Jesus from 1973 to 1979. This article has been adapted from the introduction to the new edition of the classic spiritual memoir *With God in Russia*, co-published by America Media and HarperOne on June 13.



As Harry Potter Turns 20, It's Time to Take Him Seriously

By Vanessa Zoltan



Harry Potter fans in a bookstore in London in 2016. Photo: Reuters/Neil Hall

In the 20 years since *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was published, tattoos, midnight book parties and themed weddings have all been markers of Potter obsession.

This June marks the passage of 20 years since the first of the Harry Potter books was published. In those 20 years, tattoos, midnight book parties, baby names and themed weddings have all been markers of Potter obsession. Shortly after the election of President Trump, many readers of the Harry Potter books brought their fandom into political conversations by using the stories to reflect upon and challenge the new president. Tweets and memes called for the formation of a Dumbledore's Army, which, in the book, is a force against political and magical darkness. (Dumbledore—the wise, kind headmaster of Hogwarts in the Potter books—was oft-quoted during this time.) Articles have also pondered: “What would Hermione do?” and “If Trump Is Voldemort, Let's Learn From Harry Potter.” Months later, at the Women's March on Washington, signs used characters from Harry Potter to rally people together. One proclaimed: “When Voldemort is President We Need a Nation of Hermiones.”

It is easy to poke fun at millennials who are this committed to a series of fantastical, fictional books marketed to children. Many social critics have lodged their complaints, saying that using Harry Potter language to deal with high stakes issues plays into the stereotype of the “liberal snowflake”—an overly-coddled, sensitive and alarmist liberal—all the while minimizing important issues like immigration, health care and prison reform, risking the seriousness with which we should be

addressing these life-threatening issues. The fear inherent in these critiques is that we will trivialize the profound, shielding ourselves from the real life stakes involved. But putting a political moratorium on Harry Potter references seems more a performative gesture of sensitivity rather than a sincere one.

No one wants to be the fool who called Trump Voldemort when he ought to have been called into congressional chambers. Out of context, such an aside seems clueless and tone-deaf. But the context matters. As an interfaith chaplain and the co-host of a podcast called “Harry Potter and the Sacred Text,” I have met dozens of people who turn to the Harry Potter series in times of distress.

For the uninitiated: The Harry Potter series follows an orphaned boy raised in an abusive home who discovers not only that he is a wizard, but that he must also sacrifice himself in order to save the world. He attends Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, where he also learns that kindness, friendship and community are crucial to overcoming tragedy—with or without magic. Throughout the series the protagonists (mainly Harry along with his two best friends, Hermione and Ron) face adversaries who are consistently complicated, even if they seem wholly good or wholly evil at first glance. The series uses fantasy motifs (e.g., humanoid creatures like centaurs and werewolves) as a way to discuss racism and explores interracial relationships between wizards. By sending its titular character to the forest

to die for his friends, Harry Potter is ultimately about sacrifice and justice.

Anne, a member of the Harry Potter class that I facilitate at Harvard Divinity School, rereads a key chapter of the series every year on the anniversary of her mother's death. In the chapter called “The Forest Again,” Harry is able to interact with the adults in his life who have passed away. Although he does not get to talk with them much or spend a long amount of time with them, for the time they are together, “their presence was his courage.” This chapter gives Anne a place for her to grieve. It gives her a kind of liturgy, a ritual to locate her grief in a meaningful and cathartic way.

Another person I have heard from reads the book as a reminder of the fact that escaping abuse is a long road, since this is the road on which we follow Harry in J. K. Rowling's books. This reader uses the text as a reminder that it is more than possible to move on from being abused to being a citizen who has a lot to give.

While I do not think we should use the Harry Potter series as a kind of CliffsNotes to understand our current political situation, the two readers I describe above show us that careful engagement with this book can be a productive, reflective tool that compels us to action. Treating Harry Potter with seriousness—or, in my case, as if it were sacred—is a necessary precursor to accessing the books' wisdom.

What would we learn if we read the books we love as if they were sacred? How might they change us? To

Jerusalem Slim *

By Michael Topa

I did not know it was Joy
And her fingers
Blessing me from words
Trapped in stone

Now in Gethsemane
You who could not wait
One hour sleep like salt

Scattered on the ground
But even now I forget
Where the difference falls

Some say Elijah
Some say John
But Joy you say nothing
And take me on

* This is what my father called Christ, alone and muttering to himself, while nursing his Four Roses whiskey at the kitchen table.

Michael Topa has worked as a psychoeducational consultant and is the co-founder and current director of Greenoaks Educational Services.

This poem was a runner-up in America's 2017 Foley Poetry contest.

be clear, treating these texts as if they were sacred is not the same thing as mining them for political resistance strategies or asserting that the stories literally happened. Above all, choosing to revere a text in this way means allowing it to be deeply and meaningfully instructive in your life.

My own approach to reading Harry Potter is threefold. First, I practice the belief that the text is not just entertainment but, if taken seriously, can give us generous rewards. Trusting the text does not mean I understand the text to be perfect—either in construction or moral teaching—but that it is worthy of attention and contemplation. A guiding principle is that the more time we give to the text, the more blessings it has to give us. This is the opposite of simply using the novels as a shorthand to lambast adversaries—political or otherwise.

Second, I treat the text with rigor and ritual: By reading the text slowly, repeatedly and with concentrated attention, my effort becomes a key part of what makes the book sacred to me. The text in and of itself is not sacred but is made so through rigorous engagement. Particularly by attentively engaging in ritual reading, I believe we can glean wisdom from its pages.

Third, I read the text in commu-

nity. Isolation will not help us. But sitting down with a book and friends, arguing about what is found in its pages and trying to identify lessons—that can be instructive. By doing this, we are imagining the inner lives of strangers and improving our aptitude for empathy.

As the world becomes scarier, discussing accessible books in community, with trust and rigor, provides a way for millennials to process issues of personal, moral and political significance. Such conversations are possible within, across and beyond faith communities. Harry Potter may be the perfect series to speak to this moment in time: It is pro-love and about integration and kindness, among so many other things. But we need to do more than use it as a way to identify like-minded readers. We need to use the texts to create like-hearted brothers and sisters. The books are already ubiquitous—so let us put them to good use. Then we can make protest signs with Dumbledore quotes.

Vanessa Zoltan is the co-host of the podcast "Harry Potter & The Sacred Text," a chaplain intern at Hebrew Senior Life and a research assistant at Harvard Divinity School.



Harry Potter may be the perfect series to speak to this moment in time.

Book Expo America in 2013. Photo courtesy of Scholastic Books



A Jesuit Perspective on Harry Potter

While it is unlikely that my students will have read the whole of the New Testament, all have read the seven Harry Potter books at least twice and some as many as eight times. For several years, I have been offering a theology seminar at the College of the Holy Cross, “Defense Against the Dark Arts,” about Harry Potter. In teaching the seminar—the name of which is taken from a class that Harry takes in the books—I ask in good Jesuit fashion: What portal have my students’ imaginations stepped through?

Christian faith is built on a story, and stories require imagination. Getting inside the Gospels requires stepping through a magical portal, too. We call it grace; yet whether we label it grace or magic, the result is the same: “Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on earth should that mean that it is not real?”

Once inside J. K. Rowling’s uni-

verse, what awaits us? Well, there are the themes of friendship and loyalty, courage and transparency, sacrifice and mortality, separation and loss, failure and remorse, destiny and providence—and love, life’s most powerful magic. Rowling is not a religious writer, yet strong religious currents run through the books. I think of Karl Rahner’s observation: “Even an image that does not have a specifically religious theme can be a religious image, when viewing it helps to bring about...that properly religious experience of transcendence.”

The religious experience of transcendence is what happens when enchantment breaks through. To walk into the world of Harry Potter is to enter a world that is enchanted, and this (with a bow to Charles Taylor) is what readers thirst for.

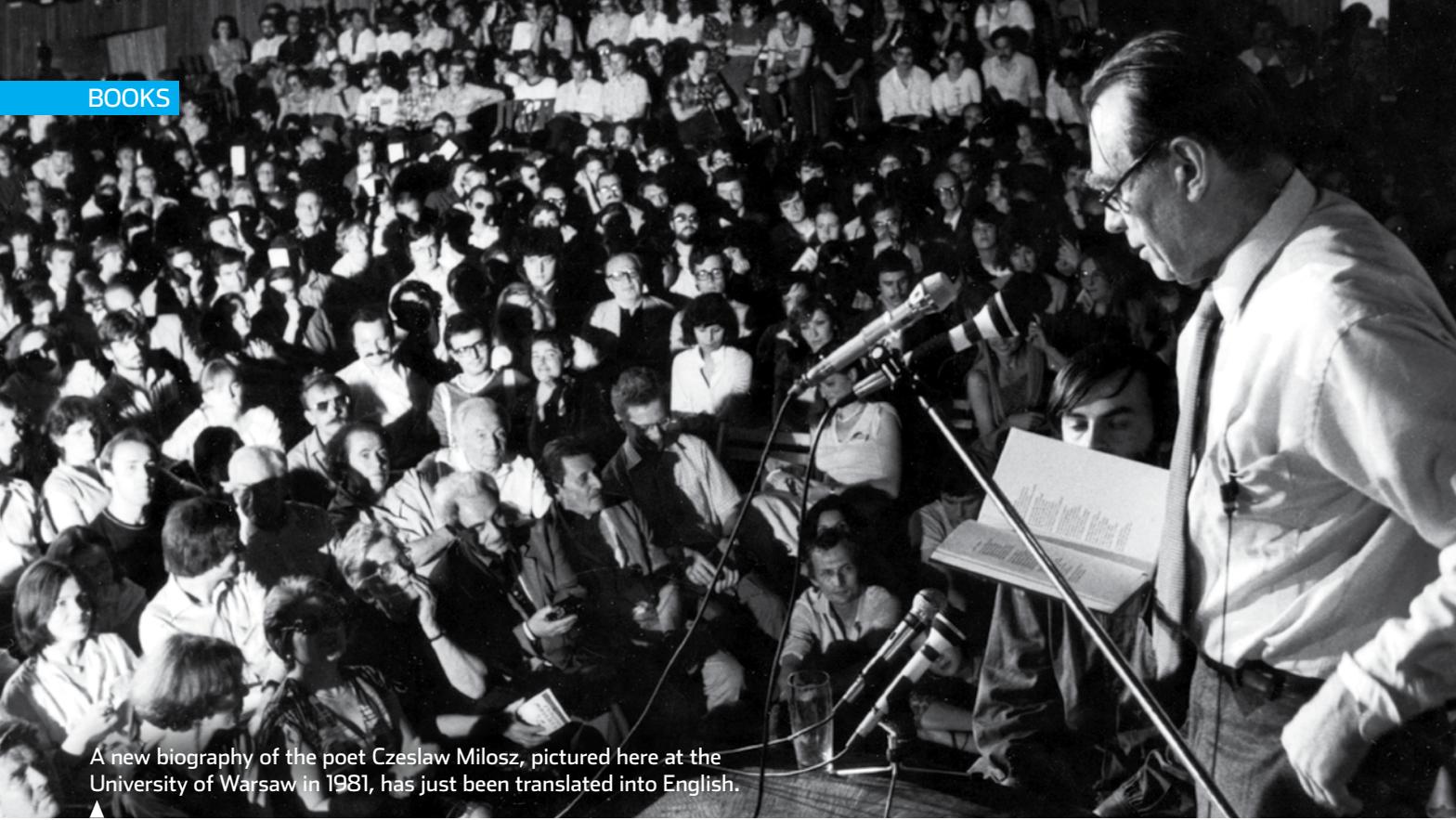
In the Harry Potter stories there are Ignatian undertones, too. The relation between dementors (soulless,

soul-sucking creatures) and patronuses (magical images that manifest the courage and hope of a wizard) is particularly intriguing. While the dementor robs people of vitality and happiness, the patronus, when invoked by a wizard, drives dementors away by projecting memories of joy. Yet summoning the patronus is not always easy. In Ignatius’ writing, we likewise find good and bad spirits and learn how memories of past blessings help lift the soul from desolation.

The best defense against the dark arts is hope; imagination is its home. Ignatius knew that. After all, what are the Spiritual Exercises if not a schooling of the imagination? Hope is our resurrection stone; Easter is its shape.

William Reiser, S.J., is a professor in the religious studies department at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass.





A new biography of the poet Czeslaw Milosz, pictured here at the University of Warsaw in 1981, has just been translated into English.

The confusing business of biography By Jon M. Sweeney

We all have books we enjoy and authors we enjoy, and the two are not always in tandem. A novel may enthrall me, but the interview I hear with its author may dampen my enthusiasm. Samuel Johnson once said, “Those whom the appearance of virtue, or the evidence of genius, have tempted to a nearer knowledge of the writer in whose performances they may be found, have indeed had frequent reason to repent their curiosity.” I’ve had that experience. There are authors whom I appreciate less now, since I have learned about their lives. For example, I reread Evelyn Waugh’s prose often, but I would not want to talk with him. In contrast, the poems of Allen Ginsberg don’t interest me much, but I would love to have the man over for dinner and would invite my cleverest friends to join us.

Still, I read a lot of biographies. On a purely physical level, they tend to be

substantial books. Holding one, I feel that I am participating in something important. No one researches and writes a significant biography in six months; it usually takes years, whereas many other book genres, even when well done, can come off quickly.

A biography can make for satisfying reading even when its subject is not an author whose works I read or a person whom I was previously interested in. At their best, biographies exist for readers independently of enthusiasm for the subject. Take, for instance, Edmund Morris’s three volumes on Theodore Roosevelt. Volume one, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, has to be one of the 10 best books, not just biographies, I have ever read, and I enjoyed it without any previous interest in Roosevelt’s politics or career.

A recent trend in biography writing is to make the book not just about its subject but also about the process

of writing about him or her. It has become common for biographers, since Richard Holmes and his *Shelley: The Pursuit* (1975), to take this sort of double-entendre approach. In addition to telling the story of the subject, they tell a story of the inquiry itself. In more recent years, Holmes has built upon this form—which he started 40 years ago—by making an industry around “the art of biography,” lecturing as a professor of biography writing and as the author of many books that tell tales of the pursuit, including this year’s *This Long Pursuit: Reflections of a Romantic Biographer* (Pantheon, 368p \$30).

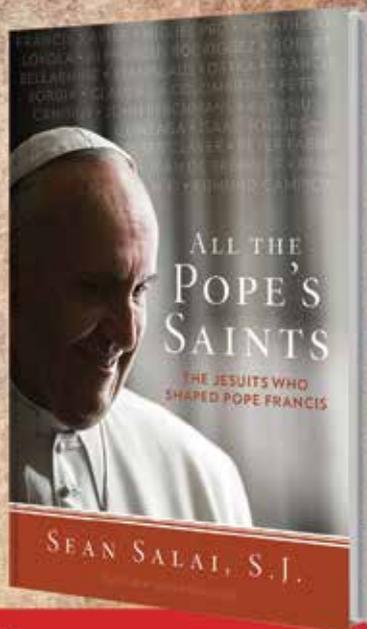
The papal biographer George Weigel has now stepped into these waters with *Lessons in Hope* (Basic Books, 368p \$30), a title that is surely designed to remind readers of his 1999 international best-selling biography of St. John Paul II, *Witness to Hope*.

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“Becoming John Paul II’s biographer... [became] the pivot of my life,” the biographer writes in what is essentially the foreword to the volume. (The book is, for whatever reason, constructed without use of words like “foreword” and “chapter.”) Often an author will have two reasons for writing this sort of volume. First, as Weigel explains it, would be to tell “stories that would make him [the pope] present again by rekindling memories or illuminating previously unknown aspects of his rich personality.” And second, surely, to use material left over from years of research and writing—as well as stories that one has found successful on the lecture circuit.

This recent twist on the biographer’s role makes the biographer

himself a subject of history. And so, in what is essentially chapter one of *Lessons in Hope*, we have “Lent in the Third Grade: Baltimore, 1960,” which is mostly about Weigel. His class was instructed by one of the School Sisters of Notre Dame to pray for the conversion of a Communist dictator. So, Weigel concludes: “Had anyone told me that, some 30 years later, I would write books in which Wladyslaw Gomulka’s complex role in post-war Polish history figured prominently, I would have thought the prognosticator mad. Yet there it is.”

We are also introduced through Weigel’s memoir to dozens of other ways that his real life anticipated or prepared the way for his writing about John Paul II. For instance, Weigel

studied philosophy at St. Mary’s Seminary College in Baltimore—to prepare him to understand the subtle thought of the Polish pope. Even the shuttering of a seminary in Washington State where Weigel taught for two years becomes, upon Weigel’s reflection—“a crucial turning point in my life, with major consequences for my becoming John Paul II’s biographer.”

There are those who theorize that biography writing is ignoble, even immoral. They think that writing about others is to “colonize” them or to bend them to fit a mold. Speaking of a different type of writing about people—specifically, travel writing—the Irish poet Tara Bergin recently reflected in an issue of the quarterly literary magazine *Granta*: “Writing is by its very nature



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an intrusion: voyeuristic; fetishistic; impolite; self-serving—the self is the finished piece of writing.” I think she has a point, or at least that is a real danger, particularly when one who writes about other people becomes interested in finding himself in the midst of his subjects.

Thank goodness, Andrzej Franaszek’s biography of Czeslaw Milosz does not succumb to these temptations. First published in Polish in 2011, *Milosz: A Biography* (Harvard University Press, 544p, \$35) is both exquisitely written and well translated. Longer in the original than in the English, one still has the sense that nothing is missing. Franaszek is a Polish literary critic and former secretary to Zbigniew Herbert, who was one of Milosz’s fellow poetic greats of the last half of the 20th century.

Franaszek’s prose matches his attention to detail. “At the beginning of this story there was once a child, for whom the world began in wonder,” Chapter One begins. Then soon, Franaszek demonstrates how the idyll erupts, as does all of Eastern Europe, following the events of June 28, 1914, in Sarajevo, when Milosz was only 3.

Milosz chose not to fight in World War II, despite being 33 at the time of the Warsaw Uprising. He felt a sense of destiny—that it was of vital interest to more than just him that he survive the war. Great writers are often made of this sort of egotism, and it is true that as a poet, translator, critic and commentator on current events, Milosz would go on to have an impact on the world. But not without controversy.

In his 30s, he worked for five years as a cultural attaché to the Polish Embassy in Paris. This put him in league with Stalin, something that

PILGRIMAGE

HOLY LAND PILGRIMAGE, Nov. 16-26, 2017. Bethlehem + conversation with Palestinian Catholic mayor; Jericho, Tabor, Capernaum, Cana, Nazareth, three days in kibbutz hotel on shore of Sea of Galilee; Joppa, Jerusalem, Qumran, Masada, Dead Sea, conversation with patriarch and more.

Brochure and contacts: Michael Cooper, S.J., (727) 644-5544 and Paul Macke, S.J., (224) 279-7786 and Sister Caroline Cerveny (727) 744-4684 or c.cerveny@verizon.net.

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many Poles, as well as his native Lithuanians, never forgave him for, even after Milosz defected in 1951 and denounced the Soviet agenda. Ten years later, he arrived, and then lived somewhat unhappily for decades, in the scholarly confines of Berkeley, Calif.

In 1980, the great poet was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, again not without detractors and controversy. His life was deeply conflicted when it came to his Catholicism. Milosz argued about faith and its inability to provide solace or answers with childhood friends, priests and theologians, also in personal essays, and even with Thomas

Merton in letters collected in a volume titled *Striving Towards Being* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux), back in 1997. Milosz experienced a great deal of sorrow over a long life, watching as one of his sons went mad and twice becoming a widower. There were affairs and bitter arguments with friends. He lived into his 90s, eventually returning, not exactly Solzhenitsyn-style, to the Eastern European places he had left behind long before. Franaszek serves him well.

Jon M. Sweeney is an author and critic. He has written a biography, *Phyllis Tickle: a Life, to be published in February*.

Faith and the Spanish Civil War

The novel *There Your Heart Lies* follows Marian Taylor's attempts to come to grips with her brother's suicide. She holds the Catholic Church responsible, blaming it for her father's decision to "cure" Johnny of his sexual orientation and thereby "save his soul."

So at 19 she severs her ties with Catholicism and goes to Spain to help the Communists during the Civil War. Yet as the novel's title implies, one cannot escape one's own upbringing. As Mary Gordon, an award-winning Catholic novelist, insightfully puts it, "Echoes from a lost faith willfully and violently bob up, float up unbidden, unwelcome, the flotsam and jetsam of

a vanished way of life."

Those echoes—suggestive of Francis Thompson's poem "The Hound of Heaven"—give the novel a powerful resonance as Gordon's three-part story moves nimbly from Marian's youth to her old age and her relationship with her granddaughter.

In Spain Marian finds two camps: the Communists and the country's nationalist government, which is aligned with the Catholic Church. She detests the Spanish priests and bishops because they live in luxury and abuse the poor. They even encourage soldiers to kill the Communists.

Father Tomás is the exception. Although he is outraged at the atrocities "the Church he loves" commits in the name of God, he stays true to his priest-

ly vocation. If there is a problem with the novel, it is that Gordon does not devote enough space to Tomás, whose complex character and extraordinary resolve are worthy of their own book. As the 92-year-old Marian remembers her time in Spain, she describes Tomás as saint-like and a "man of sorrows."

As with many Mary Gordon stories, Catholicism plays a significant role in the plot, adding to its surprising twists. The church waits like a ghost in the wings ready to enter the storyline and assume the designation of whipping boy—or, in another guise, a bringer of grace.

Diane Scharper is the author of several books, including Radiant: Prayer/Poems (Cathedral Foundation Press).

A time of powerlessness and rage

In light of Brexit, ISIS and the election of Donald J. Trump as U.S. president Pankaj Mishra's new book is nothing if not timely. Beautifully written, Mishra's text offers a remarkable synthesis of the "climate of ideas" that has given rise to our own "age of anger."

Mishra's key descriptive term for the modern age is *ressentiment*. Led by figures like Voltaire, the Enlightenment established an ideal of "cosmopolitan liberalism" marked by self-interest, commerce and reason. The problem, of course, is that not everyone drank the Kool-Aid, particularly Voltaire's compatriot Rousseau. It was Rousseau who lambasted the currents of moral corruption, economic inequality and intolerant elitism that emerged from Voltaire's ideal

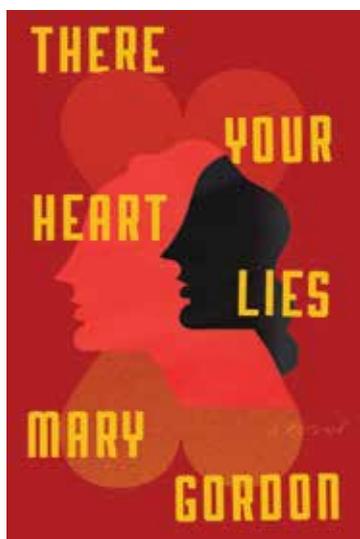
of "self-love." *Ressentiment* only grew as industrial capitalism disrupted societies in Europe and later around the world, vastly increasing socioeconomic inequality even as modern culture propagated the ideal of social equality. This further exacerbated what Hannah Arendt described as negative solidarity, namely a growing awareness of relative deprivation that produced a toxic mix of envy, humiliation, powerlessness and rage.

Ressentiment's exaltation of "moral victimhood" in turn drove the various "isms" that arose in the 19th century. In the midst of profound modern changes in economy, politics and gender roles, the romantic concept of the *Volk* or "people" emerged at the heart of the new religion of nationalism. *Ressentiment* also undergirded other less remembered movements. For Mishra, it is not seventh-century

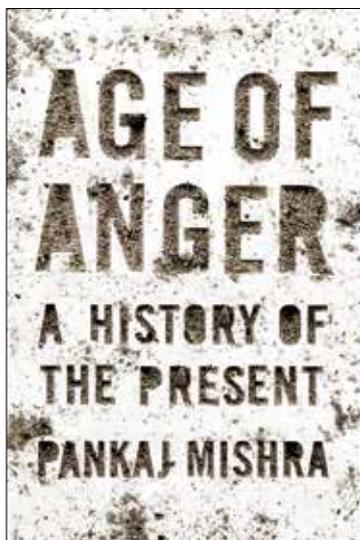
Islamic theology but the hyperviolent, transnational, individualistic and nihilistic Western anarchism of the late 1800s that resonates in the terrorist acts of Timothy McVeigh or Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Mishra's argument is intentionally circumscribed; readers should not lose sight of the modern age's deep currents of compassion and solidarity. Overall, though, this is a masterful study that recovers an intellectual history that we forget at our peril. Put *Age of Anger* on your list of books to read for 2017, and let's hope it doesn't come to define our future.

J. J. Carney is the author of Rwanda Before the Genocide: Catholic Politics and Ethnic Discourse in the Late Colonial Era.



There Your Heart Lies
By Mary Gordon
Pantheon Books. 318p \$25.95



Age of Anger
A History of the Present
By Pankaj Mishra
Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 416p \$27

Darwin's evolution revolution

Misleadingly titled, this book is actually about a small circle of New England intellectuals, especially the Concord transcendentalists, and how they responded to the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. The most important of these were Asa Gray, Charles Loring Brace, Franklin Sanborn, Bronson Alcott and Henry David Thoreau. Randall Fuller definitely concentrates on the history of an elite here.

But many other characters appear, often with a full character sketch, so the stated purpose of focusing on five is often obscured. Also, scientific and philosophical terms need more distinct definition. A glossary of characters and an appendix of terms would be helpful to popularize this story.

Thoreau was crucial. He intended to synthesize transcendentalism and evolution but died before doing so. Would long-term American acceptance of Darwinism have been smoother if Thoreau had lived?

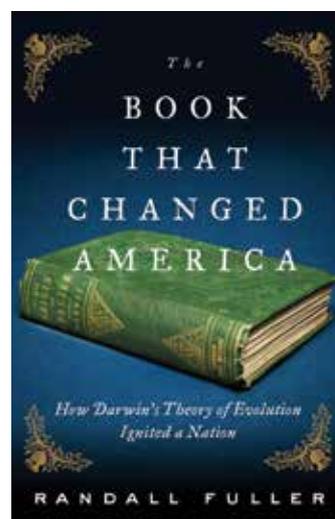
Fuller believes that Darwin's hint that all human beings are biologically related undermined enslavement. But *Origin* also undermined American exceptionalism, America's mission in the world and even faith.

That the transcendentalists' priority in the Civil War was not union but abolition was foreshadowed by their affection for John Brown. They financed his thwarted raid at Harper's Ferry, Va., in 1859 and mourned his execution. Brown's attempt to end slavery with a single dramatic blow was, ironically, quite the opposite of evolution. The irony of the transcen-

dentalists' urgent abolitionism and their fascination with the gradual nature of evolution is striking.

Abraham Lincoln believed that the Union must be saved to abolish slavery. He inspired a postwar renovation of the Constitution. Thoreau thought that *evolution* was a scientific term for *creation*. Could *amendment* be considered the constitutional term for an ongoing work of creation? Did any of the transcendental abolitionists use Darwin's influence to see the Constitution as an evolving document that they could support if it were reformed?

Thomas Murphy, S.J., is an associate professor of history at Seattle University.



The Book That Changed America
How Darwin's Theory of Evolution Ignited a Nation
By Randall Fuller
Viking. 294p \$27



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Laughing at flawed nuns and priests in ‘The Little Hours’

Lunigiana, Italy, 1347: A young nun, wearing a habit customary in the 14th century (or the 1950s), leads a donkey by a rope through the countryside. Mayflies and mist diffuse the morning light; a flute song can be heard, as if from the trees. The one nun is joined by others. They are greeted by the laborer who works at their nearby convent.

“Good morning, Sisters.”

The gentle sisters? They respond with a torrent of abuse, vulgarity, profanity and vitriol that erupts out of their wimples like hot ash out of Etna.

It is, we are ashamed to say, hilarious.

Why is this scene, from the new film “The Little Hours,” so funny? Well, for a couple of reasons. Surprise and outrage are two of the basic tools of comedy, and no one expects these sweet-looking sisters to sound like sailors. Or to scheme like witches. Or to lust after a supposed deaf-mute who is actually the runaway lover of a local nobleman’s wife—a nobleman planning unspeakable revenge on the handsome young rogue. Meanwhile, the sisters talk among themselves like millennials

who have lost their cellphones.

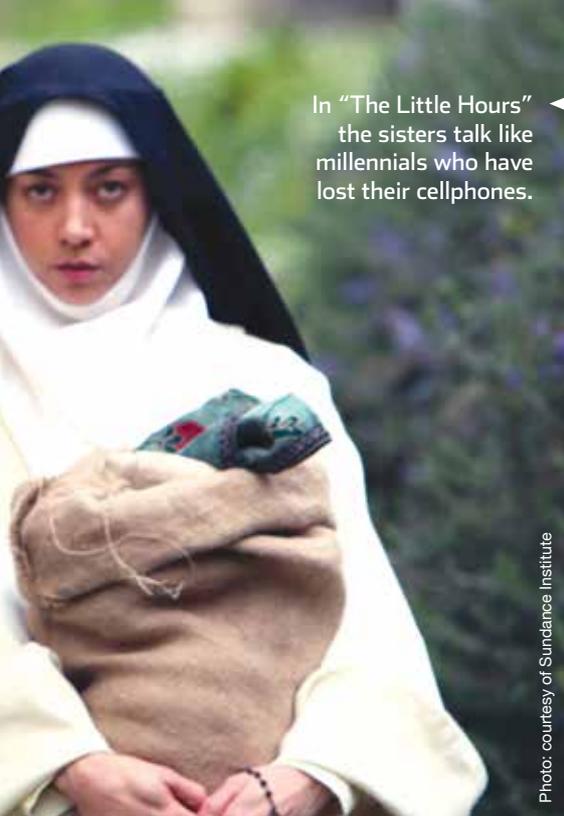
Many readers will have realized by now that the film is based on “The Decameron,” which comprises 100 tales told by seven people who have fled the plague and are regaling each other with tales the way Scheherazade amused her king, or Chaucer entertained medieval England. It is worth noting that the director Pier Paolo Pasolini’s 1971 “The Decameron” was part of his “trilogy of life,” which included “The Canterbury Tales” and “Arabian Nights.”

It is also worth noting that Pasolini included the same episodes that occupy the mind of the film’s director, Jeff Baena, namely the ones about nuns and priests and sex. But Pasolini was a provocateur by both nature and intention, and a highly politicized artist who strove, like the 14th-century writer Boccaccio, to reconcile his Catholicism with his nature. No one will accuse Baena of trying to make a heavy statement. But neither will anyone accuse him of emulating a film like “Virgin Territory” (2007), a direct-to-DVD romp that went to “The

Decameron” strictly for the clerical, uh, romance.

At the same time, one wishes “The Little Hours” was a little funnier, maybe a little more pointed in its send-up of hypocrisy and corruption, and less interested in outrage for the sake of outrage. The trailer for “The Little Hours” quotes the Catholic League: “Pure Trash!” it calls the film. I do not know how pure it is, but we agree the filmmakers’ intentions are probably not of the highest calling.

Speaking of callings—no one in the movie seems to have one, which could provide the filmmakers an alibi, should they be asked to repent. The young nuns—Alessandra (Alison Brie), Fernanda (Aubrey Plaza) and Ginevra (Kate Micucci)—are living the monastic life because that is what their parents decided to do with them: stick them in a convent. The young women are all captives, more or less, and subsequently act out in ways unbecoming to an order, a church or a faith. When they drive out the poor day laborer with their abuse, Father Tommaso (John C. Reilly) hires



In “The Little Hours” the sisters talk like millennials who have lost their cellphones.

Photo: courtesy of Sundance Institute

on the hunky Massetto (Dave Franco), who has been forced into hiding by the enraged cuckold Lord Bruno (Nick Offerman). That Massetto is supposed to be deaf and mute leads to all manner of situations that were old when “I Love Lucy” was a baby, but the fact that they have been translated to pre-Renaissance Italy gives them some panache. I guess.

The “shtick” of “The Little Hours” is the anachronistic surprise: Someone, for instance, has “cooked the books,” at the church, which probably was not a catchphrase back in 1300s Lunigiana. And the unbridled lust? Well, “The Decameron” was hardly gateway literature: Flawed humanity existed before it, and after. No one needs “The Little Hours” to shock them with the news that people are often comically weak. Or, for that matter, weak enough to laugh lustily at “The Little Hours.”

John Anderson is a TV critic for *The Wall Street Journal* and a contributor to *The New York Times*.

‘Master of None’ looks for love, while ‘Catastrophe’ finds it

“Master of None” follows Dev Shah (Aziz Ansari) as he searches for love through rose-tinted glasses—at times literally. The show’s second season, available on Netflix, opens in black and white with the flamboyance of a Fellini movie. The perspective of the show is consistently uncynical and visually alluring, even when it drops the black-and-white format. This makes for charming protagonists and friendships but dull romantic relationships; Dev’s love interest is a sweet, archetypical Italian beauty, whose character the show fails to explore in any depth.

In “Catastrophe”—also a writer-actor romantic comedy—we see the type of relationship Dev aspires to, although it lacks the tasteful glamour of “Master of None.” Available on Amazon Prime, “Catastrophe” profiles Rob Norris (Rob Delaney) and Sharon Morris (Sharon Horgan), a couple that decide to marry after Sharon becomes pregnant following a fling. “Catastrophe” eschews Italian film references and instead allows its dirty jokes and flawed, affable characters to do the work.

One of the most romantic scenes in “Catastrophe” takes place at the end of Season 1. On their wedding night, Sharon is heavily preg-

nant and her husband offers to cut her neglected toenails. His new wife accepts, tearful with gratitude—what clearer sign that they are soulmates than a gesture like this? The moment is cut short, however, when Sharon senses Rob’s mild disgust. The night descends into the couple’s greatest argument yet and Sharon walks out—gnarly toenails intact—only to return seconds later after her water breaks.

In the hypercurated world Dev lives in, a scene that conveys the touching stubbornness of marriage seems impossible. If Season 3 of “Master of None” envisions a future for Francesca and Dev, the show will have to reinvent itself. This is something the show’s creators are aware of. “Your relationship probably wasn’t going to be this magical fantasy that’s in your head,” a friend counsels Dev. “It was probably going to be a s*** show.”

If “Catastrophe” is anything to go by, he is right. But, as Sharon and Rob show us, the beauty of marriage can show itself in those messy moments—no rose-tinted glasses required.

Eloise Blondiau, producer.
Twitter: @eloiseblondiau



The perspective of “Master of None” is consistently uncynical.

Photo courtesy of Netflix

Called to Be Sent

Readings: 2 Kgs 4:8-14, Ps 89, Rom 6:3-11, Mt 10:37-42

It is one thing to follow Christ's call but quite another to accept his mission. When Matthew narrated the call of the first disciples, he emphasized the speed of their response. They were adventurous young men who only needed a nudge from God to leave behind all they knew and serve a man who drew crowds wherever he went.

The evangelist knew the compelling nature of Jesus' call. At the start, a life of discipleship promises fulfillment, wisdom and grace, as well as potential honor and status. The inspiration of these dreams of doing great things for God can sometimes obscure the hard work and suffering inherent in discipleship. In his preaching this week, Jesus offers his disciples no such illusions. His "Mission Discourse," the second of five great sermons in Matthew's Gospel, promises hostility and rejection and offers only abandonment to divine providence as a hope of comfort.

Hostility to Jesus and his message had already begun. The debate over his ability to forgive sins had turned some faithful Jews against him. Now he had doubled down on his claims and was sending his disciples out to spread this same message throughout Judea and Galilee. It is easy to imagine friends and family quietly begging the Twelve not to go; it is easy to imagine the disciples wondering what they had gotten themselves into. Jesus' response is clear, "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me."

The Twelve must have sensed they were passing a point of no return. Until now, they had learned from Jesus, but they had not yet risked themselves. Now, to continue their discipleship, they had to preach his difficult message alone among strangers. By making his words their own, they were making themselves targets for the hostility directed at Jesus. Those whose goal was to sit at Christ's side in a restored kingdom of Israel must have been utterly bewildered.

"Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." Jesus read the same Hebrew Scriptures we read, and much of what he knew of his Father he learned from their message.

'Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.'

(Mt 10:39)



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

What ambitions do you bring to Christ's call?

What is Christ asking you to leave behind?

Narratives like the first reading's story of the Shunemite woman from 2 Kings, for example, convinced him that the Father cares for any who undertake a divine mission. Moreover, those who support them receive divine recompense. It is only in abandoning themselves to this providence that the disciples could find the wisdom and grace they had hoped for.

Discipleship today requires the same self-abnegation. We need to speak Christ's words in our own voice. We need to forsake our ambitions and follow his path. We need to withdraw from clan and class and serve his poor. We have to pass the same point of no return. We will confuse our families and maybe even lose a few friends. The only people who might understand what we are doing are those who have undertaken the same mission themselves. The grace we seek is ours only when we give ourselves over completely to Christ's mission.

Michael R. Simone, S.J., teaches Scripture at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.

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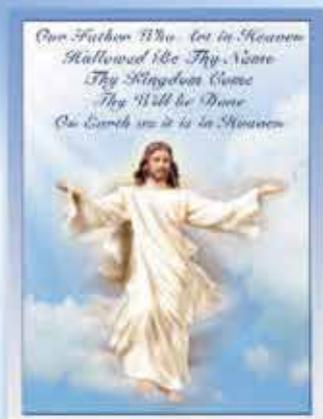
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The Yoke of Mission

Readings: Zec 9:9-10, Ps 145, Rom 8:9-13, Mt 11:25-30

T. E. Lawrence was astonished by the things his Bedouin companions noticed in the desert. Where Lawrence saw only a bleak expanse of sand, the Bedouin saw animal tracks, small plants, evidence of water and places to hide from the sun. They could squint into the noontime glare and spot the approach of fellow travellers or opposing armies long before Lawrence's eyes could pick them out. They knew the rhythms of the desert, the wind patterns and seasonal changes that portended sandstorms or an abundance of lifegiving dew. According to Lawrence, the desert was a mother to the Bedouin, and he never ceased to be amazed at their understanding of her ways.

Jesus offers us a similar insight this week. During his active ministry, he lived his life utterly dependent on divine providence. He emphasized this dependence to his disciples before he sent them out to preach in his name. This was no ascetical exercise; it was the necessary path to God. A person completely dependent on God becomes sensitive

‘Although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, you have revealed them to little ones.’

(Mt 11:25)



PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

What experiences remind you of your dependence on God? What do you learn from them?

What experiences hide God from you?

What burdens can you let Christ carry?

to the subtle rhythms of divine action in the world. Jesus was a child of God as Lawrence's Bedouin were children of the desert.

Jesus recognized a similar sensitivity among the poor and simple of his day. They knew their dependence on providence, and it sharpened their awareness of God's action in the world. These "little ones" recognized Jesus before anyone else did so. They saw in Jesus a source of the same grace they had relied on all their lives.

The wise and the learned, meanwhile, had forgotten the lessons of dependence. Jesus' actions perplexed and troubled them. Something in their education caused them to lose sight of their dependence on God. Perhaps it was because they had attained social status and comfort. Perhaps they came to believe that in their learning they had every answer they would need to make their own way through life. Just as a climatologist might be able to describe a desert but not survive in it, the wise and learned of Jesus' day were able to talk about God more easily than they could recognize the action of grace.

The first part of today's Gospel also appears in Luke, but the second part, Mt 11:28-30, is unique to Matthew. The statement is a paradox: The yoke symbolizes the burden of servitude, yet Jesus promises a "yoke of rest." Matthew understands a life dependent on God to be a life of freedom. Jesus offers the same yoke that he bears, the saving mission he receives from the Father. Like most yokes, it has two collars to distribute the load. As the disciples discovered, to take up Jesus' yoke means to give up fantasies of control and self-importance. At the same time, they learned that Jesus did all the heavy lifting. His is a yoke of rest.

In the midst of our relief, we can still find plenty to do. Jesus needs our feet to move with his. He needs us to watch his labor and assist as we can. As Bedouin are children of the desert, we will, yoked to Christ, learn to become children of God.

Michael R. Simone, S.J., teaches Scripture at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry.

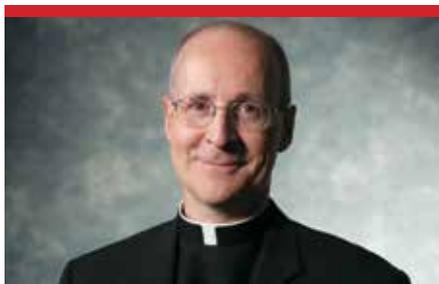
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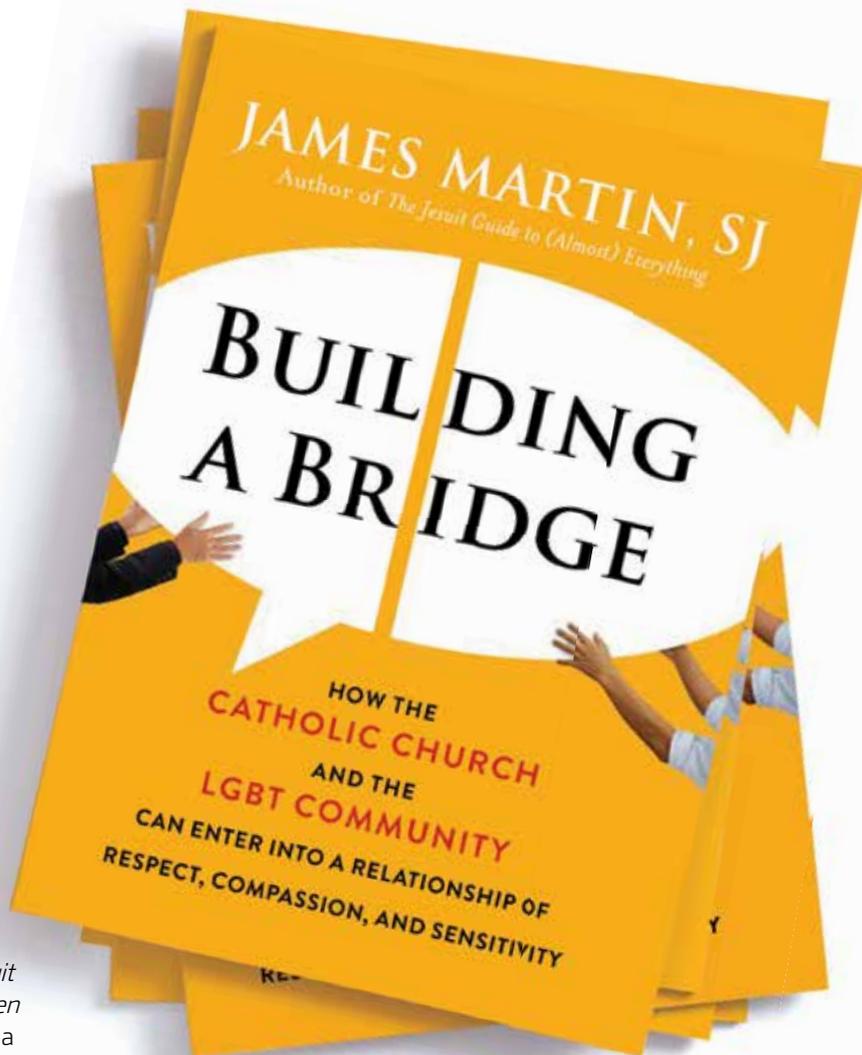
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A welcome and much-needed book.

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REV. JAMES MARTIN, SJ, is a Jesuit priest, editor at large of *America* magazine, and bestselling author of *Seven Last Words*, *The Abbey*, *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*, *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything*, and *Between Heaven and Mirth*. In April Pope Francis appointed him as a Consultor to the Secretariat for Communication.



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Does the truth matter?

This is no longer a theoretical question.

By Charles J. Sykes



If you occasionally feel like you are binge-watching history, you are not alone. These are remarkable times for both our politics and our culture, and the stakes seem to be rising all the time. It is not merely that social norms are routinely shattered; it often feels as if the rules do not matter at all anymore.

Even before the end of the last presidential campaign, it was obvious that we had entered a post-factual era in politics. This was, after all, a campaign in which a presidential candidate trafficked in “scoops” from *The National Enquirer* and openly suggested that his rival’s father may have been involved in the assassination of John F. Kennedy—and got away with it. But, if anything, the pace seems to be accelerating, as cable networks, radio hosts and websites continue to peddle bizarre conspiracy theories even after they have been debunked.

At one time, really not that long ago, our culture, institutions and traditions provided guardrails for our politics, limiting the impact of the most dishonest or most reckless voices. But in the age of social media, those rails are gone, along with the gatekeepers of fact. The result is that we now find ourselves awash in fabulism, fake news and outright lies, some of them coming from the White House itself. Indeed, one of the most consequential questions we now face is whether truth matters anymore. This is no longer a theoretical question for postmodern

academics. It is increasingly an existential question for our democracy.

I keep coming back to a tweet from the Russian dissident and chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov, who wrote: “The point of modern propaganda isn’t only to misinform or push an agenda. It is to exhaust your critical thinking, to annihilate truth.” Mr. Kasparov understands that the real threat of the flood of “alternative facts” is that many voters will simply shrug, ask, “What is truth?” and, like Pontius Pilate, not wait for an answer.

We might assume that people naturally want to seek out information that is true, but this turns out to be a basic misunderstanding of the human psyche and our new tribal politics. The social psychologist Jonathan Haidt describes the power of tribalism in shaping our ideas about truth. “Once people join a political team,” he writes in *The Righteous Mind*, “they get ensnared in its moral matrix. They see confirmation of their grand narrative everywhere, and it’s difficult—perhaps impossible—to convince them that they are wrong if you argue with them from outside the matrix.”

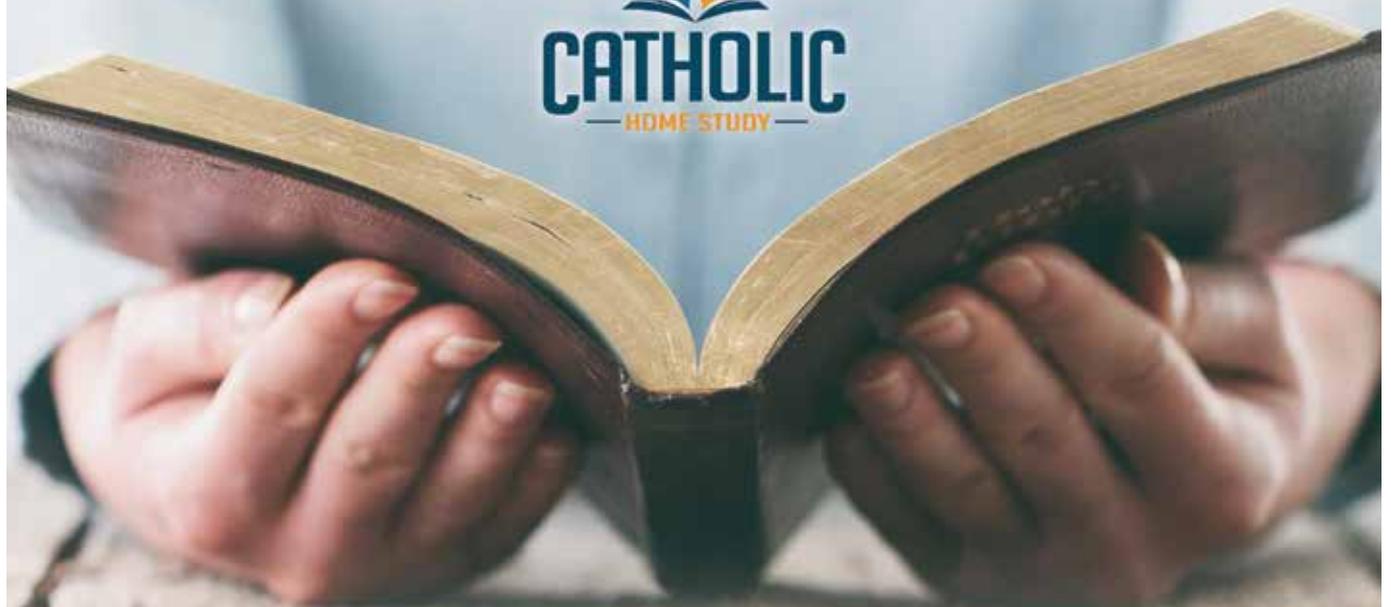
Mr. Haidt also cites the work of his fellow social psychologist Tom Gilovich, who studies the cognitive mechanisms of strange beliefs. If we want to believe something, Mr. Gilovich says, we ask, “Can I believe it?” and we need only a single piece of evidence, no matter its provenance, so

“we can stop thinking” because we “now have permission to believe” what we want. The flip side is that when we are confronted with uncomfortable or unwanted information that we do not want to believe, we ask, “Must I believe?” and look for a reason to reject the argument or fact. Again, only a single piece of data is necessary “to unlock the handcuffs of must.”

As a talk show host, I saw this first hand. When then-candidate Donald J. Trump claimed “thousands” of American Muslims had celebrated the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, many of my listeners believed him—because they wanted to. This suggests that the solution (if there is one) lies less in the media than in ourselves. Fake news, like politicians who deceive, will remain a fact of life. The only antidote is an educated, critically minded electorate who can see through the hoaxes and separate fact from propaganda. But, most important, we need a citizenry that believes that truth matters—and matters urgently.

Charles J. Sykes is a conservative commentator and the author of the forthcoming book *How the Right Lost Its Mind*, to be published by St. Martin’s Press in October.

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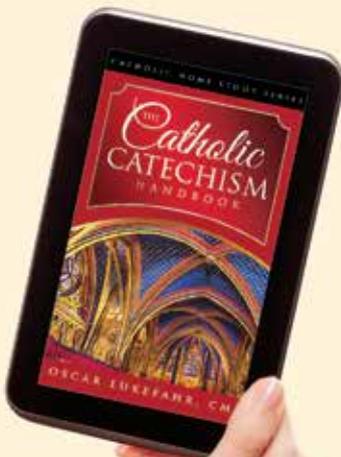
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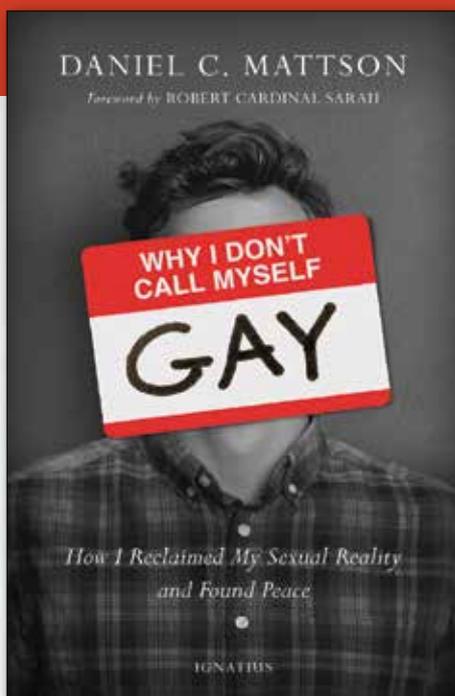
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